HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  

Friday, October 12, 2018

APPROPRIATION (FINANCIAL YEAR 2019) BILL, 2018

[Fifth Day]

The Standing Finance Committee of the whole House resumed its deliberations on the Bill and Estimates.

[Chairman: Mr. Forde]

1.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Morning colleagues.

Hon. Members: Good afternoon.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah, good afternoon. Wow! Good afternoon, colleagues.

Hon. Members: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Day three, Standing Finance Committee, Friday October 12, 2018. The meeting of the Standing Finance Committee will now resume.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Chairman, I need clarification on a point of procedure. The Speaker of the House said, when we started these proceedings, that the speaking time for the Standing Finance Committee shall not exceed five minutes on each intervention and the Minister will be invited to make a brief five-minute opening statement. On Appendix I of the Standing Orders, our Standing Orders, says in committee all Members are allowed up to five minutes’ speaking time each, and I need some clarification as we proceed. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: And you are making that point, Member for Naparima, based on what?—your Members are not given—

Mr. Charles: The fact that yesterday you said that we had to make a brief preliminary statement before the question, and my understanding is that we have
five minutes at each intervention. [Crosstalk] Well, I have asked for a clarification.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, hold on. One second. Leader of the House and Chief Whip, I would just like to suspend for two minutes. Could you just have a sidebar with me please, Chief Whip and Leader?

1.33 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee suspended.*

1.34 p.m.: *Standing Finance Committee resumed.*

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, Members, shall we proceed? Okay, based on the point raised by the Member for Naparima, according to Appendix I, Time Limit on Speeches, page 71 of the Standing Orders and continuing on page 72, just around mid-page:

“Our Committee

All Members—unlimited periods not exceeding 5 minutes each.”

However, as the Chair of the Standing Finance Committee, the determination of the length and the veracity of the content of the particular Member will be determined. All right? Yes, you are allowed a preamble, but we are going to ensure that it is not “prolongated” to ensure that we waste time and we are not topical. Fair enough, Members? So we shall proceed.

Head 15: Tobago House of Assembly. [Crosstalk] I know we are early in the morning. It is still afternoon, I do not know why I am still saying “morning”.

*Head 15:* Tobago House of Assembly, $2,210,630,000.

**Mr. Chairman:** I will now invite the Minister of the Finance to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

**Hon. Imbert:** Mr. Chairman, the Tobago House of Assembly has certain powers, responsibilities and authorities vested in it by virtue of Act 40 of 1996. It is responsible for most things on the island of Tobago as a result of the Fifth
Schedule of that Act. The Tobago House of Assembly is responsible for most areas of Government. There are a few exceptions such as foreign affairs and aspects of national security. The Tobago House of Assembly is entitled to a percentage of the national budget by virtue of a decision of the Despite Resolution Commission which found that the Tobago Assembly allocation should be between 4.03 per cent and 6.9 per cent. It has been the practice for other Governments to give the bare minimum of 4.03 per cent, but this PNM Government is giving them a little more. Thank you.

Mr. Padarath: Less.

Hon. Imbert: More. A lot more than the UNC.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like to welcome the Chief Administrator of the Tobago House of Assembly and the other senior technocrats. Welcome to Trinidad.

Question proposed: That Head 15 stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $2,210,630,000 for Head 15: Tobago House of Assembly is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly, and the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. We now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Member for Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: The Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Bodies and Tobago House of Assembly, if you look at my book here, I start on page 2 and then I go to pages 3 and 4, then I go to pages 5, 6, 7, 8, and then I come back again and I go back now and I start from page 7. I have a page 6, a
Mr. Chairman: So you are saying it is not in order? There is some—
Dr. Rambachan: No, and then you go back up and it is going backward, 20, 21.

Mr. Chairman: All right. Okay. Now, in that book we will be starting on page 11.
Dr. Rambachan: But you understand the problem here?
Mr. Chairman: Okay, I will have the Clerks check it out.
Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what problem the Member has, but my book goes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21—

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Minister of Finance, thank you. [Laughter] I have the correct book. Because the book I have in front of me also, the numbering is in order. So the Clerk will just change—
Dr. Rambachan: This numbering is not in order.

Mr. Chairman: So probably the numbering is not in order. So Clerk, could you just ensure. Sub-Head 06, Current Transfers to Statutory Board and Similar Bodies, page 62; Item 001, Tobago House of Assembly, page 62. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Board and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly. We are at page 11, Division 01 - Assembly Legislature; Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 11; Item 001, General Administration, page 11. Chief Whip, your Members are ready?

Mr. Padarath: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Good and Services, page 11; Item 001, General Administration, pages 11 and 12. I recognize Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Line Item 16, under Good and Services, Contract Employment. Chair, in light of the Tobago House of Assembly getting an
increase, a very large increase for this upcoming fiscal year, it is quiet unfortunate that the Chief Secretary and the Finance Secretariat are not here to answer, but I trust that the goodly gentleman here would be able to answer. So line Item 16, Contract Employment.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member, again—hold on, one second. The goodly gentleman is the Chief Administrator of the Tobago House of Assembly.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, the Chief Administrator. I apologize, Mr. Chair. So line Item 16, Contract Employment, I see there an expenditure for fiscal year 2019, 2.502 million with an increase by 542,000, can we get some explanation to that please?

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Imbert:** By all means. Firstly, that is not a mammoth increase. Five hundred thousand—

**Ms. Ramdial:** According to you.

**Hon. Imbert:**—in a $50 billion budget is not a mammoth increase. Secondly, if you look at the 2017 actual it was 2,529,000; the 2019 estimate is 2,542,000. So that is just $23,000 more. It is nothing out of the ordinary. It is just the allocation for their contract employees.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Minister, would we be able to get a list of the positions for Contract Employment?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Will be provided. Sub-Head 03—

**Ms. Ramdial:** No.

**Mr. Chairman:** Same place?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.

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Mr. Chairman: Okay, 11 and 12.

Ms. Ramdial: Moving along to page 12, Mr. Chairman. Line Item 64, Operation of Constituency Offices, just a little bit of clarity with respect to the increase by 400,000 for 2019 to 4 million, as compared to 2018 which was 3.6 million.

Hon. Imbert: We plan to increase the number of seats in Tobago to five.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Singh: No, no, that is a farcical answer.

Ms. Ramdial: Yeah, that is irrelevant. It is irrelevant.

Mr. Chairman: Members! Toco/Manzanilla.

Hon. Imbert: By the way, Mr. Chairman, this is constituency offices for the 12 assemblymen. If you look at the 2017 actual it is less than the 2017 actual and, therefore, it is nothing out of the ordinary.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla, question.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to confirm what the Minister indicated. So the constituency offices here represent the offices of the aldermen and elected officers indicated?

Hon. Imbert: There are no constituency offices for aldermen in Tobago.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: So whoever it is. I am asking.

Hon. Imbert: There are no constituency offices for aldermen in Tobago. You are not listening, so therefore the question makes no sense. Please ask the question properly.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Assemblymen.

Hon. Imbert: There are 12 Assemblymen in the House of Assembly and each of them is entitled to a constituency office which is financed by the Assembly and this is the provision for that, and this year’s provision is less than the 2017 actual.
Ms. Ramdia: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: You are welcome.

Mr. Singh: Thank you. Just for purposes of clarity, does it include within these constituencies offices, the Office of the Minority Leader?

Hon. Imbert: That is not a constituency office. Really, Member for Chaguanas West, you are a seasoned parliamentarian. That is not a constituency office. Come on, man.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head—Couva North on this same Sub-Item or you are going forward?

Mr. Indarsingh: I am on page 14.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, hold on. I have not reached there as yet. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 12; Item 001, General Administration, page 12. I recognize Couva North.

Ms. Ramdia: Thank you, Chair. Under line Item 01 there were no allocations in 2017, neither 2018; however, there is 550,000 budgeted for 2019, can you say how many vehicles or the intention of how many vehicles are to be purchased?

Hon. Imbert: Two.

Ms. Ramdia: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 12; Item 007, Households, page 12. Division 02 - Office of the Chief Secretary; Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 13; Item 001, General Administration, page 13; Item 007, Public Administration, page 13; Item 011, Planning, page 13. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 14; Item 001, General Administration, page 14. I recognize Couva South and then I will go to Couva North.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Chair. Just under 23, Fees, I see in 2018 the
estimates were 200,000 and in 2019 the estimates have moved to $1.3 million, an increase of 1.1, could the Minister provide some rationale for this movement?

**Hon. Imbert:** There is quite a bit of litigation that they anticipate they will be handling in 2019.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** They anticipate, I did not get that clear, Minister.

**Hon. Imbert:** You got it.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** No, no, I am saying could you—your response.

**Mr. Chairman:** He said he did not hear that clear.

**Hon. Imbert:** But he repeated what I said, so he got it.

**Mr. Chairman:** So Finance, go ahead.

**Hon. Imbert:** They anticipate, as you heard and repeated, quite a bit of litigation in 2019.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** And in relation to the anticipation of litigation, could you guide us in terms of the matters that may result in litigation?

**Hon. Imbert:** That will be provided.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** That will be provided, by?

**Hon. Imbert:** Me.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** What time frame?

**Hon. Imbert:** As soon as possible.

**Mr. Chairman:** Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Line Item 28, Other Contracted Services, an increase by $500,000 to 1.5 for fiscal 2019, can I get some explanation with respect to Other Contracted Services?

**Mr. Imbert:** Just one second. Are you on page 15?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Page 14.
Mr. Chairman: 28, Other Contracted Services.

Mr. Imbert: You are on Item 28, page 14?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Under Goods and Services?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: General Administration? If you look at the actual expenditure for 2017 it was 3.6 million. So that a provision of $1.5 million in 2019 actually represents a significant reduction from the 2017 expenditure. It is simply an estimate.

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, but Minister, I would like to have or get an idea as to what type of other contracted services are included for this increase by $500,000. What type of services?

Hon. Imbert: It is an increase over the 2018 estimate, but it is a reduction over the 2017 actual.

Ms. Ramdial: Agreed. I am interested in the type of services.

Hon. Imbert: A list would be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could you indicate how many individuals are within that line Item 16, Contract Employment, for the value of $14 million?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 16, Contract Employment.

Hon. Imbert: Okay, we will get it for you in a few minutes. I have asked the technical staff to provide the information. So as soon as I get it, I will let you know.

Mr. Chairman: In the interim, Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to add to line Item 16, the
Member for Caroni East asked for the number, I am asking for the positions and if there are any positions that are vacant at this time, please?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Mr. Chairman: Couva South. Couva North, sorry.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 37, Janitorial Services. In 2017 the figure was 831,092, in 2018 the actual was 500,000 which was a decrease, and now another increase in 2019 by 500,000 to make it a million dollars for Janitorial Services, can I get an explanation please for the Office of the Chief Secretariat?

Hon. Imbert: New facilities will be occupied in 2019. That would require increased janitorial expenditure.

Ms. Ramdial: New facilities within the same building or a different building, or—

Hon. Imbert: In Tobago.

Ms. Ramdial: Where exactly new facilities?

Hon. Imbert: Milshirv.

Ms. Ramdial: Sorry.

Hon. Imbert: Milshirv.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, thank you.

Hon. Imbert: I answered you, you know.

Ms. Ramdial: Well, I did not hear you.

Hon. Imbert: You are not listening.

Mr. Chairman: All right, Minister of Finance. Cumuto/Manzanilla, you have another question?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Line Item 22, can the hon. Minister account for the decrease; is it as a result of a termination of employment or were these persons transferred to permanent employment, please?
Hon. Imbert: By definition, short-term has a beginning and an end. So it is no question of people being transferred anywhere. This is simply a provision for short-term employment during the current fiscal year.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Could you indicate then how many persons are no longer employed with the—

Mr. Chairman: Member, could you speak a little—rise the mike a little.

Hon. Imbert: There is no question of persons being no longer employed. By definition short-term employment is for a maximum of six months. It has a beginning and an end. When it comes to an end there is no question the person being no longer employed. It is short-term. This is simply a provision to allow the Assembly to hire persons on a short-term basis in fiscal 2019.

Mr. Indarsingh: Chairman, I think my colleague was simply trying to find out how many persons’ contracts came to an end. I think the Minister should be more facilitating.

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, the Members are mixing up the line Items. This is Short-term Employment. The other discussion was on Contract Employment. You are mixing it up. We are dealing with Short-Term Employment which is for a maximum—it is a temporary form of employment for a maximum of six months.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva South, so you have an additional question on that?

Mr. Indarsingh: I was just trying to assist my colleague. She was trying to find out the numbers, and I think that the Minister of Finance must facilitate the responses that are being asked of him.

Mr. Chairman: So the question is you would like to find out the numbers that were on the short-term contracts?
Hon. Imbert: On?

Mr. Chairman: Could that information be provided?

Hon. Imbert: No, no, no, Mr. Chairman, we are going forward, not back.

Mr. Chairman: No, we are on the same line Item, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Imbert: Yes, but we are going forward. It is not persons who are on. It is persons who will be employed on a short-term basis.

Mr. Chairman: Right. So “will be”.

Hon. Imbert: I will certainly get that information.

Mr. Chairman: For clarity. Okay, so the information would be provide. Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. On this very matter, Mr. Chair, is the Minister indicating that for the revised estimate for 2019, $1.5 million—

Mr. Chairman: Which line Item?

Dr. Moonilal: Short-Term, 22. Is the Minister indicating that a revised estimate for $1.5 million and the Minister will not provide a list, or the names, or the number of people who benefited by this Item for the 2018 period when you had a revised estimate of $2 million?

Hon. Imbert: The Speaker made a ruling a day or two ago that we are looking forward not backwards.

Dr. Moonilal: Could I ask the Minister, therefore, if you can provide an estimate of how many persons may be, will be, or could be, hired short-term employment for fiscal 2019?

Hon. Imbert: I think you were asleep when I answered that identical question two minutes ago.

Mr. Chairman: The information will be provided.
Hon. Imbert: Clearly asleep.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, Okay, Mr. Minister. Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: Mr. Chairman, with all deference to you as Chair and to the Minister of Finance—the Minister of Finance cannot control this Committee meeting.

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, is this a question?

Mr. Chairman: Hold on.

Hon. Imbert: Is this a question?

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, one second.

Dr. Tewarie: He cannot come here in this Committee meeting—

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, please. [Crosstalk] Members!

Dr. Tewarie:—and indicate that he is not taking into account—

Mr. Chairman: Members!

Dr. Tewarie: That is the purpose of this meeting.

Hon. Imbert: Is that a question?

Mr. Chairman: Members, I have given the Member for Caroni East—

Hon. Members: Central.

Mr. Chairman:—Central, the floor. Let me hear your point.

Dr. Tewarie: Sir, I am saying that the Minister of Finance cannot come here and indicate that he will not answer questions on the 2018 accounts. [Desk thumping]

Hon. Imbert: Again, is that a question?

Mr. Chairman: Members, again, as the Chair, the Minister of Finance has said it would been provided. He did not say he would not answer the questions, but point has been made and has been noted.

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make point, as the substantive Chairman has made, this is the 2019 budget estimates. We will be looking at the
2019 estimates and answering questions on the 2019 estimates. Not the 2018, not the 2017. [Crosstalk] The 2018 and 2017 figures are there for comparison purposes only. Too bad!

**Mr. Chairman:** Member, again—[Crosstalk] Hold on! Members, I have heard each and every one of you, and as has been stated by the substantive Chairman of the Committee, it was made clear and identified in terms of the booklets before us and the estimates that we are dealing with 2019, and I am going to continue to go along those lines.

**Hon. Imbert:** And so will I.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am now going to move on and we are going to Item—

**Hon. Imbert:** They are clearly misleading the public and the Parliament.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister of Finance, I have ruled.

**Hon. Imbert:** I know, but they are misleading everybody.

**Mr. Chairman:** I have ruled.

**Mr. Singh:** Why do you not want to account?

**Hon. Imbert:** It is not a requirement of this Committee.

**Hon. Member:** Why you are dealing 2019—[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Imbert:** I do not need to. It is the estimates 2019, not ’18, not ’17. This is how it has been for the last 27 years. It is not changing today.

**Mr. Chairman:** Hon. Members, as the Chairman at this time of the Standing Finance Committee, I am not—Members, please—going to entertain the crosstalk that is continuing, and also as the Chairman I am not going to enter the crosstalk. Each individual will be given the necessary opportunity to make their preamble, ask their question, and then we will get the necessary answers accordingly. If the answers cannot be provided, there is a procedure where it would be provided at a
later date. Other than that, we must maintain the decorum of the House though we are in Standing Finance Committee.

Mr. Indarsingh: Chairman, based on what you are saying, I just want to get some guidance. So if we are looking at 2019 and you want to compare in terms of the movement—you cannot relate to 2018 figures and so on, or 2017 which is provided in the book?

2.00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, again, as I have said just now, we are dealing with the estimates for 2019. Yes, reference can be made to 2017 and to 2018 but in terms of the information and questioning on 2017 and 2018, that will not be allowed. Those ground rules have been laid down clear in terms of the standing procedure when it started.

Mr. Indarsingh: Something clandestine is happening here.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva South, please. [Crosstalk] Minister of Finance, thank you. [Crosstalk] Minister of Finance. Right, Members, those are the guidelines and those are the guidelines that will be followed as we continue along on the tree of Standing Finance Committee.

I will now move on to Item—Cumuto/Manzanilla, we are on Item 001, General Administration, page 14. Proceed.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have observed in line Item 22, a decrease of 500 and I have observed in line Item 16, an increase of 1 million, and I was simply trying to ascertain if the persons who were no longer on short-term contract were now given an opportunity to apply for a longer contract as was stated in line Item 16, and hence the reason for my questions. I am a little bit concerned because when we come here, Mr. Chairman—
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Mr. Chairman: Come to the question, please, Member.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: How can I ask for—the Government will come every year to ask for funding and it is an estimate.

Mr. Chairman: Question please, Member.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The only time we actually get the revised or the actual is the following year so that we can ask questions on how moneys were spent. [Desk thumping] How can we ask if we are not given the opportunity, Mr. Chairman?

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, what is the question? This is not a debate.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Point made, point taken. Item 002, Information, page 50. Oh, you have a question? All right, Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Line Item 23, Fees. 2019, there is an increase of $1.1 million. Could the Minister of Finance list—for the Fees to be increased by $1.1 million, the Tobago House of Assembly should have indicated what those fees would include. Could the Minister of Finance indicate to this House the entire $1.3 million estimate for 2019?

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I cannot accommodate a Member who comes late, asks a question that was already asked and answered. [Crosstalk] Asked and answered. Come late. That was asked and answered already.

Mr. Lee: All right, let me ask another question.

Mr. Chairman: Hold on. Just one second. Minister of Finance, yes, the question was asked but as you said, the Member came in late but we do not need to go into that. Just kindly give the statement.

Hon. Imbert: I answered it already, Mr. Chairman, I am not answering it twice.

Mr. Chairman: Well okay, and that is what we want to get. Next question.

Mr. Lee: I will ask another question. Line Item 43, Security Services, 2.5 million

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is estimated to be budgeted, utilized for 2019. Could the Minister indicate to this House who are the security services providers that will make up $2.5 million?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Mr. Lee:** Could you indicate to this House who are the security services providers that will make up $2.5 million?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes, I will provide it. You asked me if I could provide it. I said yes.

**Mr. Lee:** No, I said could you indicate to this House now.

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes. I cannot indicate now. I will indicate in due course. You keep asking all sorts of convoluted questions.

**Mr. Lee:** No, I am not asking any convoluted questions. [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Chairman:** Members, we are just over 30 minutes into the Standing Finance Committee for today. We have not even identified more than 10 Items.

**Hon. Imbert:** Okay, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Hold on, hold on, Minister.

**Hon. Imbert:** I can answer his question.

**Mr. Chairman:** We have not even identified 10 Items as yet. We have a long evening ahead of us and I am not going to tolerate the road we are going down. Could the information be provided?

**Hon. Imbert:** The House of Assembly has very promptly been able to provide me with the relevant answer. The security firms are: Rapid Response, MI4, Amalgamated and MTS.

**Mr. Chairman:** Oropouche East.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am on page 15, 002, Information, Contract Employment.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, I am now going to that one, hold one second. Item 002,
Information, page 15. I recognize the Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Through you, could I ask the Minister, the 2019 Estimate is 3.5 million—

Mr. Chairman: Line Item?

Dr. Moonilal: Line Item 16, Contract Employment, Office of the Chief Secretary. The 2019 Estimate is 3.5 million, but the Actual 2017, 3.4. Could I ask the Minister to provide now, the amount of persons anticipated to be on the roll for Contract Employment in fiscal 2019?

Hon. Imbert: Information will be provided in due course.

Dr. Moonilal: What month is due course?

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing. For fiscal 2019, there is an increase by $500,000 to 2.5 million. Can I get some explanation with respect to this increase?

Hon. Imbert: 62?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Just an estimate. It is not different— much different from 2017 Actual. [Crosstalk] I am not going to recognize sotto voce comments thrown at me by the others. If you look, Member for Couva North, at the 2017 Actual—[Crosstalk and laughter] Mr. Chairman, this cannot work. I am answering Couva North and Pointe-a-Pierre is just throwing words across the floor. I am asking you to allow me to answer Couva North without the other Members over there throwing words at me.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed, Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you. [Crosstalk] “Ah next one. Ah next one.” Couva North,
if you look at 2017 Actual, 2.23 million and 2019 Estimate, 2.5, there is no substantial difference. It is not significant.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Minister, so is it safe to assume that there is some new public awareness programme or something that would engage increased funding for $500,000?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, thanks.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 007, Public Administration, pages 15 and 16. I recognize Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under 16, Contract Employment, could the Minister advise this meeting “how much” persons would stand to be employed by that 4 million allocation in 2019 which has been increased by $671,000?

**Hon. Imbert:** Mr. Chairman, I give an undertaking that I will ask the House of Assembly to provide the number of persons employed under Contract Employment in all of the departments. So I would like to forgo now responses to similar questions as we get the similar Heads. I have some information—I have received some information. [Crosstalk] Mr. Chairman, I cannot talk if Oropouche East is babbling across there.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Mr. Chairman, that is rude and disrespectful.

**Hon. Imbert:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to answer the Member for Couva South without being disturbed by the Member for Oropouche East. Can I do that, Mr. Chairman? [Crosstalk] He is still talking, you know.

**Mr. Chairman:** Members. Hold on one second, Minister of Finance. Members, as Chairman of this Committee, I have the responsibility to ensure that this
Committee comes off. That is one. Secondly, as the Chairman of this Committee, I also have the authority to deal with any Member in this particular House as the Chairman sees fit. We are on Standing Finance Committee, we need to get information out based on questions and based on answers. If Members are not in a position to ask, we would not be in a position to get answers to the questions. Please, do not let me use my authority in order to ask Members to vacate their seats for any particular reason as we go forward. We are bordering now on a very thin line and I am serious.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Right. So I recognize the Minister of Finance, he said he was provided with some information, proceed.

Hon. Imbert: I have just received some information from the House of Assembly technocrats and this is the information I have been given. The number of contract employees in the Assembly Legislature Department, 23; the number of contract employees in the Office of the Chief Secretary, 297; the number of contract employees in the Finance department, 84; the number of contract employees in the Food Production department, 148. [Crosstalk] Mr. Chairman, if after I say every number, Naparima says “wow”, this is going to trivialize this exercise. Can I give these numbers in silence, please?

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Hon. Imbert: Thank you. The number of persons employed in the Food Production department, 148; the number of persons employed in the Tourism department, 92; the number of contract employees in the Education department—these are all contract employees—616; the number of contract employees in the Community Development department, 82; the number of contract employees in the
Infrastructure department, 104; the number of contract employees in the Health
department, 277; the number of contract employees in the Settlements department,
86; the number of contract employees in the Sport department, 20; for a grand total
of 1,827 contract employees in the Tobago House of Assembly.

Mr. Chairman: I recognize the Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. The figures that the Minister
has just read into the public record is based on the Revised Estimates of 2018, all
right?

Hon. Imbert: I am here to talk about the 2019 Estimates. I do not know how many
times I will have to say that.

Mr. Indarsingh: No. You are telling us that—so where you have increases for
Contract Employment under the 2019 allocation, Minister, persons have already
been employed?

Hon. Imbert: The numbers I have given are the number of contract employees
that are expected to be engaged in 2019; full stop. If the Assembly decides, for one
reason or another, that it is necessary to reduce or increase contract employees, it
has the authority so to do and will so report in due course to the relevant
authorities.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Hon. Imbert: This is a 2019 figure I am giving you.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you.

[Mrs. Anisette-George in the Chair]

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Ma’am. To the Minister, I am on Public
Administration, line Item 50, page 15. I have noticed in 2017 you had $734,000 for
Housing Accommodation, nothing in 2018, blank, and now you have for 2019, $1 million. Could you just explain this as to what the housing accommodation would be in 2019 that was not required in 2018 at all?

**Hon. Imbert:** This is for public officers who will normally be resident in Trinidad who are stationed in Tobago from time to time, for example, a Customs Officer.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Minister, so are you saying in 2018, no public officer would be stationed—was stationed there and there was absolutely no provision here for any housing allowance?

**Hon. Imbert:** This is the estimate at this time. When the final account is done and when we do it next year, the figure may change. These are Estimates at this point in time.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Line Item 43, Security Services, there is an increase by $1 million to make the Estimate for 2019, 2 million. Can I get some clarification with respect to this increase?

**Hon. Imbert:** If you look at the 2017 Actual it is about 1.8; this is 2 million and they will be occupying the Milshirv Building in 2019 I am told, so there will be a requirement for an increased—

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, thanks.

**Hon. Imbert:** You are welcome.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 008, Tobago Emergency Management Agency. Member for Oropouche East.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Thank you very much. Page 16, Ma’am. At number 43, again, under this matter of Tobago Emergency Management Agency. This is a new line
Item and it is provided for 2018, $800,000. Is this some new agency or new building or new facility again that requires security?

**Hon. Imbert:** Apparently, one of the Divisions has moved to another location. That Division was sharing the cost with them. Now, the Division that will occupy this building has to cover the entire cost.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Could you indicate the provider of security?

**Hon. Imbert:** MI4.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. TEMA is one of the better functioning disaster agencies in this twin-island state and I am looking at materials and supplies and there is an increase in $170,000. Is that sufficient having regard to the nature of the climate change and impact that is taking place?

**Hon. Imbert:** What page is that?

**Mr. Singh:** Line Item 12, Material and Supplies.

**Madam Chairman:** Page 16.

**Hon. Imbert:** I am told it is but one of the good things with the House of Assembly legislation is that they have the ability to move funds around on a needs basis and they get money en bloc so that I am sure they will make proper appropriate arrangements if the need arises.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Line Item 28, Other Contracted Services, there is an increase by 500,000. Can you identify the type of contracted services that require this increase?

**Hon. Imbert:** Removal of seaweed from the beach and so on, you know,
sargassum. The problem with sargassum.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Hon. Imbert:** You are welcome.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 009, Occupational Safety and Health. Member for Caroni Central.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Yes, just a simple question to the Minister. I noticed that there are no allocations under this Head for ’17, ’18, ’19. Can you explain that?

**Hon Imbert:** What page? What Item?

**Madam Speaker:** 009.

**Hon. Imbert:** That is gone elsewhere.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. So what about the unit?

**Hon. Imbert:** It is gone elsewhere in the book.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay, okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 010, Information Systems Department; Item 011, Planning; Item 012, Land Management. Yes, Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Line Item 16 again. I know you said had given us the figure for Contract Employment, Minister, but the increase by $1 million again, some sort of clarification with respect to the levels, the position themselves?

**Madam Chairman:** Are we on page 18?

**Ms. Ramdial:** 18, yes.

**Madam Chairman:** And line Item 16?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Contract Employment, yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Yes? You said there is an increase?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, by 1 million.

**Hon. Imbert:** What is the question?
Ms. Ramdial: The type of contract positions. The type.

Hon. Imbert: I said I would provide, bearing in mind it is true. There is no increase so the question is irrelevant.

Ms. Ramdial: I am seeing that in page 18, 16.

Hon. Imbert: There is no increase.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, there is no increase.

Hon. Imbert: That is an irrelevant question but more importantly—

Madam Speaker: Minister of Finance, one minute.

Hon. Imbert: I would like to make a point.

Madam Chairman: One minute. Member for Couva North, do you agree there is no increase?


Madam Chairman: Okay, there is an increase from—[Interruption] Member for Naparima. [Crosstalk] Member for Couva South, everybody in here is a human being; everybody.

Mr. Indarsingh: I accept that, “is he who needs to understand that”.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South, if you understand that, then you could only control yourself. Okay? Member for Couva North, could you ask the question, please?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, Ma’am. Thank you for recognizing my accurate observation. [Desk thumping]

Madam Chairman: Good.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Line Item 16, Contract Employment. There is an increase by $1 million. I am asking with respect to the type and levels of positions
for Contract Employment. Can I get some clarification with respect to the type and levels?

**Hon. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, you were not here. I gave an undertaking to give the numbers and the positions for all contract employment in all of Divisions and Departments of the Tobago House of Assembly because it was coming up repetitively. I said I will do it for all and I asked that this question not be asked again as we get to the various Divisions and it was agreed it would not be asked again. That is the point I was trying to make just now.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Ma’am, can I just flag for your information, Chair, the last time we asked for clarification, there were many Heads under which we did not get any clarification. [Desk thumping] That is why I see a need to ask.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. So what I would say is this. When this matter comes up, the Member would ask the question just to pinpoint as a reminder. Okay?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** And we are not going to go into any long discourse about Contract Employment.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Much appreciated.

**Madam Chairman:** Right, okay. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Information; Item 007, Public Administration. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair, line Item 01, Vehicles. There were no Estimates for 2017, 2018 and in 2019, it is $1 million for Vehicles. Would you care to tell me how many vehicles you intend to purchase?

**Hon. Imbert:** Four.
Ms. Ramdial: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 008, Tobago Emergency Management Agency. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Ma’am, same line Item 01, Vehicles. No Estimates for 2017/2018 but in 2019, 1.2 million. How many vehicles do you intend to purchase?

Hon. Imbert: Three.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 01, Information Systems Department; Item 011, Planning; Item 012, Land Management. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 005: Non-Profit Institutions. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am curious as to what is this Item 03, Representation Office, and certainly, Item 04, this organization, Partnership for Political and Economic. One has an allocation of 250,000, the first one, 03, Representation Office, and the other, Partnership for Political and Economic has an allocation of 300,000. I would like to get some explanation, please.

Hon. Imbert: 03 and 04 deal with consultations with respect to the Tobago House of Assembly legislation.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Just to clarify, 04, is it truly Partnership for Political and Economic Total or Partnership for Political and Economic something? There seems to be some typo or something there. And my question really relates to the Contribution to Non-Profit Organizations. There was an Actual of 470,000—471,000 more or less, 2017 and this is going to 800,000 for the 2019 period. Would the Minister care to indicate why this increase and the beneficiaries
for 2018?

**Hon. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, I cannot answer multiple questions, you know. I would prefer them one at a time.

**Madam Chairman:** One minute. Member for Oropouche East, ask your question, please.

**Dr. Moonilal:** The first is, 04, is this a typographical error?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Or is that the name of the thing?

**Hon. Imbert:** It is a typo. The word “Transformation” is missing.

**Dr. Moonilal:** The word “Transformation”? 

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Madam Chairman, just for the record, this was also the case last year and it was not corrected. The Contribution to Non-Profit, why the Estimate of 800 when you had an Actual of 470 and what new organizations you intend to help with this?

**Hon. Imbert:** The Revised Estimate for 2018 is 800, exactly the same.

**Dr. Moonilal:** But we do not have an Actual for 2018 yet so we do not know.

**Hon. Imbert:** You would not get an Actual in this book. You know that. You will get the Actual in next year’s book.

**Dr. Moonilal:** When we cannot ask about this year.

**Hon. Imbert:** It is always two years in arrears. You know that.

**Dr. Moonilal:** “When we cyar ask about this year.”

**Hon. Imbert:** Do not be ridiculous.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 007, Households; Items 009, Other Transfers. Member for Chaguanas East.
Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. May I get some explanation with respect to line Item 03, Establishment of this Public Service Academy? What is it? Who is running it? What is it going to be doing? How many members of staff? Just some explanation as a new Item.

Hon. Imbert: It is similar to the Public Service Academy in Trinidad.

Mr. Karim: Could you give us some information with respect to what it—you say it is similar. How many persons is this going to be targeting?

Hon. Imbert: I will provide the numbers for you but the Public Service Academy in Trinidad trains public officers, the public service academy in Tobago will train public officers.

Mr. Karim: Okay, so some details will be appreciated.

Hon. Imbert: You will get the numbers. “What else yuh want to know?”

Madam Chairman: Member for Diego Martin North/East, we have a long day to go. Let us just try and see how we control how we do it. Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoe: The question was answered.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North. Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: My colleague asked the question, Member for Chaguanas East, and there was no answer or response from the hon. Minister of Finance and it is unacceptable that he refuses to answer what are pertinent questions. [Desk thumping] An expenditure of $5 million—a new Item—and he fails to tell the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East, I do not think that I recall it the way you do. I believe the hon. Minister gave an answer, not fully, but had undertook to provide further details.

Division 03 - Finance and Economy. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure;
Item 001, General Administration. We are at page 22. Item 002, Finance and Accounting; Item 003, Customs. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 03: Overtime - Monthly Paid Officers. There is a purported increase by 600,000 for 2019 to 5.1 million. Can I get some explanation, please? Do we intend to hire or engage in more overtime, additional hours since we are cutting down on cost, engaging in overtime?

**Hon. Imbert:** The 2017 Actual was 5.7 million. The 2019 Estimate is 5.1 million. So there is no significant difference.

**Ms. Ramdial:** But in 2018, it was 4.5.

**Hon. Imbert:** This is the Revised Estimate.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, so there is an increase—

**Hon. Imbert:** The Actual may turn out to be a little different.

**Ms. Ramdial:** By 600,000 which I think is substantial for overtime since you have been complaining about additional moneys expended in overtime.

**Hon. Imbert:** The 2018 Actual which will be in next year’s Estimates may be different. This is a revised estimate. There are three types of Estimates.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Madam Chair, can I get an undertaking as to how many officers or personnel under this Vote will be eligible for this increase of $600,000 in overtime since we are making do with less, according to the Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Imbert:** Okay, I will see if I can get an estimate of the number of Customs officers who are stationed in Tobago who would attract overtime and I am also advised that the $600,000 increase over the original estimate of 2018 includes payment of arrears for overtime not paid in 2018 that will be paid in 2019.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you. A little more acceptable.
2.30 p.m.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 004, Inland Revenue. I think that you could take that as a compliment, Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Imbert:** Madam Chairman, I would just like to get on with the job.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 013, Co-operatives; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On your ruling, just to remind for an explanation on line Item 16, Contract Employment, which shows an increase by $800,000 for fiscal year 2019. Just a reminder.

**Hon. Imbert:** The information will be provided.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

[M. FORDE in the Chair]

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 36, Extraordinary Expenses. You had no allocations at all for ’17 and ’18, but $50,000 is allocated here, a new Sub-Item. What is an extraordinary and anticipated in 2019 for $50,000?

**Hon. Imbert:** I will get clarification on that. Extraordinary Expenses are unforeseen expenses. An example would be to assist persons with funeral grants, and so on.

**Mr. Lee:** General grants?

**Hon. Imbert:** Funeral grants.

**Mr. Chairman:** Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you, Chair. Item 16, and I know the Minister agreed to provide information on the numbers and the names. I am asking, why the increase? Why this time, the increase from 2.2 million to 3 million? Why? I will also ask a
philosophical question: Why the extent of contract officers, as opposed to permanent employees?

**Hon. Imbert:** That is typical throughout the public service. There are establishment positions which have to be filled by the Service Commission. When they are not filled, work must be done. So the various agencies employ people on contract.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay. And why in this instance?

**Hon. Imbert:** Pardon?

**Mr. Charles:** Why this increase in this instance?

**Hon. Imbert:** Again, if you look at 2017 actual, it was about 2.8 million. So it is not a significant difference. If you look at the 2017 actual, it is 2.8/2.78. So it is not a significant difference.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 002, Finance and Accounting, page 24. I recognize Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Line Item 37, Janitorial Services, an increase by a million, to 2 million in 2019. And line Item 43.

**Mr. Chairman:** Let us take it one at a time.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, sure.

**Mr. Chairman:** Janitorial Services, 37.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes. Can I get an explanation with respect to the increase?

**Hon. Imbert:** Again, if you look at the 2017 actual, it was 2 million. And as I indicated, they would be occupying new premises. So there would be a need for additional expenditure.

**Ms. Ramdial:** So that department of finance and accounting is moving to new premises, Minister, am I to understand that, which would warrant this increase?
Hon. Imbert: I am told that there is no anticipation they would occupy new premises. However, if you look at the 2017 actual, it is 2,002,000.

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, I know, but 2018, it went back down to a million.

Hon. Imbert: No, it is a revised estimate. It is not an actual.

Ms. Ramdial: And now we are seeing an increase. Right. So I am just asking for some explanation. Giving me the 2017 estimates does not explain to me why there is an increase.

Hon. Imbert: The 2017 is not an estimate. It is an actual.

Ms. Ramdial: He is talking 2017.

Hon. Imbert: It is an actual. It is not an estimate.

Ms. Ramdial: Minister, it is Janitorial Services that has increased by a million. Is it that the price of the service by this particular company has increased? An explanation please?

Hon. Imbert: Chairman, I would like to make an overall explanation with respect to these estimates that would apply to all similar questions in the future. I am hoping that when I make this explanation this will avoid similar questions in the future.

If you look at the tables in the book, there are four columns. The 2017 Actual; that is not an estimate. The budget division has determined, through auditing and closing of accounts that that is what was actually spent.

In 2018, there was an original estimate, but it was merely an estimate. In 2018, when you come to the time of the budget, these documents are prepared about two weeks before the budget debate. So these documents would have been prepared in the middle of September. In the middle of September, the public servants would only have an estimate of what the 2018 outturn will be.
At the end of the fiscal year, and going into next year, they would have the 2018 actual. So the 2018 actual could be and is often different from the 2018 revised estimate. So, your best guide, in terms of determining whether there has really been an increase or not, is the 2017 actual.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, and just to clarify, Mr. Chair. I know the Minister said it, but just to clarify then you are saying that, as you said earlier, you made a mistake with respect to finance and accounting not moving to new premises—right?—that that is not so.

**Hon. Imbert:** I am advised that finance and accounting will not be occupying any new premises.

**Ms. Ramdial:** All right, great. Yeah, thanks.

**Mr. Chairman:** The next one was Security Services.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** What is the information you require?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Line Item 43, Security Services, again an increase by 680,000. So the revised estimate is 2.3 million for 2019, which is a little bit over the 2017 Actual figure.

**Hon. Imbert:** What page?

**Mr. Chairman:** We are on page 24, line Item 43, Security Services.

**Ms. Ramdial:** So it surpasses the 2017 actual figure. So can I get an explanation for that please?

**Hon. Imbert:** The difference between the 2017 actual and the 2019 estimates, if I do a quick calculation.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Eighty thousand, about 80,000.

**Hon. Imbert:** Eighty thousand, out of 2.3 million, about 3 per cent. So it is not a
significant difference.

Ms. Ramdial: It is taxpayers' dollars, so I still ask for a little bit of clarification what would warrant that increase by 80,000—

Hon. Imbert: It is a rounded-off figure.

Ms. Ramdial:—since we are making do with less.

Hon. Imbert: I have answered, Mr. Chairman. It is a rounded-off figure. The actual—again, let me make another general statement. When you look at the four columns, the actuals give you specifics down to the last dollar. For example, under 02, Goods and Services, Customs, $1,859,105. But when you go to the estimates, they are rounded off to the nearest thousand, to the nearest five thousand, to the nearest 10,000, to the nearest 100,000. It is an estimate. So if the Actual was $2,226,037 in 2017, it is not unreasonable to have an estimate of $2,300,000 in 2019. It is two years afterwards and it is a rounding-up, from 2.26 million to 2.3. There is nothing strange about this. There is nothing untoward about this. There is nothing mysterious about this. This has always been the case, with respect to the preparation and publication of estimates. They always round up estimates. You are not going to find an estimate that is accurate to the last dollar, or even the last $5 or the last $100. It will always be in the thousands or the hundred thousands or the five hundred thousands.

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, just for clarity from Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Minister of Finance, just some clarification. When we look at the 2018 revised estimates, I know this is not the actual for 2018, but it is the best information we have on expenditure in 2018 at this point in time. And, therefore, we have to make reference to it. Correct or not?

Hon. Imbert: Is that a question?
Mr. Charles: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: There is no problem in looking at the estimates for 2018, but your best guide is the actual for 2017.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. PM, Prime Minister.

Dr. Rowley: Mr. Chairman, I beg your indulgence to make a comment as Head of this Government. I get the impression that my colleagues have a problem with increased allocations for Tobago. I simply want to say to all of them, this Government has no problem in defending any increased allocations for Tobago because it is being done in the proper budgeting. [Desk thumping]

Dr. Gopeesingh: If I may speak, Mr. Chair. In response to the Prime Minister—[Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: One second, one second.

Dr. Gopeesingh: There is no—[Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: One second.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Well, we have to respond to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Chairman: No, well Couva North—[Crosstalk]

Dr. Gopeesingh: What line Item he went on? So we have to choose a line Item. We just want to respond to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Chairman: And I am saying Couva North had her hand up first.

Dr. Rowley: You want to adjourn for a debate?

Dr. Gopeesingh: [Crosstalk] And it is reprehensible for the Prime Minister to get—reprehensible.

Mr. Padarath: Tell me about 114 West Hill. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Members! Members!

Mr. Padarath: Tell us about 114 West Hill and the school fees "yuh" paying.
Mr. Chairman: Princes Town! Princes Town! Princes Town! Please! Members, as I have said, I am not going to enter into any back and forth crosstalk with you all. I am just going to make my decision. I said it earlier. I am just going to make my decision, and that is clear.

Dr. Gopeesingh: May I? May I?

Mr. Chairman: One second. I am going to recognize Couva North. And just to come forward, the Prime Minister just wanted to highlight/ follow up, based on what the Minister of Finance said and I gave him the opportunity. I am recognizing Couva North. Proceed.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also want to highlight, like the Prime Minister, that his statement is not true. We are here questioning the funding for the Tobago House of Assembly Administration. These moneys are not redounding to the people on the ground. This is about general, the recurrent expenditure. [Crosstalk] Chair, listen to me please, the recurrent—we are dealing with the recurrent expenditure to the THA. These are for the efficient running of the THA administration.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Ms. Ramdial: This is recurrent expenditure. All right?

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Couva North. Thank you, Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: And we will proceed with the business. Item 003, Customs, page 24 and page 25. [Crosstalk]

Ms. Ramdial: Get real.

Mr. Chairman: Members. Members.

Hon. Imbert: I am here to answer questions and do my work.
Mr. Chairman: Hold on. Leader of the House and Chief Whip, the next time, the very next time, on both sides on the House, I have to intervene for any format of improper decorum, I am going to act. Chief Whip, Leader of the House, right? So if you missed out on the opportunity to ask your questions, or you missed out on the opportunity to answer the question, or to clarify any question, do not blame the Chair. Let us proceed.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman: No. Member, I am not—Member, sorry “I am not tolerating no more. Please. Item 003, Customs, page 24 and 25; Item 004, Inland Revenue page 25; Item 008, Budget Division, page 25; Item 011, Business Development Unit, page 26. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. For 011, Business Development Unit, I see decreases for every Head. Can I get some explanation with respect to this?

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: If the Member looks closely at page 26, it is not a decrease per se. It has been moved. There is no estimate for 2019, whatsoever, under that Item.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, thank you.

Hon. Imbert: You are welcome.

Mr. Chairman: Item 012, Consumer Affairs, page 26; Item 013, Co-operatives, page 27. Item—oh sorry, Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 28, Other Contracted Services. There were no estimates for previous 2017/2018. I am seeing $150,000 for recurrent expenditure, Other Contracted Services. Can I get some clarification, please?

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, you are going to provide that along with the other information on contracted services?
Hon. Imbert: As I have said before.


Mr. G. Singh: Chair, line Item 27, I see that Official, this is Financial Literacy Secretariat and there is a new allocation for overseas travel that is envisaged in 2019. There were no allocations for 2017/18, and now there is a new allocation. Could the hon. Minister explain as to what is this allocation for?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 27, Official Overseas Travel.

Hon. Imbert: I was going to make a joke and say travel to Trinidad.

Mr. Singh: I too thought so.

Hon. Imbert: I thought so. But the fact is that each department would need, from time to time, to go to seminars, workshops, conferences, and so on, to upgrade their skills. And what they have done, previously most if not all of the allocation for overseas travel was within the administration department. They have now segregated it and put in into the various units. So this is in anticipation of the personnel in the Financial Literary Secretariat having to go to a workshop or a seminar outside of the jurisdiction.

Mr. Singh: Just for my edification, Chairman, through you Chair, in the Trinidad situation, all overseas travel is subject to the Minister of Finance’s oversight. Is there a similar exercise at the THA?

Hon. Imbert: That is the Cabinet oversight, actually.

Mr. Singh: Well, okay, Cabinet oversight.

Hon. Imbert: In a similar way, in Tobago, the Executive Council approves overseas travel, as the Cabinet does in Trinidad.

Mr. Chairman: Item 016, Youth Energised for Success, page 28. Member for
Appropriation (Financial Year – 2019) Bill, 2018
Standing Finance Committee (cont’d)

Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you Chair. Line Item 27. Again, it is a new Sub-Item for official overseas travel, $100,000—Youth Energised for Success. Can I also get some explanation with respect to that unit? What are the functions of that unit, also?

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 27.

Hon. Imbert: It is to energize young people for success.

Hon. Member: Like Red Bull.

Ms. Ramdial: Do not be facetious, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: You are accusing me of being facetious?

Ms. Ramdial: Can I get some clarification, please? You just repeated what I said in a different way.

Hon. Imbert: It is a programme that has been there for years. It was there under the—in your time.

Ms. Ramdial: Can you just explain what it is? Can you explain? Tell us what they do? How have they improved the lives of the young people in Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, has the Member finished the question?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Okay. You are not the Chairman, but I will just take your word for it.

Mr. Chairman: Member, again, line Item 27, Official Overseas Travel. We have an increase of $100,000. Could we just get a clarity on—

Hon. Imbert: The Youth Energised for Success Programme is designed to develop young Tobagonians, the potential of young Tobagonians, for the future development and diversification of the island's economy. In pursuit of that noble
objective, some overseas travel would be required.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 0—[Interrupt] Okay, Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, on the same line Item, how is the person identified and selected for such travel?

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Imbert:** I am told that it is primarily designed to develop young staff members of the Assembly, but other persons can apply.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Okay. If the hon. Minister can identify in line Item 28 and 27 how many persons are currently employed in that—

**Hon. Imbert:** That information would be provided.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** That would be provided. Item 017, Emergency Social and Medical Assistance Unit, page 28; Item 018 Communication Unit, pages 28 and 29; Item 019, Economic Management and Research Unit, page 29; Item 020, Investment and Public/Private Partnership Unit, page 29. I recognize the Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you Chair. Line Item 16, again, a reminder to the Minister for Contract Employment. I am seeing a figure for $1 million here, that was not estimated for 2017 nor 2018, and also line Item 28, Other Contracted Services, 2 million. Can I get some clarification as to the type of contract services?

**Hon. Imbert:** Well this, if you look at it carefully this is a—

**Ms. Ramdial:** It is a new Item, yes. Sorry about that, yes.

**Hon. Imbert:** Finished?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.

**Hon. Imbert:** If you look at it carefully, this is their Public/Private Partnership
Unit, and they are trying to get it off the ground. So that, there would be a requirement in the coming year to have staff on board. And that is why there is an allocation for contract employment and other contracted services. The Tobago House of Assembly is trying to develop this area, in terms of the island's operations, public/private partnerships. So it is a growth area.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Chairman. The questions were raised and the Minister provided a bit of insight.

**Mr. Chairman:** Right. Thank you. Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you. I just wanted to get a little more clarification on what is the objective hoped to be achieved by the THA in this line Item.

**Mr. Chairman:** Which line Item? Again, let us be specific.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** The 020.

**Mr. Chairman:** Pardon.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** The 020, investment. It is a new Item, Investment and Public/Private Partnership Unit. What is it?

**Hon. Imbert:** What is the objective? You want to know what is the objective? It is to have a partnership between the public sector and the private sector, projects.

**Mr. Chairman:** Come on. Members, let us keep it—

**Hon. Imbert:** It is a partnership between the public sector and the private sector. It is standard. It has existed for years. It was there when you were in Government. It is simply to develop programmes and projects. The Government may put in equity, may put in land. The private sector may come with finance, may come with expertise, public/private partnership. "What else yuh want meh tuh tell yuh?"
Mr. Charles: Do we have any targets set to justify the expenditure? Like they identified six public and private partnerships in these.

Hon. Imbert: I will find out. I will find out and provide the information.

Mr. Chairman: That information would be provided. Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: Yes, just a quick question, Minister. When you establish a new unit like this, do you begin with contract officers, because you do not have the complement of staff within the House of Assembly? Do you start with contract officers?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Item 021, Strategic Sector Support Unit, page 30. I recognize the Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This as well is another new Item. Might we be able to get some details as to what this Sector Support Unit is, or sectors, if that is the case, with just over $3 million in allocation?

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Imbert: To facilitate the growth and expansion of the Tobago private sector with a primary focus on trade and investment.

Mr. Karim: Entirely the private sector.

Hon. Imbert: To facilitate the growth and development of the Tobago private sector, with a primary focus on trade and investment.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head—Naparima, you have a question or you—

Mr. Charles: Just a follow-up question, in line with my colleague from Chaguanas East. Are there any targets for growth in that sector, like 10 per cent growth in the private sector in specific areas, or is it open ended?

Hon. Imbert: I will find out and provide you with the information.
Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 30; Item 001, General Administration, page 30; Item 002, Finance and Accounting, page 30; Item 003, Customs, page 30. I recognize Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you very much, Chair. 01, Vehicles. Again, I am seeing an estimate for $440,000. Can you tell me how many vehicles you intend to purchase?

Hon. Imbert: Two.

Ms. Ramdial: Two. Okay. And we continue counting.


Dr. Gopeesingh: Could the Minister indicate the reason for the discontinuation of this Fiscal Policy Research Unit, as evidenced by no Vote for it?

Hon. Imbert: It will reappear elsewhere.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Okay. So another line Item will take care of it.

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Item 008, Budget Division, page 31. Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Can the Minister indicate if the same will apply for 008, if it will apply somewhere else as there is no allocation?

Mr. Chairman: Business Development Unit? Budget Division?

Hon. Imbert: I am terribly sorry. You have misread your documents.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Sorry.

Hon. Imbert: There is an allocation.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, Minister of Finance. Let us proceed. Item 011, Business Development Unit, page 31.

Hon. Imbert: Do you want me to point out that allocation?

Mr. Chairman: Item 012, Consumer Affairs, page 31; Item 013, Co-operatives,
Dr. Gopeesingh: Could the Minister or someone give us some understanding of what that is about, an Emergency Medical and Social Assistance Unit? What does that provide?

Hon. Imbert: It is similar to the medical aid provision in the Ministry of Health and the cash support programme in the Ministry of Social Development.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 018, Communication Unit, page 32; Item 019, Economic Management and Research Unit, page 33; Item 020 Investment and Public/Private Partnership Unit, page 33; Item 021, Strategic Sector Support Unit, page 33; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 33; Item 005, Non-profit Institution, page 33. I recognize Couva North and then we go to Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 01, Contribution to Non-Profit Organisations. I am seeing a decrease of a million dollars. Minister, can you explain why we have a decrease and you have not estimated, as you did in 2018, for 2 million? Is it that we have less non-profit organizations to distribute moneys to?

3.00 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: The Tobago House of Assembly has allocated a lower figure for that Item for this year.
Ms. Ramdial: Is it because we have less non-profit organizations? Less resources? Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007, Households, page 33.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Just for clarification. There is a line Item 03, under there, Payment of Superannuation Benefits to former, and there is nothing.

Hon. Imbert: Assemblymen.

Dr. Gopeesingh: What is it?

Hon. Imbert: Assemblymen.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Well, you now want to put that in; it is not there. I cannot read it.

Hon. Imbert: That is what is missing.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. But, you do not have to be so rude as usual. [Laughter]

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I object. I object! I was asked a question, I answered it in sweet and milk, honey-like tones. And the Member says I am rude? I object, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Am I allowed to ask you to retract it?

Hon. Imbert: Yes, retract that. [Laughter] I answered in honey-like tones, honey-like tones—

Dr. Gopeesingh: As usual, I—

Hon. Imbert: [Laughter]—tones, and you tell me I rude. Well, I never!

Mr. Chairman: We needed that. We needed that.

Hon. Imbert: You playing for the gallery.

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, I think we needed it, let us move on. Item 007, Households, page 33; Item 009, Other Transfers, page 34.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, might we be able to get some explanation as to Item 28, the Intelligent Island. What is this
about? Is it being modelled after Singapore? [Laughter]

**Hon. Imbert:** Mr. Chairman, when the Members are finished I will answer.

**Mr. Chairman:** You go ahead. You have my clearance, go ahead.

**Hon. Imbert:** Thank you, Sir. But they are still getting on there. This is an emerging area in terms—[Laughter] Mr. Chairman, what is the problem “they find I talking too slow? What happen?”

This is an emerging area. Many countries, many cities, many governments, all over the world are moving towards intelligent buildings, intelligent towns, in terms of information and communication technology and in terms of technology proper.

What this is is an allocation to bring Tobago into the digital age, into the use of smart technology, into the use of intelligent buildings and intelligent equipment and building management systems and Wi-Fi and other technology of the digital age.

**Mr. Karim:** Is this for the entire island? “Wi-Fiing” the entire island.

**Hon. Imbert:** No, it is not “Wi-Fiing” the entire land. It is a movement towards the use of intelligent technology in the island of Tobago. That would include by way of example, some of the items I have mentioned.

Obviously in one year you cannot create Wi-Fi zones throughout the entire island of Tobago. But that would be one of the objectives in the future.

**Mr. Karim:** Is there a model after which you are looking at? It is Singapore?

**Hon. Imbert:** It is home grown.

**Mr. Karim:** Was a study done? Any feasibility study done in this regard?

**Hon. Imbert:** I am advised that the Division of the Finance and Economy has been in consultation with Huawei Technologies, to provide support for their recently
established innovation centre which will provide a training programme to yield at least 500 skilled jobs three years from now in fields such as network engineers and associates. And, there is much more but I do not think I should detain the House with all of the plans of the Tobago House of Assembly to make Tobago an intelligent island and to improve its technological architecture. That might take two hours.

**Mr. Karim:** Where is this, Mr. Chairman? Where is this centre expected to be located?

**Hon. Imbert:** In the Cove Industrial Estate.

**Mr. Chairman:** Division 04—

**Dr. Tewarie:** I would not detain the Minister. I just wanted to—what is the establishment of an escrow account for Studley Park for? 16.

**Hon. Imbert:** Which line Item is this?

**Mr. Chairman:** 16, page 34.

**Hon. Imbert:** It is just a financing facility, an arrangement they use to purchase equipment and supplies for the quarry. They established an escrow account and they put money into it. And then it is drawn down—

**Dr. Tewarie:** As required.

**Hon. Imbert:**—as the purchases are completed.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Items 17, 18 and 22. There are no estimates for these companies. Is it that there is no need for funding from the THA? They have become self-sustainable?

**Hon. Imbert:** They will reappear elsewhere.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, thank you.

**Mr. Charles:** 009, 27, Venture Capital, 1.5million actual 2017—
Mr. Chairman: What page are you on?

Mr. Charles: Page 34, 27, Venture Capital.

Mr. Chairman: Line 27.

Mr. Charles: Yes, 1.5million actual and 1.5million estimated in 2019. So there is no increase in the estimation. Venture Capital is supposed to be used to stimulate businesses, help those in need and accelerate the growth of private sector development. Could the Minister tell us what is proposed in this allocation, in terms of the businesses that have been impacted by this allocation?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided in due course. What the Tobago House of Assembly has told me is that all of these answers will be provided next week. And just by way of example, I have just received some emails from my own Ministry, the Ministry of Finance providing some of the answers that we have given an undertaking.

Mr. Charles: Because it is a good project.

Mr. Chairman: Division 04, Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries; Sub-Head, 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 35. Item 001, General Administration, Page 35; Item 002, Agriculture, page 35.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 30, Allowance for Daily-rated Workers. It is a new Sub-Item and it is estimated for $400,000 in 2019. Could you care to clarify a little bit? How many daily-rated workers you intend to employ?

Hon. Imbert: We will provide that information for you. I am told that there is no plan to employ any new daily-rate workers. So this is just an Item to deal with an allowance. So, I will get the information for you for clarity.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, there is a line Item here 02, Wages and COLA. for 32million under Agriculture. So, paying wages for—how many citizens would be
contributing to this agricultural sector for the value of $32 million in wages
Minister?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And what is the nature of the agriculture.

Hon. Imbert: Well I had originally given you information on contract employees. But I can give you daily-rated now. In the area of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries, there are 326 daily-rated workers.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Daily-rated.

Hon. Imbert: That is what it says.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 29, Overtime for Daily-Rated Workers, a huge sum of 1.8million. Minister you care to clarify? Should we not be cutting down on overtime if we are trying to save? Make do with less?

Hon. Imbert: Agriculture is an activity that requires working at times which are outside of normal working hours, such as on farms and other places where you have to get up early. There will always be a requirement for overtime in an agricultural activity.

Ms. Ramdial: Do you have a number of how many workers who subscribe to this 1.8 million overtime?

Hon. Imbert: There are 326 workers over all. Some may get some a lot of overtime and some may get little.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 003, Marketing, page 35; Item 004, National Resources and Forestry, page 36; Item 005, Marine Resources and Fisheries, page 36. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 36; Item 001, General Administration, pages 36 and

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37. Item 002, Agriculture, pages 37 and 38.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. 09, Rent/Lease Vehicles – Equipment for $200,000. Can I get some clarification with respect to this? It is listed as a new Sub-Item. Is it for vehicles alone or vehicles and equipment, can you—

**Hon. Imbert:** What page is that?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Page 37, line Item 09, Rent/Lease Vehicles - Equipment.

**Mr. Chairman:** Page 37.

**Hon. Imbert:** This is standard rental arrangements for vehicles when they are required.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you. On the next page, page 38 which I think is the same line Item.

**Mr. Chairman:** We are on Agriculture, Item 02. Proceed.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Line Item 43—

**Mr. Chairman:** Security Services?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Yes. Can the hon. Minister indicate, what is the reason for such a substantial increase? Thank you.

**Hon. Imbert:** The actual is in another place because this was taken from another Head and put here. But, the actual in 2017, I am told, is over $3.7 million so it is not a significant difference.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** But according to the line Item it shows it is an increase that probably the Minister can identify where it was transferred from, please?

**Hon. Imbert:** This came from the Division of Agriculture which is now in Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries. But the 2017 actual is about $3.7 million. It is not a substantial increase.

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Mr. Chairman: Item—Member for Couva North, you have a question here also? Okay. Item 003, Marketing, page 38.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, line Item 16. Just to remind the Minister to provide the details with respect to Contract Employment which shows an increase by $400,000 for 3 million for 2019.

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Assured, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Imbert: Yes. And we are happy to give Tobago an increase.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. And if the hon. Minister can identify in line Item 23 what exactly is being marketed, I will appreciate it very much. Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: Farmers and agricultural produce.

Mr. Chairman: Item 004, Natural Resources and Forestry, page 39. Item 005, Marine Resources and Fisheries, pages 39 and 40.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, it is to remind the Minister. Line Item 16, Contract Employment, another increase by $800,000 for 2.8 million in 2019.

Hon. Imbert: 2017 was 2.9.

Ms. Ramdial: I am not seeing that here.

Hon. Imbert: It is in another page. Page 77.

Ms. Ramdial: I am sure it is.

Hon. Imbert: It is.

Ms. Ramdial: I am sure it is.

Hon. Imbert: It is. We are always happy to increase Tobago.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head—the Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line Item 09. I see it is a new Item. What exactly will be rented or leased?
Hon. Imbert: Vehicles and equipment.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I know that is the line Item.

Hon. Imbert: You asked me. I answered you.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I wanted to you to be very specific.

Hon. Imbert: You want to know what type of vehicles?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: Well, since it is a rental it is very difficult to predict. It is what is available and it is what is required. It is impossible to tell you what type of vehicle and for how long. That will—as the need arises.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I needed to know if it is a vehicle or is it a type of equipment?

Hon. Imbert: When the need arises to rent a vehicle that will be because the owner’s own equipment would have broken down. So it could be a pickup truck, it could be a panel van, it could be SUV, it could be anything. It is just a provision for rental of vehicles as and when the need arises. So it is very difficult to give you specifics.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I just wanted to find out if it might have been a new boat or something like that.

Hon. Imbert: No, no. It is standard.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 43, Security Services. I am seeing an increase by 300,000 for the 2019 estimates to a $1 million. Can I get an explanation for that increase?

Hon. Imbert: You are on page 39?

Ms. Ramdial: 40, it has gone forward.

Hon. Imbert: You are on page 40?
Ms. Ramdial: Yes, it continues on page 40.


Ms. Ramdial: Yes, it continues.

Mr. Chairman: Page 40, Item 43, Security Services. That is the one you for on? Right.

Ms. Ramdial: Item 43, Security Services. There is an increase by 300,000 for security services. Can you explain?

Hon. Imbert: 2017 Actual was 1.4.

Ms. Ramdial: I do not see that here.

Hon. Imbert: It is on page 77.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. So, what does that mean? 2017?

Hon. Imbert: What it means is that this is a reasonable allocation because if the 2017 allocation was 1.4—

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, thank you.

Hon. Imbert:—then 1 million is adequate or maybe less than adequate for 2019. But it is certainly not too much. That is what it means.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 40; Item 001, General Administration, page 40; Item 002, Agriculture, page 40.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles. Again, an increase on estimate for 2019 for $3 million. How many vehicles are going to be purchased for this Department of Agriculture? Considering there were no Revised Estimates for 2018.

Hon. Imbert: The information will be provided. But it is not correct to say there are no Revised Estimates. You have to go to page 77 and so on and look at the
former division, the Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment. And when you there, you will see the 2017 Actual. So, it is not correct to say that there is no 2017 to compare it with.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, Minister, as you have the information could you share with me what was the 2017 and the 2018 estimate?

Hon. Imbert: Just give me one second. So that is Minor Equipment Purchases, 002 Agriculture. Just take a look. We will provide the information.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 003, Marketing, page 41.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Mr. Chair, again 01, Vehicles a 2019 estimate for $1 million. Some clarification as to how many vehicles for Marketing?

Hon. Imbert: Three.

Ms. Ramdial: Three?

Hon. Imbert: Three.

Mr. Chairman: Item 004, Natural Resources and Forestry, page 41.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Again, 01, Vehicles, an estimate of 4.573 million. Minister, how many vehicles you intend to buy for this department?

Hon. Imbert: The information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 41. Item 005—[ Interruption ]

Ms. Ramdial: No, you skipped out Marine Resources and Fisheries. Chair, 005.

Mr. Chairman: My apologies, Item 005, Marine Resources and Fisheries, page 41.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Again, line Item 01, Vehicles; an estimated 500,000.
How many vehicles you intend to purchase for Marine Resources and Fisheries?

**Hon. Imbert:** The information will be provided.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Now, we move to Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 41; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions, page 41; Item 007, Households, page 41; Item 008, Subsidies, page 42. Who would like to go first?

**Dr. Moonilal:** Chairman, the both subsidies. I just wanted to get an idea of what is really is that? Is that related to supporting the boats that were purchased or fixing the infrastructure for the boats or what really is that? And secondly, I see a new line Item 07, Tobago Agricultural Society, but there is also a line Item 05, Tobago Agricultural Society with allocation. So I am wondering, what is the fundamental difference between that? There must be a reason that it is different. But they have the same headings so maybe in the future they may look to change—it is not the same heading? One is apicultural and this is a new Item, so if they could just explain the need to do that.

And, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that usually when Items move from one place to another there is a notification. But in this case what has happened is the Minister keep saying that it is in another place and they have no notification in the explanation. I am sure it is not deliberate to confuse the issue but in the future it would be nice when these things move to just have a notification in the explanation column.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister of Finance, you care to shed any light there?

**Hon. Imbert:** I would like to answer the questions one by one. The Member asked about seven. Could you start with question one, please?

**Dr. Moonilal:** What is the new line Item 07? What is this about?
Hon. Imbert: It is bee-keeping. That is what apiculture is; bee-keeping.

Dr. Moonilal: The boat subsidy, what it is about? The boat subsidy?

Hon. Imbert: That is a subsidy that is there to assist persons when they buy boats—fishermen. They get a reimbursement form the Government.

Dr. Moonilal: And the third issue is: Why was there no explanation for all the movements between one sub-heading and another as is the custom in all other areas?

Hon. Imbert: I will get an explanation for that.

Dr. Moonilal: And circulate it in due course.

Hon. Imbert: I did not say that. I will get an explanation for that.

Dr. Moonilal: And keep it to yourself.

Hon. Imbert: I will let you know.

Dr. Moonilal: I want to know.

Dr. Tewarie: A couple of questions. The first one—

Mr. Chairman: One at a time, just in case.

Dr. Tewarie: The Agriculture Incentive Programme, Minister. Is this the same national programme or is this separate and distinguish to the THA?

Hon. Imbert: This is a Tobagonian programme.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay, so it is separate? It is under the Tobago House of Assembly?

Hon. Imbert: It is for Tobago. Everything in this part is for Tobago.

Dr. Tewarie: I am just seeking clarification.

Hon. Imbert: I am simply providing clarification.

Dr. Tewarie: Thank you, thank you very much.

Hon. Imbert: It is for Tobago.

Dr. Tewarie: And the other thing I wanted ask and is—I wanted to ask the
question knowing that in Trinidad we satisfy only a small percentage of our food needs in Trinidad as well. I wanted to ask if the Minister has any estimate or if the Tobago House of Assembly has any estimate of what percentage of Tobago’s food needs are supplied locally?

**Hon. Imbert:** Under the Agricultural Incentive Programme?

**Dr. Tewarie:** No. I mean the whole purpose of incentive is production. So—

**Hon. Imbert:** I am simply asking if you are asking that in the context of line Item 008; 04, on page 42?

**Dr. Tewarie:** Yes.

**Hon. Imbert:** What is the question?

**Dr. Tewarie:** The question is: Do you have any idea and could you help me to know—and I am casting on aspersions on Tobago because we have the same problem in Trinidad—what is the percentage of production of the local needs in Tobago? I just wanted to understand the island—

**Hon. Imbert:** What I can undertake to give you is information on the Agricultural Incentive Programme and what it is designed to do. That is what I can undertake to tell you because this is a line Item dealing with Agricultural Incentive Programme. I will endeavour to get information on what are its aims and objectives.

**Dr. Tewarie:** All right.

**Hon. Imbert:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** I just wanted to indicate that the Central Statistical Office in Tobago, one of their objectives is to actually get that kind of information. We had a meeting with them about just under a month ago to ensure that they will be capturing that kind of information. So that will be forthcoming eventually.

**Mr. Chairman:** The Member for Oropouche West, same line Item?
Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: 04, the incentive programme. This represents an increase of 200,000. How many farmers can benefit from this incentive programme?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Mr. Chairman: Item 009, Other Transfers, page 42.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 01, Tobago Cassava Products Ltd. I am seeing a decrease by $1 million. Minister, can you explain? Has this company become a little more self-sustainable?

Hon. Imbert: They are on their way.

Ms. Ramdial: They are on their way? Okay.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: 02, Fish Processing Company. I would just like the hon. Minister to tell us how many pounds of fish they process in Tobago in this fish processing company?

Hon. Imbert: I would love to be able to tell you that, but I do not have that on my fingertips. I will get the information provided for you.

Mr. Chairman: Right. It will be provided.

Hon. Imbert: Would you like the varieties of fish as well?

Hon. Members: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Whether is Carite, King Fish, Mahi Mahi, Flying Fish; sure.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: I will appreciate that.

Hon. Imbert: I will try my best to get that information for you.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: And then 03 Tobago, Cold Storage Warehouse Facility. What is being stored at this cold storage and in what quantities?

Hon. Imbert: A variety of agriculture products both of the animal and of the plant variety.
Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: And from the plant variety what are those? Because they need to be processed.

Hon. Imbert: Agricultural products that require refrigeration.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: Cold storage?

Hon. Imbert: Cassava is an example.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Goopeesingh: Well we have that in 01, Tobago cassava production.

Hon. Imbert: This is a facility to store the cassava in a refrigerated environment after it is produced by the Tobago Cassava Products Ltd. So no one needs to—

3.30 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. This line Item is getting us hungry. Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, could you just provide, provide for us now, the list of directors of these two companies: the Tobago Cassava Product Limited and the Fish Processing Company of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: I cannot provide that for you now. I will provide it as soon as possible. If it is here, you will get it before the end of this session today.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head—my apologies. Division 05, Tourism, Culture and Transportation: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 43; Item 001, General Administration, page 43; Item 002, Tourism, page 43; Item 007, Culture, page 43; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 44; Item 001, General Administration, page 44. I recognize Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you Chair. Again, line Item 16, Contract Employment, just to remind the Minister for the undertaking to explain, why an increase for Contract Employment by $1 million.

Hon. Imbert: I did not give that undertaking. I gave an undertaking to give the
numbers and the positions.

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, thank you.

Hon. Imbert: And it is not an increase over the 2017. It is a reduction of $2 million over the 2017, and that is on this page.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 002, Tourism, pages 44 and 45; Item 006, Transport, page 45; Item 007, Culture, page 46. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 91, Tobago Heritage Festival, $20 million. Can we get an explanation please?

Hon. Imbert: Explanation for what?

Ms. Ramdial: The funding, the amount—Tobago Heritage Festival, $20 million.

Hon. Imbert: Yes, what do you want to know? What do you wish to know?

Ms. Ramdial: Minister, does this festival generate any revenue for the Tobago people after you have expended such high sums of moneys?

Hon. Imbert: If you look at the right-hand side of the page, you will see that that 20 million is broken down: CDC, Tobago Heritage Festival, Tobago Museum, Tobago Folk Festival, Tobago Music Festival and Carifesta Tobago, and these are all tourism-focused activities; both local and foreign tourism. And as far as I am aware, tourism is the greatest contributor to the GDP of Tobago and, therefore, I wholly endorse and support and believe that this expenditure is for the benefit of Tobago and Tobagonians, and we are happy to provide this $20 million.

Ms. Ramdial: Minister, in light of the decrease of tourist arrivals to Tobago over the past five years or so, are these moneys justified in terms of generating the stimulus to attract tourist arrivals? Do you not think that something needs to be done a little more?
Hon. Imbert: Perhaps we should spend some more, you might be right.

Ms. Ramdial: I am asking. I am asking.

Hon. Imbert: You may be right.

Ms. Ramdial: I am asking.

Hon. Imbert: I cannot say.

Ms. Ramdial: Minister, in addition to that, tickets are usually sold to attend these festivals—Tobago Heritage—well, Tobago Jazz is not here—Tobago Music Festival, et cetera. Usually, the ticket sales are much less than what you expend in terms of hosting these festivals. Can you tell me that these expenditures are justified, as the Minister of Finance?

Hon. Imbert: I am happy to give Tobago this $20 million for their heritage festivals. I am overjoyed to give them this $20 million. I think it is totally justified and if I could give them more, I would.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 46; Item 001, General Administration, page 46; Item 002, Tourism, page 47. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Line Item 01, Vehicles, again, Minister of Finance, an increase of 385,000. How many vehicles do you intend to purchase with these moneys?

Hon. Imbert: It is not accurate every time you look at something like this, to say it is an increase. It is an allocation of 385,000. Because in many cases, the information is contained on another page with respect to the 2017, 2018 and so on. But if you wish to know how many vehicles and the type of vehicles, that information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 006, Transport, page 47; Item 007, Culture, page 47. Couva
Ms. Ramdial: Thank you Chair. Minister, 01, Vehicles, again, an allocation of 643,000. How many vehicles do you intend to purchase?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: In fact, Mr. Chairman, let me give an undertaking, similar to Contract Employment. Wherever “Vehicles” appear we will give the information: the number of vehicles, the type of vehicles.

Ms. Ramdial: You took too long to say that.

Hon. Imbert: So I would ask the Member—you do not need to ask that question again.

Ms. Ramdial: I will remind you.

Hon. Imbert: You do not need to.

Ms. Ramdial: I will.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 47; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions, page 47; Item 007, Households, page 48; Item 009, Other Transfers, page 48. Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item 008—no, line Item 13, Rolling Three-Year Tourism Plan. Is it $40 million for a plan? Could the Minister indicate whether that $40 million is spent to develop a plan or what is it? For a tourism plan, $40 million?

[Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Member, the mike, just bring it down a lil lower and sort of speak into the mike please.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I see here, 2018, 40 million was spent.

Dr. Gopeesingh: And in 2019, another 40 million is estimated to be spent for a Rolling Three-Year Tourism Plan.

Mr. Chairman: The question?

Dr. Gopeesingh: What is the purpose of that? Why do you have to spend $40 million for a plan for tourism on an annual basis?

Hon. Imbert: That is it?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Question done now?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes. I need an answer.

Hon. Imbert: The bulk of that, this year, as has been the practice for many, many, many, many years, is to purchase airlift. Of that 40 million, 21.1 million will be paid to Virgin Atlantic to provide airlift and 16.9 million will be paid to British Airways to provide airlift. When you add those two together, you will get 38 million. So the remaining 2 million is spent assisting the certified Tour Guide Association and Caribbean Airlines gets an allocation of about 700,000, Thomas Cook and so on, is also given an allocation. It is really to provide airlift and to encourage airlines to come to Tobago.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So, through you, Mr. Chair. Is the Minister saying that you pay Virgin approximately 21 million and the other airline 16 million? You pay them that as an incentive to come to Tobago and has that achieved its required objective?

Hon. Imbert: Yes and yes.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Could you demonstrate that in terms of figures to show whether—you are paying 21 million and 16 million the other way to encourage airlines to come to Tobago. What is the benefit that has accrued from that process?
Hon. Imbert: I will see what information I can provide.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I want to see how many flights from Virgin and the other one have come to Tobago and what has been the increase over the years and if it is deteriorated or improving.

Hon. Imbert: I will see what I can do in terms of gathering the information that you have asked for.

Dr. Gopeesingh: We look forward to that.

Hon. Imbert: I am sure the airlift is reaping rewards for the island of Tobago. Other islands in the Caribbean do it. St. Lucia does it, Antigua does it. All the other islands purchase airlifts, standard practice.

Mr. Karim: Line Item 16, something is missing there for that $2 million. What is this assistance for?

Hon. Imbert: What page is that?

Mr. Chairman: Page 48, line Item 16, Assistance to Sport Tourism Organization and—

Mr. Karim: “And”—something.

Hon. Imbert: Hold on. We will come back to you on that.

Mr. Karim: And the other, line Item 15. Might we be able to get an idea as to how many properties benefited from this line Item in 2018?

Hon. Imbert: Properties?

Mr. Karim: Well, you have here Assistance to Small Properties.

Mr. Chairman: Line Item 15

Hon. Imbert: Oh, that one. All right. With respect to the one you just asked about, the complete title is Assistance to Sport Tourism and Other Organizations and that is like Arima Race Club, [Inaudible] Scarborough Harbour Project, Trinbago...
Wheelers, Tobago Mountain Bike Tours, et cetera, et cetera. With respect to small properties, I will provide the information for you.

**Mr. Karim:** Can you also say, Minister, line Item 14, who comprised this committee that is responsible for the expending of all of these fees to the various airlines? The airlift committee?

**Hon. Imbert:** We will get the information for you.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** I have Caroni Central first.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Just a couple of things. This Item 17 here, Minister, is that separate and distinct from the 91 before, that we examined, Tobago Heritage Festival?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes, and I asked you to: “Come to Tobago to go to their Blue Food Festival, their Dragon Boat Festival and their Jazz Experience—”

**Dr. Tewarie:** I have been.

**Hon. Imbert:** Come again. [Laughter]

**Dr. Tewarie:** No, no. We have a couple of other questions. The other thing is this 19, the Zip Line project, is that now completed?

**Mr. Chairman:** 19, Zip Line.

**Hon. Imbert:** Still in progress.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. How far?

**Hon. Imbert:** I will get back to you on that.

**Dr. Tewarie:** You are not sure?

**Mr. Chairman:** The information to be provided.

**Dr. Tewarie:** The final thing. On the Rolling Three-Year Tourism Plan, when we had a recent incident in which $10 million was misallocated, is it under this project? I know that people were charged for that but, still, was it under this
Hon. Imbert: I am told the figure that is being investigated is 8 and not 10, and yes, it was under that.

Dr. Tewarie: It was under this project?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay, thanks.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Minister, are you confirming with line Item 17, Tobago Tourism Festival with the expenditure of 15 million allocated for 2019, that is in addition to the 20 million for the Tobago Heritage Festival, making a total of $35 million for festivals in Tobago? Mr. Chairman, $35 million for festival in Tobago, Minister?—20 for heritage and 15 for Tobago festival.

Hon. Imbert: Which line Item are you on?

Dr. Gopeesingh: 17.

Hon. Imbert: Okay. And you want to know whether this is in addition to the Heritage Festival allocation?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: As I said, please come to Tobago for their Blue Food Festival—

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. So you are confirming that it is $35 million for festivals.

Hon. Imbert:—their Dragon Boat Festival, their Jazz Experience and other similar festivals. Please come to Tobago.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East, you have a follow-up question?

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, one last one. Line Item 20, Tobago Tourism Agency Limited, with an allocation this year of $19 million, increase from 2018. So to
Tobago Tourism Agency Limited now, is $20 million. What is the purpose of that and what do they do, Tobago Tourism Agency Limited?

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. Imbert:** I am waiting for him to finish.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yeah, 20 million expenditure, could you justify it? For what?

**Hon. Imbert:** That is it?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Yes, that is it.

**Hon. Imbert:** As you will recall, there was a company called TDC, Tourism Development Company, which was terminated and split into two. You now have a Trinidad Tourism Company and a Tobago Tourism Agency. So this is the Tobago arm of what used to be the TDC. So it is the Tobago element of the TDC. It is now split into two entities: Trinidad and Tobago. So it is the Tobago Company that develops and markets Tobago in terms of Tourism.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** And 20 million has been allocated for the Tobago arm of the—

**Hon. Imbert:** Approximately 20, Tobago Tourism Agency which is, as I said, is the Tobago arm of the former TDC.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Could you indicate, while we are on that, if not now, but to give us the information, who are the members of the board of that Tobago Tourism—?

**Hon. Imbert:** That information will be provided, if not today, as soon as possible.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Minister.

**Mr. Chairman:** Member for Oropouche East, you still have a question?

**Dr. Moonilal:** All have been asked.

**Mr. Chairman:** Couva North, you still have a question?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, Mr. Chair. Minister, in light of your exuberance to give Tobago festivals more money, why the decrease by 3 million for line Item 17?
Mr. Chairman: Tobago Tourism Festivals?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes. There is a decrease by 3 million.

Mr. Chairman: Page 48.

Ms. Ramdial: Why the decrease?

Hon. Imbert: If you look at the Actual for 2017, it was 15 million. So this is the same amount as was actually spent in 2017, and may well turn out to be the same amount that was actually spent in 2018, but we will know that next year.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: But, as I said, come to Tobago for Blue Food, come to Tobago for Jazz.

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, yes. You are very exuberant. I hope you go.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Couva North, I am moving on. Division 06, Education, Innovation and Energy: Sub-Head 01, Personal Expenditure, page 49; Item 001, General Administration, page 49; Item 002, Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education, page 49. I go with Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, might you be able to indicate the allocation for these levels—primary, secondary and vocational please? A breakdown of the quantum. I know you have a global figure here.

Hon. Imbert: You have to give me some better specificity. What exactly do you wish to know?

Mr. Karim: I just want to know how much is allocated out of this to primary, how much is allocated to secondary, how much is allocated to vocational.


Mr. Chairman: So that will be provided.
Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Mr. Chairman: Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The question was asked by my colleague.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Great. Item 002; Item 003, Library Services, page 49; Item 004, School Feeding Programme, page 49. Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I am looking for any line Item under School Feeding Programme, to see: what is the expenditure for the school feeding for the children in Tobago which we support, but I am not seeing any line Item to show the cost of that.

Mr. Chairman: I think lower down, we have the School Feeding Programme.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I see the total is 367,000. [Crosstalk] Okay, I will be guided.

Hon. Imbert: You all are asking and answering your own questions?

Dr. Gopeesingh: No, no. Well, if you tell me it is on page 57, we will wait—

Mr. Chairman: We will come to that, Member.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I am finished. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005, Sport, page 50; Item 007, Happy Haven School - Tobago Council, page 50; Item 008, Tobago School for the Deaf, Speech and Language, page 50; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 50; Item 001, General Administration, pages 50 and 51; Item 002, Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education, pages 51 and 52, and I recognize Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Hon. Minister, could we get an idea as to what—an explanation of line Item 23, Fees and line Item 28. I do not know if you were going to, like you said before, provide the information with respect to Other Contracted Services for 6.8 million.

Mr. Chairman: So, Fees—
Mr. Karim: Line Item 23, Fees.

Hon. Imbert: You will get clarity on the fees, but I just want to make a point. I did not say I would give an explanation of Other Contracted Services. I said Contract Employment.

Mr. Karim: Okay, so can I ask for one?

Hon. Member: Certainly.

Mr. Chairman: So, information will be provided for both line Items.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: I will recognize Caroni East and then I will go to Couva North.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The question that was raised, was it in relation to line Item 16, for Contract Employment of $50 million?

Mr. Chairman: No, not that one.

Dr. Gopeesingh: All right. So can I ask then to give an explanation of this Contract Employment in Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education, line Item 16, for $50 million? What does that entail? Contract to whom, for what?

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I did give an undertaking to provide details for Contract Employment.

Mr. Chairman: So, that will be provided.

Hon. Imbert: I said that. I will.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But I cannot understand contract employment in primary, secondary, when you have teachers there.

Hon. Imbert: You will get the information. There are teachers on contract. When you get it you will see what is going on. We have nothing to hide over here.

Dr. Gopeesingh: They are not under the Teaching Service?

Hon. Imbert: You will get all of the information, the number of positions, the
number of persons, et cetera.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right.

**Hon. Imbert:** It will be provided.

**Mr. Chairman:** Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** The question has been asked.

**Mr. Chairman:** The question has been asked.

**Ms. Ramdial:** But we are on page 52, line Item, Security Services—43, Security Services. I see there is an increase by 6.7 million. The Estimate for 2019 is 22 million, an increase by 6.7. Can I get some clarity?

**Hon. Imbert:** The 2017 figure is virtually identical. It was 21.97 and this is 22. So the difference is a fraction of 1 per cent.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 003, Library Services, page 52; Item 005, Sport, page 53; Item 006, Youth, pages 53 and 54.

**Hon. Imbert:** There is no allocation there, Mr. Chairman. There is no allocation, so there is nothing to ask and nothing to answer.

**Mr. Chairman:** But for the record, I still need to identify it.

**Hon. Imbert:** I understand. But there is nothing to ask and nothing to answer.

**Dr. Tewarie:** But could the Minister explain, is it that it is also in the book?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 007, Happy Haven School - Tobago Council, page 54; Item 008, Tobago School for Deaf, Speech and Language, page 55; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 55; Item 001, General Administration, page 55. Couva North.
Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, just a reminder to the Minister for line Item 01, Vehicles, an expenditure of 500,000. How many vehicles do you intend to purchase?

Mr. Chairman: Will be provided, Mr. Minister. Item 002, Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education page 55; Item 003, Library Services, page 55. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Again, a reminder to the Minister for 01, Vehicles, an estimate of 563,000. How many vehicles to be bought for this department?

Mr. Chairman: For the record, will be provided, Minister of Finance. Item 005, Sports, page 56; Item 006, Youth, page 56. Chaguanas East.

Hon. Imbert: There is nothing there. There is nothing there.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007, Tobago Council for Handicap Children Happy Haven School, page 56. I will recognize Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Mr. Chair, just again, 01, Vehicles, to remind the Minister, how many vehicles to be purchased with $467,000?

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, to be provided. Item 008, Tobago School for the Deaf, Speech and Language, page 56. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, again, line Item 01, Vehicles, for the estimate of $400,000, how many vehicles to be bought with that?

Hon. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I gave an undertaking that I will give the number of vehicles and the types. There is no need to remind me.

Ms. Ramdial: Mr. Chair, it is my right to ask. [Desk thumping]

Mr. Chairman: Okay. And, Member, again, you prefer to go that way?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Minister of Finance, if the Member decides to go that way, I have
no other choice.

**Hon. Imbert:** But I, having given the undertaking, will—

**Ms. Ramdial:** I just like to remind you. I like to remind you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Cumuto/Manzanilla, you have a question?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to find out on Item 008, with the vehicles, how many persons really are employed with the Tobago School for the Deaf?

**Mr. Chairman:** Which line Item?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Well, if we are purchasing vehicles, 01, I just wanted to find out how many members of staff are on duty so that we will be able to link how many vehicles are being purchased for the number of staff that are present—

**Hon. Imbert:** That is a Personnel Expenditure question that would have been under another Item. This is only Goods and Services, Vehicles.

**Mr. Chairman:** Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 56; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions, page 56; Item 006, Educational Institutions, page 57. Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Hon. Minister, is it possible to get a breakdown of these trade centres that consumed $12.6 million?

**Mr. Chairman:** Name the line Item, Sir.

**Mr. Karim:** Line Item, 03, Trade Centres, and their locations, the programmes and how many trainees do they have? You could supply it in writing.

**Mr. Chairman:** That will be provided, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Mr. Karim:** Also, on line Item 11, for $800,000 consumed in 2018, how many persons would have availed themselves of this Adult Education Extension
Services? And my final line Item in that area there, is line Item 21. I am trying to understand, if I can get an explanation as to what that is about.

Mr. Chairman: That will be provided?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

[Mrs. Annisette-George in the Chair]

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister: Under 009, Other Transfers, just for my benefit, could the Minister tell us—

Madam Chairman: Just one minute. You are on 009?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yeah.

Madam Chairman: Okay. We have not reached there as yet. Item 007, Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair, again. To the Minster, I see a consistent allocation of 12.5 million, under a heading “Basic Grants”, I am a bit—looking for some enlightenment on this basic grant.

Hon. Imbert: Grants to government assisted schools.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay. To all? So it is basic and building grants, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: That is okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thanks, Madam Chair. Line Item 06, might we be able to get an idea as to how many students benefitted from this expenditure?

Hon. Imbert: The information will be provided.
Mr. Karim: The Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute, is this institute in any way connected with the UTT? Is this institute in any way the one that has been spoken about with respect to the Tobago University or the University of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Could you give us a little bit of explanation on that?

4.00 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: It is not associated with the UTT.

Mr. Karim: Right. Okay. But is it associated with the proposed new university of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: It is in the embryonic stage.

Mr. Karim: So, there is an intention to create a university of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: You are asking that on an Item that is headed, Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute?

Mr. Karim: Yes, because there were some discussions.

Hon. Imbert: I cannot see the connection. If you want to know about the Hospitality and Tourism Institute, I will provide any information that is available.

Mr. Karim: Let me ask the question in this way. Is this line Item going to be connected in any way to the proposed university of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: As I said, those discussions are in the embryonic stage so it is difficult to give you a definite answer, but I will find out.

Mr. Karim: Sure. Thank you very much.

Hon. Imbert: I will find out from the promoters of this proposed tertiary institution.

Madam Chairman: Division 07 - Community Development, Enterprise Development and Labour. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General
Administration; Item 002, Community Development; Item 003, Culture; Item 004, Labour. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration.

Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment, the Actual for 2017 was 1.8 million, I am seeing for 2019 the estimate 3 million, an increase by 2.6, if I could get an undertaking.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, sure. Item 002, Community Development. Item 003, Culture.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Is this the same thing, Minister, where it will appear elsewhere?

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central, question?

**Dr. Tewarie:** I was asking the Minister, since there are no allocations here whether it will appear elsewhere, because it happened in other instances so I assume it was yes.

**Hon. Imbert:** He answered the question himself.

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me?

**Hon. Imbert:** The answer is, yes. He answered the question himself.

**Madam Chairman:** The answer is, yes, it will appear elsewhere.

**Hon. Imbert:** Yeah, he is correct. He asked and answered the question.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 004, Labour. Item 005, Occupational Safety and Health.

Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Madam Chair, thank you. Just again, line 16, Contract Employment, to remind the Minister of the increase by 1.6 million.

**Madam Chairman:** We are reminded. Item 006, Business Development Unit. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Community Development; Item 003, Culture; Item 004, Labour; Item
005, Occupational Safety and Health. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles, an allocation and an increase by 500,000. How many vehicles to be purchased?

Hon. Imbert: I gave an undertaking that I would provide the information with respect to—

Ms. Ramdial: Yes. It is just a reminder, Madam Chair.

Hon. Imbert: No, Madam Chair may not have been here when I gave that undertaking. With respect to this Item, just like Contract Employment, I will provide details of the numbers and the types of vehicle for all departments of the THA.

Madam Chairman: Item 006, Business Development Unit. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 005, Non-Profit Institution. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chairman. May I get a little bit of detail in terms of line Item 17, Special Community Programme?

Hon. Imbert: The information will be provided.

Mr. Karim: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 07, Assistance to Community Organizations, I am seeing a decrease by $1 million. Can I get some clarification?

Hon. Imbert: What clarification do you wish?

Ms. Ramdial: Why a decrease?

Hon. Imbert: The 2017 figure was the same more or less as the 2019 provision.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay.

Hon. Imbert: That is the explanation.
Ms. Ramdial: Madam Chair.

Madam Chairman: Yes, please.

Ms. Ramdial: Line Item 19, Pembroke Heritage Park, there are no allocations, just 2017 Actual was 21,000. I am just curious: why are there no allocations?

Hon. Imbert: It will appear elsewhere.

Ms. Ramdial: Elsewhere, okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Households. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just a little detail if you want to submit it in writing too, line Item 05, what is it that this is all about?

Hon. Imbert: CARE, that is what you are asking?

Madam Chairman: Page 64, 007, 05.

Hon. Imbert: We would get the information for you.

Madam Chairman: Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, National Service, might I be able to get a little idea as to what is the National Service about?

Hon. Imbert: It is a programme in Tobago encouraging volunteerism among young Tobagonians, and the money is for the administration of the programme.

Mr. Karim: Okay. Can I ask—

Madam Chairman: Yes, Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Is this connected in any way with a previous Item I spoke about, COVA, C-O-V-A?

Hon. Imbert: Which previous Item is that?

Mr. Karim: Just on the same page, 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, line Item 23.

Hon. Imbert: No.
Mr. Karim: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 10, Export Centres, I see an estimate for 2 million. How many export centres exist, and just a clarification with respect to the amount, 2 million, for their operations?

Hon. Imbert: What do you wish to know?

Ms. Ramdial: What exactly the 2 million is for?

Hon. Imbert: Running costs, operating costs.

Ms. Ramdial: Export centres, how many?

Hon. Imbert: We will provide that information, but the 2 million is for their operating costs.

Ms. Ramdial: These export centres, what is exported? Are they—what exactly is being exported by these export centres?

Hon. Imbert: It is to encourage entrepreneurs in Tobago to participate in large trade shows such as the TIC, and so on.

Ms. Ramdial: Have there been any results, any measuring of results? How long has this—because I am seeing 2017, 2018, 2019, so have we been able to produce any persons who have been able to export any product out of Tobago?

Hon. Imbert: I am sure, but that information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: The question was asked. It is in essence of, when you are providing the information what is the export component that was facilitated by this $2 million expenditure?

Hon. Imbert: Okay.
Mr. Charles: Thanks.

Madam Chairman: Division 08 - Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Maintenance of Roads. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: We are on page 67, right, Madam Chair?

Madam Chairman: No, we are on page 65.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 003, Maintenance of Buildings. Item 004, Transport. Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate. Item 007, Mechanical Workshop. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister, line Item at the bottom of page 82, Studley Park Quarry-Operations. In 2017 you had an expenditure of 7.4 million, in the Revised Estimates of 2018 of 750, so I am assuming during the course of 2018 the expenditure—

Madam Chairman: Okay, Member, I realize you are going by page.

Mr. Lee: Page 67.

Hon. Imbert: I think the Member was a little mixed-up, he said page 82, he meant Item 82, under 002; that is what he meant.

Mr. Lee: Page 67, line Item 82. Is it okay?

Madam Chairman: Yeah, I think we are on 002, Maintenance of Roads.

Mr. Lee: Yeah.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Lee: Line Item 82.

Madam Chairman: Yes.
Mr. Lee: Studley Park Quarry-Operations, in 2017 7.4 million was expended, in 2018 the revised figure went down to 750 from an estimate of 3 million, so there is an increase now of 2.250, could the Minister enlighten us, what is happening with the quarry operation and why that expenditure of 20 would have been so—the revised figure would have been so low of 750 and now an increase of 2.2 million for 2019?

Hon. Imbert: Well, if you look at the original estimate for 2018 it was 3 million, so the 2019 Estimate is identical to the original estimate of 2018.

Mr. Lee: But why would the revised figure have gone down to 750?

Hon. Imbert: The revised figure is simply an estimate. I will endeavour to determine whether there was actually a reduction and what was the cost.

Mr. Lee: So you would add some more clarification at a later date, right?

Hon. Imbert: I will endeavour to provide the information that you have requested.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: Just a follow-up question on this Studley Park Quarry matter. When the Minister gives his explanation or clarification, could he also explain the need for the escrow account on this particular Item? I asked a question on it earlier. It is an escrow account of 5 million.

Hon. Imbert: We passed that, you know.

Dr. Tewarie: Yeah, I know that, but, I mean, the question is, if you are reducing the expenditure and you are building up an escrow account, I do not understand this.

Hon. Imbert: Well, when we get to page 72, all will be explained.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay. Very good.
Madam Chairman: Item 003, Maintenance of Buildings. Item 005, Transport Division. Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate. Item 007, Mechanical Workshop. Item 009, the Environment. We are now on to page 70. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: You passed it already, it is okay, go ahead.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Maintenance of Roads. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles, $1 million. Just how many vehicles to be purchased?

Madam Chairman: Okay, so—

Hon. Imbert: I said I would provide that information for every single department.

Madam Chairman: Okay. Good.

Mr. Charles: Am I correct to understand you would provide for all the vehicles for all the Items that are purchased?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: Yes, you are very correct.

Mr. Charles: Thanks. Appreciated.

Madam Chairman: Item 003, Maintenance of Buildings. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Reminding again for 01 for vehicles, 400,000, how many vehicles to be purchased?

Madam Chairman: Item 004, Transport. Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate. Item 007, Mechanical Workshop. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 01, Vehicles, 540,000. How many vehicles to be purchased?

Madam Chairman: We are reminded. Anything else? Item 009, the Environment.
Ms. Ramdial: Actually, Madam, I mixed up the figures, it is 500,000 under 007 for Vehicles, and under the Environment it is 540,000. How many vehicles for both Divisions?

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions. Item 007, Households. Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Studley Park Enterprises Ltd, $7 million for this year, the Minister had undertaken to give us an explanation when we arrived at page 72 in relationship to the Studley Park Quarry-Operation and also the escrow?

Hon. Imbert: Studley Park has been converted into a company by the name of Studley Park Enterprises Ltd, so that the Public Service Division of the House of Assembly is winding down and its operations will be replaced by the operations of the Studley Park Enterprises Ltd. So that is why you see a decrease in expenditure in the public service side of Studley Park and now you see an allocation for Studley Park Enterprises Ltd, which will now operate the quarry.

Mr. Lee: Just a follow-up question, Minister, now that you have Studley Park Enterprises Ltd as a company and the operations are winding down from the quarry side in the—

Hon. Imbert: I did not say that. The quarry will now be operated by a company rather than by the public service element of the—

Mr. Lee: So all expenses that used to be incurred from the public side will be now incurred by the Studley Park Enterprises Ltd, correct? Fair to say?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Lee: So when would you see that entire divorce or movement?

Hon. Imbert: In 2019.
Mr. Lee: And also for the Escrow?

Hon. Imbert: That is to purchase equipment for the company, for the quarry in Tobago at Studley Park.

Madam Chairman: Division 09 - Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration—

Hon. Imbert: Well, Madam Chairman, there are no 2019 Estimates for this, they are all empty so there is nothing to ask or answer about, and that takes you all the way down to page 78.

Ms. Ramdial: Seventy-nine.

Hon. Imbert: No, no, at all, there are 2019 Estimates on page 79.

Madam Chairman: Yes, to page 79. Right? Yes? Which is the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development, we agreed?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So, Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 14, Remuneration to Members of Cabinet-Appointed Bodies, $1 million. Can I get some clarification with respect to that?

Hon. Imbert: What do you want to know?

Ms. Ramdial: You said Cabinet-Appointed Bodies, how many bodies exist and the list of Members for these Cabinet-Appointed Bodies?

Hon. Imbert: Information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, you vacate? All right. Item 002,

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 08, Rent-Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage, an increase of 2 million for the 2019 Estimate at 5 million, can I get an explanation?

Hon. Imbert: It is less than the 2017 Actual.

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, but where are these Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage areas?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Madam Chair, another line Item, line Item 16, Contract Employment for 8.7 million for 2019, just to remind the Minister an undertaking for those positions and persons.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 01, if the hon. Minister can provide, how many officers will benefit from their travelling and subsistence allowance, please?

Hon. Imbert: Which one is that? Which page?

Madam Chairman: Item 01, Travelling and Subsistence.

Hon. Imbert: How many people—well, I had provided this information before, you know, Madam Chairman. Yes, what I had provided before was contract employees, this is public officers. The information will be provided.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 65, Expenses of Cabinet-Appointed Bodies, 135,000, this is a new Sub-Item, again an undertaking
for the number of bodies and list of members, names of the list of members.

**Hon. Imbert:** I will provide it for all similar Items.

**Ms. Ramdial:** I will remind you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 002, Hospitals. Item 003, Health Centres. Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Item 003, could you inform the House about the number of health centres and the opening hours, if it is similar to the aspiration in Trinidad to go until 9.00 in the evening?

**Hon. Imbert:** There is one health centre mentioned in the budget contribution of the Member for Tobago East, the Roxborough Health Centre will be added to the programme to provide a 24/7 service. With respect to the location of all health centres, that information will be provided.

**Madam Chairman:** We are still on Item 003?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment, the Actual Estimate in 2017 was 1,889, the Revised Estimate for 2018/2019 is $600,000.

**Madam Chairman:** Same undertaking?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Good.

**Hon. Imbert:** I, however, want to point out that I did give the numbers of contract employees in every division, including health.

**Ms. Ramdial:** You gave the numbers but I am interested in the positions also, Minister.
Hon. Imbert: I am just saying that I gave the numbers already.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: That information is not required to be repeated. We will provide the positions.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.


Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 09, Minister, Rent/Lease - Vehicles and Equipment, you have an increase of $2 million for 2019 but in 2017 your Actual was 2.3 million, why the budgeted for 2018 would be so low at 500,000 and then to now come and increase it to 2 million? Why would that figure not, estimated at 20, close to the 2017 Actual?

Hon. Imbert: I really do not understand the question, it is a little convoluted, but I will try by best. I will try my best.

Mr. Lee: You understand?

Hon. Imbert: I really do not but I will try.

Mr. Lee: You need clarity?

Hon. Imbert: It is okay. The 2017 Actual was 2.36 million and the 2019 Estimate is 2.5 million, there is not much difference between—

Mr. Lee: All right. The question I am asking, why would the Estimate for 2018 be so way off the mark from the 2017 Actual and even the 2019 budgeted?

Hon. Imbert: Because vehicles are rented on an “as need” basis, so from year to year it will change depending on the need.

Mr. Lee: I thought it was just to give a low figure on the Estimate.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.
Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line Item 28, Other Contracted Services, 2019 Estimate 10 million, can I get a little bit of clarification with respect to Other Contracted Service?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Social Services. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment, 2019 Estimate, 9.7 million, again just a reminder for the undertaking.

Hon. Imbert: Sure.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Probation Services. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Again, a reminder for line Item 16, Contract Employment, $800,000.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Probation Services. Item 008, Litter Eradication Programme. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item, again, 16, Contract Employment for $2.891 million.

Madam Chairman: Noted. Item 009, Gender Affairs. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16 for 2019 Estimate, $200,000 for Contract Employment.

Madam Chairman: Noted. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 003, Health Centres. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles, $675,000, an undertaking as to how many vehicles we intend to purchase with this?

Madam Chairman: Noted. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Just to clarify for the ambulances or what, it is just to
identify in this particular case what type of vehicle. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me, what Item is that? Are you making the same point at the Member for Couva North?

**Hon. Imbert:** This is 03, 004?

**Madam Chairman:** No, 03, 003, 01. Item 003, Health Centres.

**Hon. Imbert:** We will get the information for you. I am told that the preliminary information is it is not ambulances, but I will get the information for you.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 004: Public Health and the Environment. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam. Again, line Item 01, Vehicles for $2 million for 2019, how many vehicles we intend to purchase?

**Madam Chairman:** Noted. Item 005, Social Services. Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles for $247,500, how many vehicles we intend to purchase?

**Madam Chairman:** Noted. Item 008, Litter Eradication Programme. Item 009, Gender Affairs. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions. Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Madam Chair. May I be able to get some information with respect to line Item 06, Special Social Programmes, and what are these programmes and how many persons would have benefited from this allocation in 2018, and how many you project to benefit in 2019?

**Hon. Imbert:** We will provide the information.

**Mr. Karim:** Page 85.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** I can see it.
Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: The question was asked.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. In line Item 08, how many non-profit organizations would have benefited from this contribution, please? You could give it to me at a later time.

Hon. Imbert: 08?

Madam Chairman: Contributions to Non-Profit Organizations.

Hon. Imbert: Oh, that one, right, 04, 08, okay. Information will be provided.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Households. Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodoe: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, with regard to Item 05, Grants Towards Necessitous Patients, allocation of 3 million, can you provide the criteria, the definition for “necessitous patients” and the number of grants that are expected to be awarded in 2019?

Hon. Imbert: Okay.

Dr. Bodoe: And if I may follow up, Madam Chair, 07, Tobago Regional—sorry, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: We can only give you an estimate. We could only give you an estimate, it varies from patient to patient.

Dr. Bodoe: Sure. And the criteria?

Hon. Imbert: That information can be provided.

Dr. Bodoe: Thank you. Item 07, Tobago Regional Health Authority, Minister, I note there is a decrease of $71,358,000 to the RHA. Can you indicate in what way that will impact on the services for the TRHA?
4.30 p.m.

**Hon. Imbert:** We gave an extra $100 million at the mid-year for backpay, so that would have made the allocation for 2018—the revised allocation—$400 million. If you look at the original allocation for 2018 it was 300 million, so this is an increase over the original 2018 allocation.

**Dr. Bodoe:** Minister, if I may just look at the 2017 actual of 417 million, and your estimate for 2019 is still less. So I am just wondering whether that will impact on the services provided by the TRHA.

**Hon. Imbert:** In 2017 there was backpay as well. So there was backpay in 2017 and there was backpay in 2018. There is no backpay in 2019.

**Dr. Bodoe:** So are you saying this sum reflects the average that will be allocated without the backpay.

**Hon. Imbert:** If you take out the backpay in 2017 and you take out the backpay in 2018, this figure that has been provided is adequate at this point in time. If it needs to be increased we will increase it.

**Dr. Bodoe:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Division 11, Settlement, Urban Renewal and Public utilities.

Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Settlement; Item 004, Electrical Inspectorate. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services. Item 001, General Administration.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Line Item 08, Rent, Lease, Office Accommodation and Storage, 2019 estimate of 2.5 million, an increase by 500,000. Just an undertaking as to where these storage areas are located, and office accommodation also.
Hon. Imbert: You want to know where they are located?

Ms. Ramdial: Where they are, yes.

Hon. Imbert: Okay. The information will be provided.

Mr. Charles: In respect of the same Item 08, Rent/Lease, if any analysis is done as to the rental/purchase options so that we get value for money. I see it here and there may be a justification. I am saying there may be, but we need to get the analysis.

Hon. Imbert: I would assume so.

Mr. Charles: So we will get the analysis, and if it is done in future so that all of us get value for money.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment for 3.3 million for 2019, an increase by 300,000. Also, Madam Chair, line Item 42, Street Lighting for 2 million in 2019. I see here that there were no estimates for 2017/2018. It is a new Sub-Item. So if the Minister can give us with respect to location of this Street Lighting Programme, where exactly is this being implemented for 2 million.

Hon. Imbert: All over the island.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. All over the island?

Hon. Imbert: You asked me where it was going to be.

Ms. Ramdial: How many street lights?

Hon. Imbert: We can provide that information. But you asked me where. I said all over the island.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.
Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: A further question please. How many street lights?

Hon. Imbert: I already gave an undertaking to answer that question. That was already asked by Couva North. So I have given that undertaking. Couva North also asked for the numbers.

Mr. Charles: Item 013, Maintenance of Vehicles. I see 100,000 is estimated. That may be a good thing because I see no Item for purchase of vehicles, so a consideration will be given to the inclusion of a maintenance for vehicles in other areas.

Hon. Imbert: It is provided in other areas.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: All over the island.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Settlements; Item 003, Labour; Item 004, Electrical Inspectorate. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Settlements; Item 03, Labour; Item 004, Electrical Inspectorate; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 007, Household.; Division 12, Planning and Development. Sub-Head 01.

Hon. Imbert: There are no allocations there, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: So can we go on to Division 13? Division 13, Sport and Youth Affairs. Sub-Head 01, Personal Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration.

Ms. Ramdial: Madam Chair, line Item 08, Rent/Lease Office Accommodation and Storage for 1.263 million. I see this as a new item so an undertaking please with respect to the office, the storage areas and office accommodation, location and the cost. Also line Item 16, Contract Employment. Again an undertaking for the cost for the estimate for 1.5 million. Also, Madam Chair, I am seeing a new Sub-Item
on line Item 22, Short Term Employment, 500,000. Also an undertaking with respect to the list of these positions. Yes, and that is it.

**Hon. Imbert:** Sure.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 002, Sport; Item 003, Youth. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Again, Madam Chair, 01 Vehicles, $334,000. Just the number of vehicles we intend to purchase.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 002, Sport.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Again, line Item 01, Vehicles, $643,000. The number of vehicles we intend to purchase.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 003, Youth.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, Madam Chair, line Item 01, Vehicles for $875,200. How many vehicles we intend to purchase.

**Mr. Singh:** A maxi and a motor car.

**Madam Chairman:** Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 005, Non-profit Institutions.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Line Item 02, Assistance to Sporting Organisations, $2 million for fiscal year 2019. Can I get an undertaking to get a list of those sporting organizations and how much moneys?

**Hon. Imbert:** It only happens when they make a request.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Well, I see here for 2018 you have estimates and a revised estimate. Do we have some organizations benefitting for the year 2018? Thank you. Can I
get a listing of those?

**Hon. Imbert:** ’18, no, no, not ’18. These are the 2019 estimates we are dealing with.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, but if you are giving assistance to sporting organizations, it is obvious that you give on a yearly basis. So whatever organizations exist in 2018, I do not think you are going to kick them out for 2019.

**Hon. Imbert:** Member, I think we went through this before, you know. These are the 2019 estimates, not the 2018 estimates.

**Ms. Ramdial:** All right.

**Mr. Karim:** Line Item 03, Youth Development Programme. What is this programme about, 500,000?

**Hon. Imbert:** The information will be provided.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 007, Households.

Hon. Members, we will now move to on to the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme*. Sub-Head 09, Development Program, Consolidated Fund, page 20. Item 003, Economic Infrastructure, pages 20 to 26.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 143, Improvement to Beaches and Landing Facilities.

**Madam Chairman:** That is on page 20.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes, page 20. I see no allocation in 2019. Am I to assume that all improvements to beaches and landing facilities have been completed?

**Hon. Imbert:** No.

**Ms. Ramdial:** So is it, Minister, you just do not intend to budget for those projects for this year, for the new fiscal year?

**Hon. Imbert:** No.
Ms. Ramdial: Can you explain?

Hon. Imbert: We do intend. The Tobago House of Assembly will be authorized to borrow up to $300 million by the Minister of Finance, and that is for the development programmes.

Ms. Ramdial: So they will be borrowing?

Hon. Imbert: It will include improvements to beaches and landing facilities. In fact, the Secretary for Finance, when I had asked them to give me some idea of what they wanted to borrow for, they did indicate that they wanted to borrow to improve their landing, and fishermen and beach facilities and so on. So they will be borrowing for that in fiscal 2019.

Ms. Ramdial: Borrowing for that project. Thank you. Madam Chair, under Land Management Services, 463, Agricultural Access Roads for Tobago. Now, in 2017 we had 44,000,900, actual. In 2018 we have an estimate of 24 million and a revised estimate of 44 million. And for fiscal year 2019 we have an amount of 15 million. Minister, would you give an undertaking to give us the list of these roads for 2019 you intend to improve agricultural access roads, for the cost of 15 million?

Hon. Imbert: I will request the information from the THA as to which roads they intend to use this allocation for, and provide it.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: The question was asked; it was under 463.

Dr. Tewarie: Minister, Research and Development. There is a fair increase there for research and development. I wanted to understand where the research effort was going.

Hon. Imbert: But the list is there. It is all there.
Dr. Tewarie: All of these here?

Hon. Imbert: Yes. The development of the banana industry, invasive plant control, urban forestry—

Dr. Tewarie: Okay. So it is broken down into all of these?


Dr. Tewarie: All right, I understand.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Madam Chairman, I will wait until page 26.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 580, Urban Forestry Programme, page 21. I am seeing a 2019 estimate for $2.3 million. Minister, can you just give an undertaking as to where these moneys are going to be plugged into for this programme? Exactly what, to do what?

Hon. Imbert: Okay.

Ms. Ramdial: Can I move on also, Madam Chair? The line Item 608, page 21, Lure Wildlife Nature Park. I see this as a new project for 2 million. Minister, again, can you give an undertaking to give an explanation as to where exactly these moneys are going into for this nature park; 2 million? Is it that you are starting up, starting it up?

Hon. Imbert: This is—Lure, I am told, is close to Goodwood, which is on the east coast of Tobago as you head towards Belle Garden, and this is a new project to create this nature park in that location, basically.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Singh: Line Item 465 on page 20, Roxborough Hyperbaric Facility. There has been no allocation over a three-year period. Is there an alternative hyperbaric facility in that part of Tobago in which diving is part of the allure?
Madam Chairman: Item 465 on page 20.

Hon. Imbert: Okay, it is maintained by the Regional Health Authority.

Mr. Singh: So there is an existing—

Hon. Imbert: But it is maintained by the Regional Health Authority. It is no longer here.

Mr. Singh: Item 603 on page 21, Mangrove Systems Inventory and Monitoring. Does this include the monitoring of the No-Man’s Land mangrove?

Hon. Imbert: It is mangrove generally in Tobago, and the answer is yes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East, you are still waiting?

Mr. Karim: Yes, I am waiting.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am on page 23 under Tourism. Line Item 268, Fort King George Heritage Park. Line Item 282, Mount Irvine Beach Facility. I see an allocation for 1 million each for 2019. Minister, can you give an update with respect to where these moneys are going to go with respect to these projects?

Hon. Imbert: You mean how they are going to be spent?

Ms. Ramdial: How they are going to be spent, sorry.

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mr. Indarsingh: Under 602 on page 21, I see there was no allocation in 2017 and 2018 for air quality monitoring in Tobago, and now there is an allocation of 2.5 million. Could the Minister provide some information as it relates to this line Item?

Hon. Imbert: We are going to monitor the quality of the air in Tobago.

Mr. Indarsingh: Will the THA be using any specific entity to conduct this exercise, and how it will they be engaged?

Hon. Imbert: That information will be provided.
Ms. Ramdial: Page 23, Minister, line Item 310, Restoration of Historical Sites for 1.4 million. Can we get an undertaking for a list of those historical sites?

Hon. Imbert: Yes.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Two line Items, 542, page 21, and I see there is no allocation. Is it that the installation of the sea defence wall is completed?

Madam Chairman: This is the Coastal Zone Protection Programme?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. And on page 23, line Item—

Madam Chairman: Just one minute. Just one minute.

Hon. Imbert: Slow down, slow down. What is the line Item that is concerning you?

Madam Chairman: Item 542 on page 21, Coastal Zone Protection Programme.

Hon. Imbert: That one, 542? That will be part of the borrowing programme.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And 774, page 23. How many rivers are there in Tobago to be desilted?

Hon. Imbert: 773 on page 23?

Madam Chairman: Desilting of Rivers, $800,000.

Hon. Imbert: That is 774.

Madam Chairman: 774.

Hon. Imbert: I will find out.

Ms. Ramdial: Page 25, line Item 523, Major Improvement Works on Secondary Roads. Now, in 2017 the allocation was 28.3 million. In 2018 the estimate was 11 million. The revised estimate for 2018 is 27.5 million, and then I am seeing a 2019 estimate for $8 million. Is it, Minister, that these works are near to completion?

Hon. Imbert: No.

Ms. Ramdial: Can you explain the low estimate for 2019 at 8 million.
Hon. Imbert: Part of the borrowing programme.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. And exactly what this 8 million would be paid or would be given for? What area of work?

Hon. Imbert: I will see if I get a list of roads for you.

Ms. Ramdial: All right, thank you. Madam Chair, 678, Milford Road Bridges; 10 million was allocated for 2017 and for the revised estimates for 2018, 10 million, 10 million. I am seeing now for 2019, 8 million and for the resurfacing programme 8 million for 2019. Again, Minister, is this with respect to the borrowing arrangement that you have?

Hon. Imbert: No. It is an allocation of 8 million for bridges on Milford Road.

Ms. Ramdial: With respect to the resurfacing programme for 8 million, exactly how many roads you intend to resurface?

Hon. Imbert: I will get the information on what their programme is.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you very much. Madam Chair, 696, Rehabilitation of the Claude Noel Highway. There was a 2018 estimate of 11.8 million, a revised estimate of the same amount, and I am seeing a reduced estimate of 7 million. Minister, can you clarify?

Hon. Imbert: Sure. It is an ongoing programme and I will get details of what is planned for 2019.

Dr. Tewarie: Ma’am, I wanted to ask a question under Business Services, page 24.

Madam Chairman: That is okay.

Dr. Tewarie: Under Enterprise Development, 002, I wanted to ask how many enterprises we are talking about there.

Hon. Imbert: Which page is it?

Dr. Tewarie: And under 003—
Madam Chairman: Page 24. It is on page 24. G. Business Services—

Dr. Tewarie: Business Incubator Programme.

Madam Chairman: —then 002 Enterprise Development, and then 003 Business Incubator Programme.

Dr. Tewarie: I want to ask how many businesses were incubated in the last year, or how many are budgeted for? Under 019, Enterprise Assistant Grant Programme, I wanted to know what enterprises. You do not have to give the answers now.

Hon. Imbert: Sure, but I mean, be aware that this is based on applications, so that a definitive answer may not be possible. It is a provision for the coming year.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Madam Chair, on page 23, I just wanted to find out if line Item 747, the Roxborough River, page 23, is this the same—

Madam Chairman: 774?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: No, 747, the Roxborough River. I just wanted to find out if this river and the same line Item 774—so it is 747 and line Item 774, why is it separated? I just wanted to know why it is separate if we are dealing with desilting.

Hon. Imbert: That is it?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes.

Hon. Imbert: The 774 is very specific, desilting. There are other things that you do in a river. You pave rivers, you build walls, you do realignment and so on. So this is other types of work other than desilting: straightening, realignment, walling and paving.

Mr. Indarsingh: Madam Chair, my question was answered.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Under Other Economic Services, under D, Tourism, 282, Mount Irvine Beach Facility, I see an estimate of $1 million allocated. But I saw an advertisement in the newspaper, Minister—correct me if I am wrong—for
the sale of Mount Irvine. Now, I do not know if it says “beach facility”, so I do not know if the beach facility is different from the hotel.

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes it is.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** So this is not the Item that is up for sale?

**Hon. Imbert:** You cannot sell Mount Irvine Beach Facility; that is a public facility. “Yuh cyar sell that”. I do not know if the hotel is for sale. I cannot associate myself with those remarks, but I know that the Mount Irvine Beach Facility is a public facility that is not up for sale.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Thank you.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Line Item 838, page 27, Seamless Education Programme in Tobago. I am seeing a revised estimate for 21 million—

**Madam Chairman:** Just now, I am not sure if we have reached there as yet. So can you defer and let me take the Member for Chaguanas East?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Sure.

**Mr. Karim:** Are we on page 26 yet, Ma’am?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, yes; once you are within the Economic Infrastructure.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay, thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Line Item 814, Teacher Training Programme. There has been an increase in the allocation in 2019 for an additional 800,000.

**Madam Chairman:** You are now into Social Infrastructure?

**Mr. Karim:** Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** All right.

**Mr. Karim:** So if you want to announce it first and then I will ask. I could go ahead with the question?

**Madam Chairman:** No, just now. We are still in Economic Infrastructure, “doh
mind” the pages are the same.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Under “Upper Economic”, I see here on the line—page 24, line 349, Tobago Tourism Agency. I know this is the new agency when the TDC was split, but I see $10 million being allocated. If the Minister could kindly give us an idea. If this is under the DP now, what are the plans for spending of this 10 million in 2019?

Hon. Imbert: It is five.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sorry. Yes that was the revised last year, 5 million.

Hon. Imbert: Information will be provided.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Dr. Gopeesingh: I was waiting for Social Infrastructure, when you reach there.

Mr. Charles: On page 24, Item G., 009, the Enterprise Development Company of Tobago, page 24, 009.


Mr. Charles: I just wanted to find out the mandate of this company, and in that context what explains—the actual was 15 million in 2017, and the estimate in 2019 is 5 million. Is that the start-up cost in 2017, or an attempt to reduce the remit of that company?

Hon. Imbert: No, it is simply an allocation. This is the Cove Industrial Estate Company.

Mr. Charles: What does it do please?

Hon. Imbert: It is in charge of the Cove Industrial Estate.

Mr. Charles: In that regard, how do you explain the $10 million reduction?

Hon. Imbert: What $10 million?

Mr. Charles: From 2017, the actual was 15. It is 10 million, and the estimate is $5
Hon. Imbert: We are in 2019.

Mr. Charles: Yes, and the estimate in 2019 is 5 million.

Hon. Imbert: Right, I am told it is adequate for what they need to do. They had some construction work previously and this is adequate for 2019.

Mr. Charles: I need some help, because you say it is the Cove.

Hon. Imbert: No, just a minute. Do you want to know what this $5 million is for?

Mr. Charles: No, I need to know—yes, in the context of the remit of the organization. Do not tell me the Cove. What does Cove do?

Hon. Imbert: It is an industrial development estate.

Mr. Charles: And how is the money going to be spent?

Hon. Imbert: In developing the infrastructure on the estate.

Mr. Charles: Help me, because in the 15 million one would have thought that there would have been a significant component of infrastructure development.

Hon. Imbert: Madam Chairman, I can provide information with respect to the 2019 estimate. The 2019 estimate is 5 million. It is not 15 million. I can provide information with respect to the 5 million, and I will get the technocrats to do a short brief on this. One would be provided.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, one paragraph.

Madam Chairman: All right. So we now go on to Item 004, Social Infrastructure.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: 003 on page 25, under Transport and Communication, please.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam, D. Roads and Bridges, Major Improvement works on Secondary Roads, an allocation of 8 million. My questions
are: What is the status of this project, given that there is a reduction in the allocation? Has there been any significant change in the areas of responsibility and spending plans to account for that reduction?

5.00 p.m.

Hon. Imbert: This question was already asked in a different way by another Member, and I gave an undertaking to provide details of what the $8 million will be spent on.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Further, under Line 696, the Rehabilitation of the Claude Noel Highway, allocation of that—

Hon. Imbert: That question was also asked by another Member and I gave—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But we are on this line Item.

Hon. Imbert: That question was asked by another Member.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Well, what was the question that was asked? You have not even heard my question.

Hon. Imbert: What is this allocation for? And what—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I have not even asked the question.

Madam Chairman: Member, let the question be asked, please.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Maybe something was asked about the highway, but I have not asked any question.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia, please proceed to ask the question.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam. Under 696, Rehabilitation of the Claude Noel, the 7 million. There has been a decrease; maybe that is the question asked. Any significant change in the areas of responsibility and therefore to account for the decrease? What is the status of this project? Who are
the contractors responsible for this project? What were the criteria for selecting these contractors and the tendering process that was used? What is the total cost and completion date of this work on this highway?

Hon. Imbert: This is an ongoing project.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I know.

Hon. Imbert: So that many of those questions will not apply, because we are talking future tense. But I will give the same undertaking I gave to the Member for Couva North, that I will find out what this allocation of $7 million is for, and how they intend to spend it.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And the possible completion date of the project?

Hon. Imbert: It is an ongoing project.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So it will go on forever?

Hon. Imbert: I expect it to go on for all of 2019.

Mr. Charles: If it is an ongoing project, the question was asked which contractors are responsible for this project, and the total cost and the anticipated completion date?—all this must be part of the request for proposal.

Hon. Imbert: Rehabilitation—

Madam Chairman: One at a time, please.

Hon. Imbert: It is a rehabilitation of the Claude Noel Highway—is an ongoing project, and an allocation has been made in 2019 of $7 million, and I will provide details of what that $7 million is intended to be spent on.

Mr. Charles: And who are the contractors, et cetera?—the questions that were asked.

Hon. Imbert: That does not necessarily apply. They may procure contractors
later on in the fiscal year. I will provide details.

**Mr. Charles:** I am not satisfied, but we will go on.

**Hon. Imbert:** Okay. Fine. I will provide as much information as possible.

**Mr. Charles:** The questions that were asked by the Member for Siparia.

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes. We have taken note of every question asked by Siparia, and the information as whatever is available will be provided.

**Madam Chairman:** Caroni East.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** You have moved on to social infrastructure?

**Madam Chairman:** Not as yet.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right. Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So, I am now ready. Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 814, Teacher Training Programme, and might we get some information with respect to that programme? What type of teachers? Is the training going to be conducted entirely on the island in Tobago or is it going to be in Trinidad and in Tobago? So number one: What types of teachers? If we could get some idea of this Teacher Training Programme?

**Hon. Imbert:** Across the board in terms of the type of teachers, and they have a teacher training centre in Tobago itself where the training will be done.

**Mr. Karim:** How many persons we expect? How many teachers in the primary, secondary and tertiary?

**Hon. Imbert:** That information will be provided.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay.
Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 838 page 27, Seamless Education Programme Tobago. In 2018, there was an estimate of $21 million and then a revised estimate of 21 million and in 2019, 5 million was estimated. Minister, can you account for such drastic decrease?

Hon. Imbert: That programme is—[Minister confers with technocrats] Apparently, the revised estimate is not accurate and the programme is now starting up.

Ms. Ramdial: The revised estimate is not accurate? So what is it supposed to be, Minister?

Hon. Imbert: I cannot tell you that yet. When we get the Actual, you can get that information.

Ms. Ramdial: And this programme is now starting up, is this for the entire education sector, Seamless Education Programme, Tobago. Where exactly is it to be implemented?

Hon. Imbert: It is for five early childhood centres and we can give you the locations.

Ms. Ramdial: And you will give me the revised, the Estimate for 2019. Right?—because this is inaccurate.

Hon. Imbert: No. Not 2019. I cannot give you the Actual for 2018 yet, that will be available sometime next year.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay.

Hon. Imbert: What I do know is that the 21 million that is here as the revised estimate is not accurate.
Ms. Ramdial: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni East.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Line Item, 70, New Construction of Scarborough R.C.

Madam Chairman: 7—excuse me?

Dr. Gopeesingh: 770.

Hon. Imbert: That is Goodwood High School.

Dr. Gopeesingh: New Construction of Scarborough RC.

Madam Chairman: He is on page 26. B, primary schools.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Yeah. Page 26. Hon. Minister, what I am saying here—is the total cost of Scarborough R.C. Primary going to be 75 million plus, 14 million plus 6 million? Is it going be 95 million, the cost of Scarborough R.C. Primary? Seventy-five million was spent in 2017, 14 in 2018, and 6 in 2019. Ninety-five million for a primary school, hon. Minister? When we built them in Trinidad for $17 million and $15 million, to bring 650 students in school? This is madness, 95 million for a primary school?

Madam Chairman: Hon. Minister.

Hon. Imbert: The school has already been opened, so the 6 million is just to deal with the final account.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So the cost is how much, Minister?

Hon. Imbert: I can give you the details of what the $6 million will be spent on.

Dr. Gopeesingh: But you have spent 89 million already.

Hon. Imbert: I can give you the details on what the 6 million in 2019 will be spent on.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Right. But what I am seeing is, 75 plus 14 means that they
have been spent on the Scarborough R.C. Primary already.

**Hon. Imbert:** I can give you details of what the 6 million in 2019 is for.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** All right. Eight-nine million plus 6 million, 95 million.

**Hon. Imbert:** I can give you details [Crosstalk] on the 6 million in 2019.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Okay. Can I just ask one more question on 784? This 5 million for childhood centres, which we are very happy about, but how many childhood centres are—

**Madam Chairman:** Member, is that 838, Member?

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** 784.

**Madam Chairman:** 784. Okay.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** How many early childhood education centres?

**Hon. Imbert:** I will get that information and provide it for you.

**Dr. Gopeesingh:** Well, it is supposed to be five starting, but—

**Hon. Imbert:** We will get that information and provide it for you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Siparia.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Madam, page 26, 784 line Item, Establishment of Childhood Centres. I know the Minister mentioned under the Seamless Education which is on the other page a 5 million for the childhood centres, and here there is another 5 million for childhood centres. I am very happy for these centres, Madam. If Minister can kindly tell us how many, the location and cost per centre?

**Hon. Imbert:** I just gave an undertaking to the Member for Caroni East to provide whatever information is available with respect to that $5 million Item for childhood centres.
Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: This is another 5 million, Minister.

Hon. Imbert: No. I was talking about—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: There are two “5 millions” for childhood.

Hon. Imbert: Member for Siparia, the Member for Caroni East asked me about 784.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Which is?

Hon. Imbert: The same one that you just asked me about.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I know he asked you about the R.C.

Hon. Imbert: You just asked about 784.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you for your undertaking.

Hon. Imbert: I will provide the information—for the other five and for this one too.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Hon. Imbert: You are welcome.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: I am okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 27, 764, the Young Scholars Programme, I take it that this is to offer scholarships, and if it is, then this seems inadequate—200,000 to promote scholarship in Tobago.

Madam Chairman: Okay. So you want to know what that programme is about?

Mr. Charles: What it is for?

Madam Chairman: Yes.
Mr. Charles: And why the low figure?

Hon. Imbert: I am told it is not a scholarship programme per se. It is simply to help persons who have excelled in the educational system in Tobago, top of the class.

Mr. Charles: At all levels?

Hon. Imbert: Well, people who have excelled.

Mr. Charles: But 200 seems inadequate in the context of the 600 for vehicles.

Hon. Imbert: Well, it is not a scholarship. It is to provide them with assistance.

Mr. Charles: Well, assistance is tuition and with books.

Hon. Imbert: It is not a scholarship.

Mr. Charles: Just look at this figure, I think it is inadequate.

Hon. Imbert: It is simply to provide the young scholars with some assistance, not a scholarship.

Mr. Charles: You could take from a vehicle or two and put here.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: On page 28, 546. The New Scarborough Library. What is the status of this project?—it is an ongoing project. And what is the possible completion date and completion cost?—546 on page 28, the Scarborough Library; 2019, 1 million. What is the 1 million to be spent on and what is the status of where the school has reached?—it is an ongoing project; library, sorry.

Hon. Imbert: I am told the library has been completed and is fully functional and in operation for many years. They will determine what that 1 million is for.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay.
Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 495 and Item 509.

Madam Chairman: 495 on page 28?

Mr. Singh: On page 28. The Chief Secretary’s Award for Excellence in Science, Teaching, Research, Innovation, Development and Empowerment. I want to know what are the criteria used to determine this? What is the programme that you have in place that would allow the Chief Secretary to give an award of this nature?

And secondly, with respect to Tobago Sci-Tech exposition, is that award linked to that exposition?—because there is an allocation for that exposition of 500,000, so together there is almost $1 million invested in Sci-Tech in that area.

Hon. Imbert: I will find out, but I doubt they are linked, but I will get the information for you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Same page 28, line Items 513 and 533. Are these connected in any way? Are they separate entities? If you can help me by telling me where they are located.

Hon. Imbert: Well, the first one is located in Roxborough.

Mr. Karim: I know, but where? Because they used—

Hon. Imbert: It is in Roxborough.

Mr. Karim: Are any of these facilities located in the Roxborough Secondary School?

Hon. Imbert: It is the Roxborough Trade Centre, that is not in the school, as far as I know.
Mr. Karim: Can you tell us, is it possible to find out what programmes—I know it is trade programmes—how many students are at each facility?

Hon. Imbert: Yes. That will be provided.

Mr. Karim: And the programmes that are conducted at these two facilities?

Hon. Imbert: I think you just asked me that, but that will be provided.

Mr. Karim: All right.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 28, Item 503, Establishment of a Consortium of Retired Educators and Specialist Teachers, could we get some, could you enlighten the House?

Hon. Imbert: There is no allocation for that in 2019. Okay? And therefore, I cannot answer your question.

Mr. Charles: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to follow up on a question that was asked earlier 495. Is the award automatic? Is it that once the person is identified whether in the newspapers or what, that it is automatic or do you have to apply and provide your results to qualify for such a very prestigious award?

Hon. Imbert: I gave an undertaking to the Member for Chaguanas West to provide the criteria for these awards. I believe that when that answer is given to the Member for Chaguanas West, it will answer your question which is virtually identical.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services.
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Standing Finance Committee (cont’d)

Question put and agreed to.

Head 15 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 16: Central Administrative Services Tobago, $40,973,000.

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes. I want to thank the members of the Tobago House of Assembly. [Desk thumping]

Hon. Webster-Roy: The Central Administrative Services Tobago, which is placed under the Office of Prime Minister in 2015 is responsible for the coordination of all matters related to Tobago under central. They are three main sections to this department, Administrative Services, the Meteorological Services Division and Registrar General.

Accomplishments for past fiscal include in terms of our NGO community we were able to assist 32 organizations. A new file-tracking system was purchased and will be implemented to improve the function in the registry section. The Registrar General’s office continues to provide services to members of the public. The weights and measures unit continues working in collaboration with the Bureau of Standards in Trinidad in the roll-out of the new Metrology Act.

Our outlook for 2019: increase in staff for the addition of a health and safety officer and other support staff to improve the efficiency of services delivered, and to ensure legal compliance with health and occupational standards. The acquisition of an automated weather observing system, ground station and radio equipment for the meteorological services, and the acquisition of an asset management and stores inventory system to secure the assets of the UNREVISED
Office of the Prime Minister, Central Administrative Services, Tobago. I thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Minister.

*Question proposed:* That Head 16 stand part of the Schedule.

**Madam Chairman:** Hon. Members, the sum of $40,973,000 for Head 16, Central Administrative Services Tobago, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure* and the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme*.

We shall proceed to consider *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*.


**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment. I am seeing an increase by 500,000 for 2 million for 2019. So to remind the Minister with the undertaking to give us a list of positions and persons for Contract Employment for 2 million for 2019.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yeah.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Also, Short-Term Employment, 715,000, an increase by 142,000, same undertaking, list of positions. Line Item 43, Security Services, 2.3 million for 2019 an increase by 151,000. Minister, can
you care to clarify with respect to security services?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Security at our head office in Tobago and also up at the Registrar General’s office.

Ms. Ramdial: What accounts for the increase though by 151,000?—increase in fees?

Hon. Webster-Roy: No. Actually that is for the Met, the new building.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay.

Hon. Webster-Roy: That is additional to cover Met.

Ms. Ramdial: All right. And line Item 66, Hosting of Conferences Seminars and Other Functions, 200,000 for 2019, an increase by 1100,000. Can you clarify with respect to that?—the increase.

Hon. Webster-Roy: We have been having a number of activities on the island, creating awareness about the Office of the Prime Minister, Central Administrative Services Tobago and hosting a number of different activities in collaboration with agencies. And also, I would have mentioned in my budget speech, we would have hosted the Republic Day parade for the second year in Roxborough.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Trade and Industry. Item 005, Meteorological Services. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line 16, Contract Employment for 2019, 400,000 is estimated, that is an increase by 280,000. Again, an undertaking from the Minister for positions, a list. Also, line Item 17 for Training, an increase by 114,000. Minister, you care to clarify?
Hon. Webster-Roy: There are a number of mandatory training that the officers have to attend, so we are hoping that they will be able to pursue those this year.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Registrar General. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases. Item 001, General Administration. Item 005, Meteorological Services. Item 007, Registrar General. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies. Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Just if the hon. Minister can identify the number of non-profit organizations? That is line Item 005/01.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Yeah. Okay. We assisted 31 this last fiscal and we are hoping to do more this fiscal. You want me to call them out? Okay.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: If we can get in writing.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 41. Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. G. Equipment and Vehicles, we are on that. Right? I can go to that, 003, Equipment for Meteorological Services. I am seeing an increase by 10.3 million. Minister, you care to clarify?—not an increase, sorry—an estimate for 2019, 10.3 million. Can you clarify a bit with respect to equipment for this division?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Okay. During the budget debate, during my contribution I would have noted that we were looking to acquire equipment for the building
that we would have moved into to ensure that we have maintained world standard, and to improve our ability at forecasting, also to assist with the new airport and the current airport so flights land more safely, et cetera.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay. Thank you.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 16 ordered to stand part it of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Hon. Members, I think that there is agreement that we should take the suspension now. We shall resume at six o’clock.

**5.24 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee suspended.**

**6.00 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee resumed.**

**Madam Chairman:** This meeting of the Standing Finance Committee is now resumed.

**Head 39:** Ministry of Public Utilities, $2,952,369,000.

**Madam Chairman:** We move to Head 39, Ministry of Public Utilities, $2,952,369,000. I will now invite the Minister of Public Utilities to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes. Minister.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Thank you, Madam Chairman. It is an honour for me to address the Standing Finance Committee of the Parliament this evening. It has been one year since I was appointed by Dr. The Hon. Keith Rowley as the Minister of Public Utilities to serve the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and I must say that it has been a year filled with very challenging, but quite stimulating work with my team at the Ministry and at the various utility agencies. Our work has been driven by a genuine desire to generate new and innovative ideas and approaches to solve the challenges facing our public utilities.

Madam Chairman, in my first presentation to this Committee last year, I
indicated that the Ministry of Public Utilities was intent on playing its part in creating the economy and society of the 2030 that we all desire. I gave a commitment to accelerate the implementation of Government policies and programmes in priority areas such as water resource management, improved transmission and distribution of water, expansion of the national power grid, and waste and waste water management.

As I look back one year over the past year, I consider myself very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to lead a Ministry which touches the lives of every single citizen of this country every single day. My team of some 300 officers and I, continue to challenge any perception that business as usual is acceptable. Instead, we have been relentless in our efforts to do more with less, and to upgrade the quality of customer service. In the last financial year we achieved an implementation rate of 71 per cent under the PSIP, using $507.4 million.

Madam Chairman, the Minister of Finance has been doing an excellent job in building the foundation for growth since he assumed office in September 2015, and we are now experiencing genuine economic turnaround, with a growth projected at 1.9 per cent this year. I intend to continue doing my part to stimulate this growth trajectory by providing strategic leadership and governance to the public utility sector to ensure that the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago obtain value for money. For us at the Ministry of Public Utilities it is not business as usual. We continue to seek and employ new ways of enhancing our operational efficiency and expanding accessibility to quality service. We have recently started a series of outreach activities to respond to the plight of so many of our citizens who face challenges in getting a regular supply of water, or electricity, or postal service. At the same time, we have also urged citizens to collaborate with us in our new
resource management and conservation drive to reduce the use of water and electricity while generating less waste. Collectively, we will continue the transformation of Trinidad and Tobago which is anchored in our Vision 2030. In fiscal 2019, the draft estimates proposed an allocation of $3.182 billion for the Ministry of Public Utilities.

Madam Chairman, 382 million will be utilized for the continued implementation of programmes and projects to increase water production through well development, expand central sewerage connections, accelerate our leak repair programme and upgrade transmission and distribution infrastructure, reduce levels of waste generation and improve landfill management, improve business operations in both the Ministry and its agencies. Madam Chairman, the work of fixing the plane while it is in the air continues, and in the year ahead these projects and programmes will define a welcome change in how we produce and deliver our services. I thank you.

Question proposed: That Head 39 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $2,952,369,000 for Head 39, Ministry of Public Utilities is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, the Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly and the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme.

We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. We are at page 245 of the Recurrent. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Meteorological Services. Member for Chaguanas West.
Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister: Could you, on Item 01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance for the Meteorological Service, could you give us an appreciation of the complement of staff on the establishment and how many vacancies there are?

Hon. Le Hunte: The substantive holders on the Meteorological Services, we have what? Is 32 substantive holders, 18 vacancies; total position is 50. We have a total position of 50, of which 32 are substantive holders, 18 vacancies.

Mr. Singh: Are there any contract employees?

Hon. Le Hunte: We have six contract employees, four are filled and we have two vacant at this point.

Mr. Singh: Through you, Madam Chair, is there any plan to fill those?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes. Yes, when we have budgeted in the expenditure for the positions.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the hon. Minister: Could you give us some appreciation of the current complement of staff and together with the establishment, and whether there are any contract employees?

Madam Chairman: We are under 001.

Mr. Singh: 05, 01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowances.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Le Hunte: The number of positions, 48. We have 37 substantive holders. We have 11—37, and we have 11 vacant positions. Contract employees, we have three posts and three are vacant.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.
Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister you indicated that in your opening speech you are all for innovation. At an earlier stage of the growth of the Electrical Inspectorate there existed a programme for the possible privatization of this through utilizing a Minnesota model, and that perhaps you may want to contemplate looking at that model in which the Electrical Inspectorate goes into the communities and they become—the Ministry provides regulation, and they provide the service, and the customer pays for it.

Hon. Le Hunte: Noted, but we have not brought that into this position this year.

Mr. Singh: Helping new innovation.

Hon. Le Hunte: Thank you very much; appreciate.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Good and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister line Item 08, Rent/Lease Office Accommodation and Storage, 8,350—8,350,000. How many locations this rent is for, and does this rent include your main head office, and the location of your head office?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes, this rent—the breakdown is for the rental of our head office at One Alexandra Street. So that figure that includes that, and that is for how many buildings, where the other buildings, the exact number of them, I would not be able to tell you. But I could tell you that it does include for the renal of all of our facilities, including our One Alexandra Street.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. Minister 02, 08, the rent. Could you tell us the monthly rent of One Alexandra Place?

Hon. Le Hunte: $675,000 per month, 8,100 annually.
Mr. Charles: So, that works out—

Hon. Le Hunte: Eight million, sorry.

Mr. Charles: So that—how much per year, sorry?

Hon. Le Hunte: 8.1 million.

Mr. Charles: So most of the money is One Alexandra?

Hon. Le Hunte: Basically, yes.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Meteorological Services; Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: You are on page 247?

Madam Chairman: We are on page 250.

Hon. Member: What!

Hon. Member: Move ahead, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Meteorological Services; Item 005, Electrical Inspectorate; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies. We are on page 251. Item 001, Regional Bodies; Item 003, United Nations Organizations; Items 004, International Bodies; Item 007, Households. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. The hon. Minister, the Utilities Assistance Programme, I see you have a reduction in this programme. This is the programme in which the very poor are assisted. Could you give us an explanation why the decrease?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, again, I mean, the amount that we are talking about is just in keeping—almost in keeping—with what it was for the revised—the estimated figures. It is just a very small drop. So, therefore, based on what it is we did the year before and what we think that we would be doing this year, yes, it is about
43,000, but, I mean, we are by and large looking at doing about the same.

Mr. Singh: And then Item 08, through you, Madam Chair, Refunds for T&TEC Re: Rebate, I see that you had an allocation of a revised estimate in 2018 of 70,000, but there is a reduction—

Hon. Member: 70 million.

Mr. Singh: —to 70 million, but there is a reduction to 50 million in 2019. Could you explain that reduction?

Hon. Le Hunte: Okay. I mean, in 2018—about 20million really was as a result of a carry-forward, so the amount that was actually spent in 2018 was about 50. Part of it was really to settle for the previous year, and hence the reason why we are going for 50 again this year.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, on line Items 06 and 08, would you be able, not at this time, but would you be able to advise how many persons benefitted from the rebate? How many persons were able to successfully apply for a rebate as well as the UAP programme in this case?

Hon. Le Hunte: All right. Okay. In 2018 there was T&TEC—from a T&TEC, under the Utility Assistance Programme, all right, under T&TEC we had 1,299 beneficiaries and under the WASA programme we had 12,284 beneficiaries. Under the Water Tank Assistance Programme you had 19 beneficiaries. Under the Solar Panel Assistance Programme, you had four beneficiaries.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Madam Chair, my question was taken already.

Dr. Tewarie: Yes, on 102, Solid Waste Management.

Madam Chairman: 01, we have not reached there as yet.
Dr. Tewarie: You have not gotten there, sorry.

Madam Chairman: Yes. All right, so can we move on? Item 009, Others Transfers. Is that where you are? No, you are at 011. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister, under Transfers, 009, 04, Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation, this year you are transferring or you are giving 79.2 million. Could the Minister state how many employees are at the TTPost presently?

Madam Chairman: Currently?

Mr. Lee: Yes, currently.

Hon. Le Hunte: 1,018 employees at TTPost.

Mr. Lee: 1,018. Are there any plans for next year to have any attrition or any severing of employment?

Hon. Le Hunte: No. Actually we recognize that. I mean, TTPost, there is a lot of vacancies there. The sum of this money is to help in filling some of those vacancies. Some of this money is also because of revenue reduction that has been happening because of the digitization of that company—less mail coming in. So that is why the expenditure. But they have some key positions that they have not been able to fill hence the slight increase in subventions that we have to give them.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, I am still on line Item 04. Do you have any significant plans or projects to utilize this increase of 4.2 million for the benefit of communities and households?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, the major reason—as I said, the major reason for the 4.2 million was really a combination of things. One of the major ones is the fact that the company is actually getting less revenue. So they are projected to get less
revenue because people are not utilizing mail services as much. So that 4.2 increase in subvention is as a result of that. They have some other projects. There are some personnel expenditure—some positions that they do need to fill. There are some materials and supplies and some office accommodations. So it is really a lot of recurrent work inside there. I do not think there is any major expansion of any new services that we are looking to do. So, as I said, that increased subvention is as a result of the drop in revenue that the company is actually going to be achieving.

Mr. Karim: Okay, thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 02, Water Resource Management Unit. There is an allocation of a million dollars. What is the status of this change that you promised in your manifesto to make?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, again, we are putting a million dollars there because we have promised it, and we are looking towards that best practice of moving the water resource management out of—separating them from WASA, and we are looking towards making that happen this year, and hence that particular allocation.

Mr. Singh: Item 03, I see that after 2 million in 2018 and there is no revised estimate in 2019. The Waste Recycling Management Authority has fell by the wayside?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, no, it has not fell by the wayside at all, because we consider that to be very important and very strategic. We are just putting the responsibility for the recycling—we have now moved that into SWMCOL, and if you look at the allocation for SWMCOL you will see a “lil bit” more money going in there to manage that particular part of the operations.
Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister. Minister, I continue to hear you indicate that there is the need to fill some vacancies at TTPost. Will this be in the bargaining unit where there is a recognized majority union, or outside of the bargaining unit, and how many vacancies are you planning to fill?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, there are a number of vacancies presently at TTPost. That is an operation. I mean, the actual number of vacancies range based on what is there. It is close to over 100 vacancies at TTPost and they are under the allocation at the company, which is the company's structure, which is all will fall under, I suspect, the bargaining unit.

Mr. Indarsingh: With the passage of time probably you could provide that information with the specific numbers and so on?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, I am saying, the number of vacancies—I could tell you the number of vacancies. As per what you would like to find out, exactly which are the ones they are looking to fill?

Mr. Indarsingh: Well, for the information of this particular meeting, if you need time, you could always provide it.

Madam Chairman: Yes, but the Minister is not certain what you want.

Mr. Indarsingh: The Minister indicated, Madam Chair, that TTPost is in the process of filling, or they have vacancies to fill. I ask the question: How many vacancies, and whether they fall in the bargaining unit or outside of the bargaining unit? A very simple question. I was trying to get the numbers.

Hon. Le Hunte: And the number of vacancies that you have is 124, and I will have to then tell you whether they are in the bargaining unit or outside of the bargaining unit. I would give that to you. No problem.
Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central, are you on 009 or you are on 011?

Dr. Tewarie: Yes, I want to ask one question on 009.

Madam Chairman: Okay, Member for Caroni Central.

Dr. Tewarie: 18, 19, 20 and 21. Is T&TEC fully responsible for this, or is there a Government guarantee? Or Government involvement of any kind?

Hon. Le Hunte: Are you dealing specifically with 14?

Madam Chairman: 18, 19, 20 and 21.

Dr. Tewarie: The bonds; they are all the same date, 18 to 26.

Hon. Le Hunte: They are all Government guarantee. All Government guarantee.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises.

Dr. Tewarie: The Minister kind of answered the question. I wanted to know what justifies the $35 million increase to Solid Waste Management. He hinted that it might involve the waste recycling management authority.

Madam Chairman: You at 02, at 011?

Dr. Tewarie: Yes. Is that the only one?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, is there any outstanding sums of money being owed to employees of the Solid Waste Management Company Limited which have been realized via the collective bargaining process?

Madam Chairman: We are on what, 02?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes, Ma’am.
Hon. Le Hunte: Outstanding money owed to the Solid Waste—

Mr. Indarsingh: Employees.

Hon. Le Hunte: Employees?

Mr. Indarsingh: Yes.

Hon. Le Hunte: I think I will need to get back to you on that. I am hearing a figure of 2.4 million that is owed, but I will need to get some more details.

Mr. Indarsingh: And could you provide for what collective bargaining period and so on?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes. Yes.

Mr. Indarsingh: I would appreciate.

Hon. Le Hunte: And let me get back to you on that particular one.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Karim: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, might you be able to tell us about the level of success you have achieved since the budget made mention, or the previous budget, with respect to the tyre recycling programme?

Madam Chairman: Where are we?

Mr. Karim: Line Item 02, Solid Waste Management Company Limited.

Madam Chairman: Is that under this head or under the Development Programme?

Mr. Karim: Well, I am not seeing anything under development on it.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: May I interject, please?

Mr. Karim: Sorry?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Under the Ministry of Planning and Development you would see that.
Mr. Karim: Okay.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 06, Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies, Item 004, Statutory Boards, page 253. We are going on to a new book. Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly; 51, Water and Sewerage Authority; Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration, page 199. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Salaries—line Item 01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance. There is a significant reduction from the 2018 revised estimate of $609,160,000 to the 2019 estimate of $306,100,000. It is a 50 per cent reduction. Could the hon. Minister explain this reduction?

Hon. Le Hunte: Okay. Well, basically it is almost a reallocation in a different particular area. The 303.1 decrease is primarily as a result of a reclassification of the 1,983 Contract Employment under Goods and Services, which was previously reported under personnel expenditure. So, you had monthly paid plus long-term contracts in it before, and now all we have in that particular area is the monthly paid employees, and we have the contract employees. If you look further down when we reach there you will see that particular area has also gone up by over $200 million.

Mr. Singh: Could you guide me, what line Item?

Hon. Le Hunte: So if, for example, you go to Contract Employment under page 196, 16 heading, you would see that moved from 37 to 237.

Madam Chairman: So that 02, 16?
Hon. Le Hunte: Yes.

Mr. Singh: So, there is no plan for staff reduction then?

Hon. Le Hunte: No. No. There are some employees that are leaving via attrition, and therefore that reduction—that slight difference is really people who are then leaving the organization via attrition.

Mr. Singh: Item 02, Wages and—through you, Madam Chair—COLA, including leave paid. There is a reduction of—a decrease of 10 million. Is this a policy of attrition?

Hon. Le Hunte: The reduction of 10 million is due to an increase of 87 daily-paid workers filling monthly paid vacancies. So, again, this was—so it is a shifting of the classification of the workers.

Madam Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla, you have a question?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Madam Chair, I just want to confirm that this continues on page 200, right? So, I can go to page 200, line Item No. 68, Water Trucking. And, I am asking—

Madam Chairman: Reinstatement WASA?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: No, 68, Water Trucking, yes. If the hon. Minister can indicate whether this is in fact adequate in light of the fact that we have had several instances of water not being supplied and persons requiring water trucking, and has not been adequate at all. And also on line Item 69, Road Reinstatement.

Madam Chairman: Could you allow the Minister to see whether he can answer your first question?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Sure.

Hon. Le Hunte: So, under Water Trucking, page—and I just want to make sure that I am on Water Trucking. Yes, we are putting some money into Water

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Trucking, and again within our budget constraints we are looking at dealing in that particular service as efficiently as we can. And that is page 199, No. 68 heading.

**Madam Chairman:** 200.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Page 200.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** All right.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Line Item 68.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Okay. And your other question?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Line Item 69. In light of the increase in the allocation given to this Sub-Item, what changes can be anticipated for residents such as myself—well, my constituency who have serious problems with road reinstatement after works have been done?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, the idea is we have increase some—we have gotten some money, and additional money put into that particular area, and the idea would be, of course, we are heavy on trying to fix a number of leaks, and we would be trying to fix the roads, or put some money to be allowed for that to happen at a quicker rate.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** So, therefore, hon. Minister, we can anticipate that as a leak is repaired, the road would be almost instantaneously re-repaired?

**6.30 p.m.**

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, you know, I would not go as far as saying that will always happen because we are trying to fix over 2,600 leaks and leaks continue to come up because of the ageing infrastructure that we have inherited. And therefore, I cannot guarantee—but what it is that we are putting a little bit more money for the fixing of the leaks because we are looking at also going into a heavy NRW programme with leaks and so forth. So hopefully we will be able to address them
in a much more timely manner going forward.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to return to page 199, but before I do so, I want to piggyback on my colleague, the Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla’s question on Water Trucking. Could the hon. Minister indicate the moneys owed to Water Trucking contractors? Provide a listing of the contractors and the moneys owed to those contractors.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** That one—I will have to provide that one to you in writing.

**Mr. Singh:** Similarly, Road Reinstatement contractors. A listing of them and the moneys owed. Because it is my understanding Minister, utilizing those line Items that—they have a series of litigation as a result of Water Trucking contractors and road restoration contractors at the Water and Sewerage Authority.

Could the hon. Minister with respect to the—give a listing of the litigation and moneys owed and the attorneys hired by the Water and Sewerage Authority and the fees paid to those attorneys? Provide it subsequently. I “doh” expect you to have that information.

**Madam Chairman:** We are under what line Item, 23?

**Mr. Singh:** It is on Road restor—it is 68 and 69.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and to the Minister. The Minister may not be totally familiar with the organizational structure of WASA and you noted that the 303million decrease—

**Madam Chairman:** Where are we?

**Mr. Indarsingh:**—in relation to—

**Madam Chairman:** Member, could you give me the line Item, please?
Mr. Indarsingh: 16, Contract Employment. I see that there is an increase of 200 million as it relates to Contract Employment. Could you elaborate on this, in terms of, for this meeting, how this 200 million is going to be utilized as it relates to Contract Employment as opposed to the establishment in the respective collective bargaining units and so on, within WASA?

Hon. Le Hunte: Let me be clear. This is not—there was a category of workers who WASA previously had all lumped together, that is, the amount of monthly paid, permanent employees and long-term contract employees. They were on contract and everything was put in one. What we have now done is to put the monthly paid employees into one particular category and the contract employees in another category. So this is not new contract employees that we are going to hire. These are existing contract employees that instead of pooling it as one and coming up with 600 and something, you now have 300 one place and 200 and something one place and you get close to 600. The difference is, really, you have some people that are leaving the organization and the objective is really to try to not fill some of those vacancies and bring that cost down.

Mr. Indarsingh: So this 200 million will cater for how many contract employees?

Hon. Le Hunte: All right. How many is in that particular category? The actual amount that would be filled in that particular category, because as I said, you have contracts that are long-term contracts and then there are some that are more short-term contracts and they are used in different areas. If you want me to give you the number that will be paid by that particular category, I will have to get that one back for you rather than trying to calculate it now.

Mr. Indarsingh: And could you provide, because I hear the term long-term contracts and short-term contracts. Could you differentiate for the meeting, what
you mean by long-term contracts as opposed to short-term, in terms of duration?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, I think for the purposes of this meeting, long-term contracts I would say are people that are over one to three years.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Over one to three years.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes. And the amount—I am getting the figure. The figure that you are asking for is about 1,983 employees under that contract particular category.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** And they do not fall—these people or these employees do not fall into any bargaining unit within WASA?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** No.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** No? Okay. Thank you very much.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, looking at 02, Goods and Services, page 199; line Item 12, Materials and Supplies. I am seeing Materials and Supplies has increased to 97 million. Can you account for what might be the reason for this drastic increase?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** This category represents expenses related to the purchase of desalinated water. There is a back payment or payments that are owed to the “desal water” and we are looking at making a lump-sum payment towards those arrears payments.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** And line 23, Fees. What specific activities paid—itemized like 2, 3 as fees?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Fees. I mean, this category represents estimated fees in several areas and payments to external attorneys to defend the authority provisions of legal advice, settlement of judgment with respect to litigation matters in the High Court.
and in the Magistrates’ Court.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. With respect to Item 12, Materials and Supplies raised by my colleague, it has been brought to my attention that a lot of the materials—couplings and so on—are in short supply. Is the Minister aware of that and if there is going to be—under this Item, if there is going to be an increase amount of materials to fix the leaks arising from this allocation?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** If I am aware, yes.

**Mr. Singh:** That there is a shortage?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes.

**Mr. Singh:** Could the Minister indicate under the Fees, the listing of the attorneys employed by the Water and Sewerage Authority and the fees paid to them and for the litigation being pursued?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** That will have to be provided subsequently.

**Mr. Singh:** And line Item 43, Security Services. There is an allocation on the 2019 Estimates of 74,244,000. Could the hon. Minister indicate the listing of the contractors who provide these security services and the monthly allocation to them?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Sure.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** When you get to 009, Other Transfers.

**Madam Chairman:** Very good. Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 69, Road Reinstatement—W.A.S.A. Could the Minister tell us the level of coordination with the Ministry of Works and Transport and other agencies so that you schedule your repairs and consequently
your road reinstatements to not coincide with the happening just after the roads are repaired and paved?

**Madam Chairman:** Member, again I am not going to allow that kind of question on this exercise.

**Mr. Charles:** No problem.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 007, Households; Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, line Item 02, Settlement of Claims. It is estimated and budgeted for $6 million, 2019. Could the Minister elucidate what kind of claims are being settled here?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, as at the 31st of August, 2018, the authority had approximately 119 claims which was estimated at about 6 million. And this is what they are basically catering for.

**Mr. Lee:** But what sort of claims would have—are these from the public? Is it from—

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well I mean, they are various. The claims include claims for personal injury claims, damages to property, crops and vehicles, wrongful disconnections and excessive buildings, industrial relations matters—are also resulted in claims that all these types of miscellaneous claims.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** 55—Regulated Industries Commission. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, page 219. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration, pages 219 to 220. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 04, Current
Transfers and Subsidies; Item 007 Households. Item 009, Other Transfers.

Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 88. Item 003, Economic Infrastructure, pages 88 to 92. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Would it apply under National Street Lighting Programme? Is it okay to go there?

**Madam Chairman:** If you could just give me the Item.

**Mr. Lee:** 581, 5-8-1.

**Madam Chairman:** 581, National Street Lighting Programme. Yes.

**Mr. Lee:** Can I ask? Okay, thank you. Minister, under this Development Programme—National Streetlighting Programme—could you indicate when this project will begin or is this—let me ask you, when this project will begin?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** This is a programme that is—it is ongoing. It was previously funded via T&TEC internally generated funds and there are some projects that are now going to be utilized to be dealing with this particular programme.

**Mr. Lee:** It is an ongoing—

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes, it is an ongoing programme. It commenced, actually—

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** My colleague asked the question.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva—Chaguanas East, I am sorry.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, this—line Item 581, National Street Lighting Programme. Is there a concern in terms of the spares for replacement? Sometimes when we make reports they are telling us that you do not have the spares to repair these streetlights. Is that a realistic concern?
Hon. Le Hunte: Well, you know, I mean from time to time inventory management is always something that we have to deal with, but I mean, it is not a major concern. We do attempt to try to address most of the issues that comes from this for street lighting repairs.

Mr. Karim: Will this be a sufficient allocation?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes, we feel that how this should be sufficient.

Mr. Karim: If I may go on to line Item 586, Madam Chair?

Madam Chairman: Line Items—

Mr. Karim: 586.

Madam Chairman: 586?

Mr. Karim: Yeah. There are a number of recreation grounds where you have poor lighting now as a result of bulbs are not being maintained or repaired and so on. The lighting facilities, is this going to come under this allocation for improvement works?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes, this is Lighting of Parks and Recreation Grounds and I suppose where they require some degree—a lot of this is really going to be for the new grounds that are going to be lit, but it will also take some of them that need to be changed— bulbs and so forth—this will also be handled.

Mr. Karim: How do we ensure as a constituency that we get on the priority list where these things are very— For example, in my constituency of Enterprise—that is just a question? How do we get in the priority for areas that may be termed “high risk”?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, you know what I do—what we try to do, we try to look at the list of constituencies that already have a lot of grounds that have been lit. [Crosstalk] And where there are constituencies that with less grounds that are
being lit, we kind “ah” look at those areas. So there are a number of things that we do, but I could assure you that there are lots of—

**Mr. Karim:** I am being reminded by my colleague that it is PNM grounds first. [Crosstalk and laughter] Hon. Minister—

**Madam Chairman:** Order, order, I am happy for the little light mood, but please let us stick to the business. We have plenty work to do. Member for Chaguanas East, are you finished?

**Mr. Karim:** Yeah, I am okay, Ma’am.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 593, the Electrification Programme. I see in 2019 there is an Estimate of 3 million. Minister, can you give some clarification on this programme, considering that in 2017 and 2018 there was no budgeting for it?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes. Well, in 20—again, a lot of those programmes were funded via internally generated funds. In 2018, there were 16 projects completed that had about 53 beneficiaries; 38 projects were approved with a total of 404 beneficiaries. We do expect that the programme going forward will impact about 150 households and communities based on the projects that we have that were approved that need to be executed.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Two questions. Minister, line Item 583, Development of Disaster Preparedness Capabilities in T&TEC. In 2018, you had $1 million budgeted and this year is 12.6 million. What is the cause for this steep budget allocation in 2019 in respect to this line Item?
Hon. Le Hunte: Well again, you know, T&TEC has been building capacity, especially with regard to disaster preparedness. One of the things that were purchased under this Item before was these big trailers that were able to provide generating facilities in case of lights going—when lights go out. What we are looking at purchasing this year is an amphibious vehicle, or two amphibious vehicles. This is a vehicle that will allow for you to get into flood waters rather than we have to wait now until they subside, so that we will be able to restore disaster areas with flood—we will be able to restore them to electricity at a lot faster rate.

Mr. Lee: Very good. And a follow-up question, Madam Chair, in Line 586, the Lighting of Parks and Recreational Grounds. You had mentioned the lighting of new grounds. Could you, if you do not have the list, you could provide us with a listing of the new grounds that are designated to be lit in 2019 under this Head, 586, please? The Parks and Recreational Grounds. You had said that there were new grounds that you were going to light up in 2019.

Hon. Le Hunte: There were 10. We are estimating 10 grounds to be lit in 2019.

Mr. Lee: Do you have the locations?

Hon. Le Hunte: No.

Mr. Lee: If you do not have it, you could provide it in writing.

Hon. Le Hunte: Upon request. We could provide it.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 592, New Bulk Power Project. an allocation of 7 million. What is this about?

Hon. Le Hunte: 592?

Mr. Singh: Yeah.
Hon. Le Hunte: Really, this is to complete work at the Westmoorings substation and the Wrightson Road-Bamboo circuit.

Mr. Singh: And Item 597, Madam Chair, with your permission. I take it that the Cove project is now completed because the Expansion of Generating Capacity in Tobago, the allocation of a 20—Revised Estimate for 2018 was 94 million. So it is completed?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes, that project is completed. Project was successfully completed and we are up to capacity in Tobago, ready for expansion.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, to the hon. Minister, line Item 596, the Replacement of Aging Transmission Infrastructure. In 2018, with an allocation of 2 million, we see that in 2019 14,800,000 has been appropriated. Can the hon. Minister indicate whether or not with this particular sum identified whether the project will be completed? [Crosstalk]

Hon. Le Hunte: The deliverables—we are looking at doing some work in rehabilitating in the Tabaquite/Rio Claro area, circuits in [Crosstalk and laughter] Point Lisas, St. Mary’s—

Madam Chairman: I have observed since the Attorney General has come in he has brought a certain energy into the room for which I am grateful. But I would just like us really to settle down and get on with the business. Thank you for the energy AG. Minister of Finance. [Crosstalk] Minister of Finance, thank you. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Padarath: Minister, can you continue?

Madam Chairman: Minister of Public Utilities.

Hon. Le Hunte: So, I mean, they are saying that there are a number of projects,
right, that require ageing transmission infrastructure and it is important for T&TEC to be constantly investing in maintenance and making sure those projects are up to mark and therefore this money here would be spent in those particular areas.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam. Hon. Minister, with respect to line Item 583, Development of Disaster Preparedness Capabilities in T&TEC. I was appreciative of the answer you gave. I just wanted to have a further appreciation of whether or not T&TEC was engaged in any other Ministry or any other external party in terms of technical cooperation advice in this particular area. Are you getting help from external? Other Ministries or any international organization with respect to the level of preparedness if you are instituting this particular programme, in terms of technical advice and cooperation?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes, there is a particular programme, APPA. There is an external in the US that we do get some advice on and we do liaise with what is happening. There is, of course, collaboration with a number of other Ministries as exactly from a disaster preparedness programme, what exactly is needed to deal with in the case of a disaster in the country and making sure that we are ready to play our part.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. With respect to this particular programme, is there a cohesion with this particular programme and Ministry of National Security as it relates to having a symbiotic relationship with all state agencies, seeing that this is a particularly new programme that is coming on stream?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well you know, again everything that we try to do as a Government we all try to work together as a team, and therefore, yes, there are lots of collaborations between what is happening in national security, what is
happening in local government, when we work together as a team.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central

**Dr. Tewarie:** Yes, Chair, 585, Production and Delivery of Bulk Power. There is a significant increase there. Can you explain what it involves? You have 4 million, 4 million and then 21.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, this project entails the construction of 18 substations and—what we are looking at doing here is that there have been some land acquisitions that happened in that corridor when the first line was passed and we are looking to negotiate and settle some of those outstanding matters.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Is 591 related to that? Or is that separate and distinct?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, again, so that there is again that same corridor trying to build the capacity and build a second line also and therefore we have some outstanding matters after we put the first line in and then we are also trying to deal with new matters to build the second line.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Fyzabad.

**Dr. Bodoe:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, with regard to the line Item 589, Elimination of Public Spaces and the allocation of $2 million: Can you indicate what spaces you are looking at? Is this an extension of an ongoing programme?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Again, we could, again, upon request the actual—we are looking at about 12 public spaces and I could then provide them for you; provide a list to you of what are some of the spaces we are looking at.

**Dr. Bodoe:** I am just thinking, Minister, just a suggestion—I am presuming that this will help in terms of security and so on. Are you satisfied that this allocation is sufficient for what you would want to achieve in 2019 in the current circumstances.

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Hon. Le Hunte: Well, you know, we have to manage one purse and I mean, of course we feel, yes, we are. The simple answer is, yes. It will take us along the path.

Dr. Boodoe: Is there a criteria or a policy for determining which public spaces will be lit? Or priority order?

Hon. Le Hunte: We do take requests coming from the Ministry and then when we look at the requests and we look at it we will then put them forward.

Dr. Boodoe: Okay Minister, thank you for that answer.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, page 90, line Item 022, Well Development Programme.

Hon. Member: “We eh reach there yet.”

Mr. Singh: “We eh reach there yet.”

Madam Chairman: No, no, no. The Item we are looking at, we are under Economic Infrastructure which takes us from 88 to 92. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: All right. Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, Minister, page 90, line 22, Well Development Programme. I see this as a new project for 19 million, fiscal 2019. Can you explain a little bit about this?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well Development Programme, what number?—90; 002, yes?

Ms. Ramdial: 022.

Hon. Le Hunte: 022. Well, as you know—I mean, one of the ways to try to increase the whole water situation, there is a constant need to be drilling and exploring new wells. So we are constantly looking to try to explore new ground water facilities. We have some of the wells, especially—we have looked at some areas in Santa Cruz; we have looked at Granville. There is a particular well down
in the Chatham area that we have identified throughout, that we are looking at increasing water production. That is part of alleviating—the plan to alleviate the water situation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Ramdial: Minister, how many wells you intend to develop with 19 million for fiscal 2019.

Hon. Le Hunte: About six at this point in time.

Ms. Ramdial: Wow, six wells. Wow. Okay, thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item—I am going back a little bit to line Item 586, which is Parks and Recreation Grounds. Hon. Minister, under that line Item there is a particular recreation ground, Housing Village Recreation Ground that there are some issues with it. Under this line Item if it could be addressed please.

Madam Chairman: Member, did you not give an undertaking to give a listing?

Yeah.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I do not want a listing, Madam Chair. It is a situation with it. It is already lit but there is a situation regarding it being—

Hon. Le Hunte: Please send your request or send what is the situation to me—[Crosstalk]

Madam Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, page 89, under Postal Services, line Item 003, Postal Code and S42 Addressing System. In the past few years the numbers have been small and in 2019 it is $2.7 million. What is the reason for this increase in this particular line Item and what is envisioned for this year in 2019?

Hon. Le Hunte: You know, this project has been around for a little while, this
whole postal code system and we are really looking to bring this project to an end. It is winding down. It is about 80 per cent complete and we are looking to just close it off by the end of this year.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 006, the Upgrade of the Carlsen Field Water Treatment Plant. In 2017 and 2018, sums were spent—

Madam Chairman: Page 90?

Mr. Padarath: Yes. In 2019, an allocation of $2 million. Could the hon. Minister indicate whether or not this sum represents the amount needed to complete the upgrade of the Carlsen Field Water Treatment Plant?

Hon. Le Hunte: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanas West.

7.00 p.m.

Mr. Singh: Line Item on page 90, 007, Non-Revenue Water Reduction, an allocation of $10 million. What are the elements of this Non-Revenue Water Reduction Programme?

Hon. Le Hunte: The elements of this particular programme, well as you know, I mean, we have a lot—and you are probably shaking your head because you are saying $10 million would not take you that far, and the reality is we do need to spend a lot more. This is a first phase of about a five-year programme that we hope to get, trying to deal with bringing down non-revenue water. Non-revenue, the estimates continue to be in the vicinity of about 50 per cent. We are looking, in this case of—again, part of fixing the programme is procuring some heavy equipment so that we could utilize some of the labour that we have in-house to try to fix some
of the leaks that we have. So, part of the money is going to go there.

And then also, there are lots of transmission lines which—where we identify some of our transmission lines; where we get a series of leaks coming out of the line, we know we need to change those lines. And therefore, this money is going to go to try to change approximately two kilometres of lines now. There are lots more lines that have passed that criteria that need to be changed and, therefore, it is a programme that we hope to increase over time as funds become available.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 91, a line Item under Water and Sewerage: De-silting and Rehabilitation of Hillsborough Dam in Tobago, an allocation of $10 million. What is the status of this project?

Hon. Le Hunte: This project has gone out for tender. We are opening tenders now and we are looking at issuing a tender and having some significant impact on this particular project in 2019.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 90, Minister, under Major Water Sources, line Item 20. I am asking on behalf of my colleague, Arouca/Maloney. The Arouca well development, $1 million, was budgeted in 2018, no revised estimate, and another $1 million is now estimated in 2019. Was anything done in the Arouca well development for 2018?

Hon. Members: Awww!

Mr. Lee: I know you cannot ask the question, so—

Hon. Le Hunte: So we are doing some—right now, I mean, of course, Arouca well development is very important to us. It requires some site acquisitions that need to be done and we are looking at doing that in 2019, and then we need some infrastructural work, and those are what we are looking to do in 2019.

Mr. Lee: So nothing was done in 2018?

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Hon. Le Hunte: No.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: There is a reason for that—

Madam Chairman: Member for Fyzabad.

Dr. Bodeo: Minister, page 90, Item 004, Construction of Avocat Wells, allocation of $882,000. Can you indicate how far we are from completion of this project?

Hon. Le Hunte: So in 2019 we are looking about the drilling and equipment of one observation well. Right? That is what we hope to achieve with this construction of the Avocat. We will be drilling and equipping one observation well in 2019 with this allocation.

Dr. Bodeo: Right. Can you indicate what you expect from the project; the scope of the project?

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, based on—after—when we do the observation well and the information that we get from it, then we will be in a better position to know exactly what it is; what we could get; what sort of—and move towards the next phase of drilling the production well and equipping the production well.

Dr. Bodeo: Thank you.

Hon. Le Hunte: But our eyes are on it.

Madam Chairman: Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: It was asked already, Ma’am.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am on page 92. Item 002, Residential Electrification Assistance Programme. Madam Chairman, there is no allocation in 2019. This is a programme in which you assist the poor—

Madam Chairman: Just now. What you said, Residential Electrification?

Mr. Singh: Yes.

Madam Chairman: All right. So let us just go to there. Item 004: Social
Infrastructure. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Residential Electrification Assistance Programme is a programme to help the very poor and the indigent. I notice that there has been no allocation in 2019. Could the hon. Minister explain? Or whether it has been moved to some other section?

Hon. Le Hunte: What we are proposed to do, we will continue this programme but we will vary from the EPA and the re-programme to fund the programme.

Mr. Singh: And what will be the allocation in that instance then?

Hon. Le Hunte: In keeping with what was done the year before, which was about $1 million.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: If I may be allowed. Because this is of a recurrent nature, this was specifically moved to a recurrent expense. Because rather than it being a project, it is no longer a project; it is something that has been occurring consistently over a period of time and in an attempt to move projects that have some age off the development programme, we have started putting them into the recurrent. So these expenses would be met from the recurrent expenditure. So it is going to be dealt with under Recurrent.

Mr. Singh: Chair, I am on page 93 now. I notice that—

Madam Chairman: Okay. One minute, please. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: I am on page 93 also.

Madam Chairman: All right. So Item 005: Multisectoral and Other Services. Member for Chaguanas West.

Mr. Singh: Madam Chair, line Item 45, the Development of a Water Resource Agency. I see that there is no allocation. There was no allocation in 2018 and 2019. What is the status of this project? I see under “Previous”, there is an allocation for
a water resource unit.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, as I said before, at that time the best practice—we are looking at implementing best practice of removing that particular—the separation from WASA, and we will be doing that. Whether or not that will be a water resource agency is not necessarily that might be the way to do it, but we are implementing best practice to remove it. So it is not necessarily going to go under this heading.

**Mr. Singh:** So you are changing the frame of your Manifesto?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** I think the Manifesto talked about best practice being put in place, and I continue to say that we will maintain best practice.

**Mr. Singh:** Okay. I will leave that alone. Item 047, Item 049 and Item 051, Madam Chair, all these matters, I notice that you have an allocation for 047 of $160,000 for an Integrated Water Security Programme for Tobago; Development of a Water Supply Drought Management, of $269,000 and the Development of a Water Supply Management Plan. Hon. Minister, these are matters used to be done in-house within the Water and Sewerage Authority without the allocation, and I am certain on an annual basis, you have a water supply drought management plan. Why is there the need now for allocations separate and apart from utilizing the talent of the Water and Sewerage Authority?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** I think it was the advice, or looking at—coming out of the management, they felt that it is good to look outside, to look and see what it is that we could get outside for this particular advice, and they felt that it would have been in their best interest, based on the resources that they have to use, to outsource this particular matter.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, Line Item 061, Community Water
Improvement Programmes for $5 million. Could the Minister indicate which communities will benefit from this project in 2019—this $5 million?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Basically, the communities are really going to be communities that have—I could provide the list of some of the communities, but the communities are really communities where the water supply is probably one at best, or zero in some areas. So I could give you the list.

**Mr. Lee:** Just call out a few.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Arima, at the Aripo area; Arouca/Maloney; La Brea. And there are some particular areas. Surprisingly, in the Mon Repos area in San Fernando there is some work there; Toco/Sangre Grande, Matura, Valencia, Sangre Grande area, Point Fortin, the Icacos area. So, I mean, I am just giving you some examples of where some of these—[Crosstalk]

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So order! Order! Minister, are you finished?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes.

**Madam Chairman:** All right. Member for Fyzabad.

**Dr. Bodoe:** Minister, page 94, Item 011, Public Sector Recycling Programme, Phase II. Can you give us an idea what that $1 million allocation will achieve in 2019?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** This is a programme, the Public Sector Recycling that we have actually started. We have 10 Ministries that are involved in the public sector recycling. It involves training, having recycling wardens, putting bins out, getting people recycling at work. So we have 10 Ministries and the plan is to expand to include 14 other Ministries. So at the end we will basically have a programme in the public sector, recycling of bottles and so forth for about 24 Ministries.

**Dr. Bodoe:** This is just the planning aspect, not yet operationalization?
Hon. Le Hunte: No, no, no. In 10 of these Ministries we actually have—we have the programme actually in place in 10 particular Ministries now, where we have wardens, where people are actively recycling their bottles; where they are being collected, et cetera.

Mr. Karim: Well, I see you went on to the other page, so I do not know if I had passed—

Mr. Singh: Yes, you pass.

Madam Chairman: Member for Chaguanaas East.

Mr. Karim: It was line Item 061, in furtherance of the question, Minister. The Community Water Improvement Programme, you said at some time zero or one. What are the things you intend to do to ensure that you up the ante for these? How will the moneys be expended—

Hon. Le Hunte: Well, there are a number of—I mean a lot of these—in these particular areas the issues why they do not have water varies. A lot of it is because of piping that is required to get to them—to get to the particular areas. So the money will be spent there. In some areas, it requires a booster to get the water to get to the particular area—to increase the pressure to the particular areas. So there are a number of initiatives, small initiatives, for a lot of small people who are having great difficulties right now, and suffering from very minimal or no water supply at this point in time. So it is a combination of projects.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, line 057, I am seeing it is a new project, Upgrade of Network Switching Infrastructure. What does that entail?

Hon. Le Hunte: This is at the head office and this is the restoration of a reliable ICT system. Right now our ICT structure at the head office, we are having some challenges and, therefore, we have to stabilize it and we have to implement some
new—as you said, some new switches and infrastructure work in the Ministry itself.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** So I presume 059 is likewise, the Private Cloud Solution.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes, both together.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 003 on page 93, Meteorological Area, The Procurement of a Fully Configurable International Civil Aviation Organization Complaint Automated Airport Weather System. This was an ongoing project. Is it completed? Because I see no allocation for it.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Yes, completed.

**Mr. Singh:** Because it was ongoing. And, similarly, in Item 07 on page 94, Establishment of a Waste Recycling Management Authority, there was an allocation in 2018; a revised estimate of $510 instead of $1 million. What is the status of this matter?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, as I said before, we are looking at the waste—the responsibility under the Waste Recycling Management Authority, the functional responsibility is going to be done under SWMCOL, all right? And therefore, those functions are going to be handled under SWMCOL, hence the increased allocation to SWMCOL for staffing of some of the areas, and so forth. So that would be handled by SWMCOL.

**Mr. Singh:** But, Chair, through you, what is the legislative regime that is going to govern this recycling? Because SWMCOL’s current legislation does not provide for that kind of regime to enforce the separation of the waste.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** We will be coming with a legislative agenda to deal with that particular in this—hopefully, this year.

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Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I want to go straight to line Item, Minister, F008, Development of New Water Sources, Phase I, Maraval and the Environs. Can the Minister elaborate on this programme and inform us what exactly will happen under this project?

Hon. Le Hunte: Again, as you are aware, in these particular areas, these are very high density areas and the water supply in these particular areas, especially Maraval and environs and north-west Trinidad and Tobago, you are having serious problems with water coming down as serious as zero—

Mr. Imbert: For years.

Hon. Le Hunte: For years, as my colleague is—so we are looking in this particular area, that there are a number of wells that require drilling of new wells; the rehabilitation of existing wells in that particular area. There is some aspect of putting—to be able to measure bulk metering that needs to happen in those particular area so you could manage the flow. So those are the particular—that is the nature of the projects: rehabilitation of existing wells; construction of new wells in the particular area, all geared towards improving the water supply by about two million gallons per day in that area.

Mr. Lee: Can I then tie that back, Minister, to line Item B005, Integrated Water Improvement Programme in North-West Trinidad for $20 million? Could you describe how long this programme will take and how many persons will benefit from this project, and when is the project due to start, and when it is due to end?

Hon. Le Hunte: Again, for basically the same reason, as I said before, tying it—these particular areas in the north-west of Trinidad suffer greatly because they have
been growing and ballooning with population growth, and therefore, what we are looking for in those areas, again, is the drilling of new wells in the Tucker Valley area; the establishment of booster stations upgrades in that particular area. Again, installation of bulk metering so that we could better manage and see where the flows are happening to better manage the NRW, and distribution and transmission pipelines. What we are trying to create are little centres of excellence that we could try to fix the areas and ensure that we increase the supply. We hope that this will benefit over 100,000 individuals.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Under Other Water Projects at page 199, the Multiphase Waste Water Rehabilitation Programme, this will be dealing with the Malabar and the San Fernando waste water. Hon. Minister, these projects started together. My understanding from the PSIP is that the Malabar project is almost 92 per cent completed, but the San Fernando project is only 50 per cent completed. And you will recall, hon. Minister, prior to your assumption of office, the San Fernando project had an increase, notwithstanding it was a fixed price contract, of US $19 million. The question that I have to ask now is, why is the San Fernando project so delayed, having regard to the level of movement at the Malabar project, which is almost complete?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, start with, yes, you are correct. The Malabar project has been successfully brought to conclusion. It will be up and ready probably, clearly, by the end of the year. The San Fernando project has had a number of challenges. We have had a lot of challenges with regard to the contractors’ ability to execute, contractors that we inherited. But we have been working. It was now—I am pleased to advise that it has moved from 50 to 60 per cent and we are working along with them. I think we are not looking at many more increases, but it is about
the execution and we are managing it from a cost perspective. But I must say, it has not been—we would have liked to have both projects completed around the same time. But I am not seeing—at this point we are managing it from a cost perspective. So it is a time, and time is money, but our hands are in the lion’s mouth and we are pulling it out slowly.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Minister, for the verification of my knowledge. The fact of the matter—and this is for the hon. Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West. These contractors we obtained through international bidding, utilizing IDB procurement, and Acciona Agua, which is the San Fernando contractor, has a history of bidding low and never finishing.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** Well, why you did not stop it?

**Mr. Singh:** But these are the realities.

**Hon. Le Hunte:** So you are confirming that we kind of inherited these contractors.

**Mr. Singh:** No, no, no. It is IDB procurement.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 005: Multisectoral and Other Services. Member for Chaguanas West.

**Mr. Singh:** Water supply to Labidco and Union Industrial Estate, an allocation of $29million. Line Item 06. This project is completed, or it will be completed? And is the Labidco Estate going to be part of the water improvement rate that you will have to eventually come to the House and the Parliament for?

**Hon. Le Hunte:** Well, the answer to the question, yes, we will have to come to the Parliament for that. And with this money we hope to get this project completed this year.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 39 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**UNREVISED**
Madam Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, PS and all your supporting members of your team. We now go on to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries. And we are at page 372 of the Recurrent Expenditure.

Head 77: Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, $777,862,000

Madam Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Rambharat: Thank you very much, Madam Char. We are all familiar with the structure of these accounts. We are going to be dealing with Recurrent, the Development Programme and Transfers relating to State Enterprises, and Statutory Bodies. So we are ready.

Question proposed: That Head 77 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $777,862,000 for Head 77, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditures under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure, the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly, and the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme.

We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Sub-Head 01: Personnel Expenditure, page 372. Item 001: General Administration.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, line 01, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance, how many vacant posts exist in the Ministry?

Hon. Rambharat: Madam Chairman, I will have to give that information in writing. I could tell you they are a substantial number.

Mr. Indarsingh: I did not hear you, Minister.
Hon. Rambharat: It is a substantial number. I will give it in writing.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Line 14, Remuneration to Members of Cabinet-appointed appointees. How many Cabinet-appointed appointees you have?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Committees.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Committees, yes. How many?

Hon. Rambharat: Madam Chair, I will have to give that information in writing.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: All right. Line 29, Overtime Daily-rated Workers. Hon. Minister, what duties require overtime for daily-rated workers?

Hon. Rambharat: Madam Chair, the Ministry provides services seven days a week and in some cases where we have livestock operations and things like that, you are required to provide round-the-clock support. So under the various collective agreement there would be need from time to time to incur overtime costs.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And which stations have livestock that they do on weekends that are actively in operation?

Hon. Rambharat: We have livestock operations at Mora Valley, Centeno, Aripo and—those are the major ones.

Madam Chairman: Item 002: Agriculture. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister. Minister, could you explain why an increase of $7,271,469 in this particular line Item?

Madam Chairman: What line Item, Member?

Mr. Indarsingh: Wages and COLA, 02.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Hon. Rambharat: Well, the increase, Member, will take into consideration increases which are due under the applicable collective agreements.

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Mr. Indarsingh: So there have been, what we would call, settlement of agreements?

Hon. Rambharat: There has not been any settlement recently, but this would have been commitments given and we would incur that cost on an annual basis.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay. But for what collective bargaining period then? If you said that—

Hon. Rambharat: I will have to give you that information in writing.

7.30 p.m.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line Item 06. I see there is no allocation. Is it taken up in line Item 14 by chance?

Hon. Rambharat: If we do not have an allocation there for remuneration for board members, it means that there are no board members to pay, and if there is a board or a board appointed then we have the ability to vire funds to meet that cost.

Madam Chairman: Item 003, Animal Production and Health.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Is that a difference of living allowance? Again, hon. Minister, if you could provide us with how many vacant positions?

Hon. Rambharat: Sure.

Madam Chairman: Item 004, Horticulture; Item 006, Surveys and Mapping. Member for Couva South.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see an increase of $800,000, Minister, under Salaries and Cost of Living. Could you explain that taking into consideration that if I could recollect, that approximately a year ago workers were sent home from this particular unit of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Hon. Rambharat: Member, with all due respect, I do not have a recollection like
that, but I could tell you that the provision is made for vacant posts which exist, which may be filled in this fiscal year.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** And how many vacant posts?

**Hon. Rambhart:** I will give you that information in writing.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** But at no point in time were workers sent home from the Surveys and Mapping Division of the Ministry?

**Hon. Rambhart:** At no point in the history of surveys or mapping, or at no point in a particular period.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Okay. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 007, Land Management; Item 008, Fisheries; Item 010, Forestry. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you. Hon. Minister, under 02; 001, General Administration; line 08, Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage. I am seeing there is an increase for $276,000. Is there any plan to rent additional space, or rooms, or buildings?

**Hon. Rambhart:** That is to provide for rents which have accrued, which were not settled in the last financial year, but will be settled in this financial year.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Okay, and line 12, Materials and Supplies. We are seeing just a small increase from 225,000 to 250, an increase of $25,000. Is that sufficient for the Ministry to perform its duties effectively; for Materials and Supplies?

**Hon. Rambhart:** Well, this is not for the Ministry. This is for—

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yes, under—

**Hon. Rambhart:**—a particular area. And if you look at the actual in previous
years and the Estimates, it is in line with the previous expenditure incurred, and in the event we have extraordinary expenditure there are mechanisms to deal with that.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 01. Can you explain the decrease in Travelling and Subsistence, please?

**Hon. Rambharat:** 01, Travelling and Subsistence, you want me to explain, Member, what?

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** The decrease.

**Hon. Rambharat:** Again, it has to do with the Estimates and the Actual from before, and we believe that the 3 million based on recent history is sufficient to cover, but, of course, that is an estimate. And again, I would say there are mechanisms in the budgetary process to cover anything that is over.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 002, Agriculture; Item 003, Animal Production and Health; Item 004, Horticulture; Item 006, Surveys and Mapping; Item 007, Land Management; Item 008, Fisheries; Item 010, Forestry. Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Under 14, Remuneration to Members of Cabinet Appointed Committees, Minister, could you inform this meeting of the number of Cabinet appointed committees that are under your jurisdiction and, further to that, who are the members of these committees; and based on the increase of $450,000 have you appointed more committees under your purview emanating out of Cabinet decisions?

**Madam Chairman:** Can you give us an Item number?

**Mr. Indarsingh:** 14, Remuneration, on page—

**Madam Chairman:** We are at page 383. Okay?

**Mr. Indarsingh:** 383? 383.

**UNREVISED**
Madam Chairman: We at page 383, I think Item 010.

Mr. Indarsingh: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Under 13; line Item 28, Other Contracted Services, hon. Minister, what are these Other Contracted Services? What does it entail?

Hon. Rambharat: Well, from time to time the Forestry Division would have to engage contractors to provide different services, maybe to do minor repairs, other things like that, and the provision is meant to cover that eventuality.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And line Item 13, Maintenance of Vehicles. How many vehicles for this increase to 350,000; and two, which company currently maintains these vehicles?

Hon. Rambharat: I would have to provide that in writing, Member.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 43, Security Services, by chance does this relate to the actual forestry security on the ground who are in place, or is this separate and apart from that?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, it is under the Item Forestry, and Security Services relate to the provision of security services to forestry establishments.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: So can we expect there will more vigilance on the ground for a number of persons who have been experiencing—[Interrupt] Well this is why I am asking, and you said it is that.

Hon. Rambharat: Are you finished, Member?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I never get any answer from you.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration; Item 002, Agriculture; Item 008, Fisheries. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies. We are at page 384. Item 002, Commonwealth
Bodies; Item 003, UNC Organizations; Item 005 Non-public Institutions. Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, line 02, CARDI. We are seeing there is an increase close to half a million dollars. What is the status or is this increase aligned really with the Ministry’s objectives, like what it is? This money is allocated for CARDI—because I know CARDI is involved in research and development, and knowing that the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries also has a research and development division.

Hon. Rambharat: Well, Member, CARDI is a regional organization providing support for the entire region. The contribution to CARDI is assessed based on a formula that they used, and Trinidad and Tobago pays its contributions as well as meets the cost of hosting CARDI here. So while the Ministry has its research and development, this is also in support of what happens in the region.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Okay. Line 06, the 4H Young Farmers’ Club. What is the status of this club.

Hon. Rambharat: In the sense of?

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: You have young persons involved in this?

Hon. Rambharat: It is the 4H Young Farmers’ Club, so the expectation in that we will have young people in there. It is across the country. 4H is very vibrant across primary schools around the country, and you would see that the Minister has provided an increase because we would like to reach more schools around the country.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And 07, Animals Alive.

Hon. Rambharat: Again, this is an animal rescue programme based in Oropouche in South Trinidad and it has provided excellent work, the rescue of the animals,
and the allocation is $250,000.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** And how many animals were rescued thus far?

*Laughter and crosstalk*

**Hon. Rambharat:** Member, I would—

**Madam Chairman:** Thus far over what period?

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Well, it is last year to now.

**Madam Chairman:** Members, please, I—Members, please. Over what period?

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** It is for the last year.

**Madam Chairman:** In 2018?

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yes.

**Hon. Rambharat:** If you take my word for it, it numbers on average 400 to 500 animals and, of course, the number fluctuates but that is what it averages.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Chair, the question has been asked. Thanks.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you. The question has been asked, but 4H Clubs, when I was young it used to be pervasive in all schools. We took part in it. Could you give us information in how many schools, primary in particular, are involved with 4H Clubs?

**Hon. Rambharat:** Okay, I would provide that in writing for you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 007, Households; Item 008, Subsidies. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 01, Agricultural Incentive Programme. Can the hon. Minister indicate why there is a
decrease in this incentive especially in light of the fact that there are farmers throughout the country that have been awaiting reimbursement for over three years?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, let me point out a few things for you. The first is that there is actually an increase in the allocation this year, but I will explain it for you. If you look at the 2018 Estimates you would see—if you look at 2017 you will see the actual expenditure was 10 million. If you look at 2018 you will see the estimates were 12 million.

Madam Chairman: Members, I would like to hear the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

Hon. Rambharat: If you look at the Revised Estimates for 2018 you will see 43 million, and that is because in the midterm this Parliament approved an addition allocation to cover the events of last year with Bret and the October rains so that in making the provision we are not comparing 43 million to the previous year. We have actually provided 24 million which is twice the amount provided in 2018.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, we are dealing with line Item 01, which is the Incentive Programme. If we are dealing with flood damage, that is line Item 04 which I have a question for. So you cannot say—

Hon. Rambharat: No, I am not dealing with flood.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: You said that moneys was given to deal with the victims of Bret. We are dealing with the Agricultural Incentive Programme and if you are saying that there was moneys that were allocated in 2017 and 2018, which would have been inadequate, you cannot say that it is an increase because persons were not paid.

Hon. Rambharat: In the midterm review, there was an allocation by this
Parliament for flood assistance and for the payment of incentives, and at the end of fiscal year 2018 the Ministry paid out $53 million in flood assistance and incentives and subsidies. It means that for the first time in a very long time we have come into this financial year without claims from previous years, and you would see that compared to 2018 the allocation this year is doubled.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Madam Chair, I have three years of reimbursements that are outstanding, however, I want to continue to line Item 04, Relief of Flood Damage.

Madam Chairman: Member, maybe you would like to ask a question to support that—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yeah, I am going to line Item 04.

Madam Chairman:—rather than that bald sort of statement.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Would you like me to—

Madam Chairman: Just ask the question with respect to—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The 04?

Madam Chairman: No, the statement.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: When would the Minister be able to provide an answer to the farmers who have been awaiting for three years to be reimbursed for their incentive under the Incentive Programme for items that were purchased?

Hon. Rambharat: Member—okay. So the process as it is requires that the claims be submitted to the Ministry. So if you have the claims then I would suggest that you submit it to the Ministry. But I could give you the assurance that claims for incentive and subsidies, and flood assistance, which reached the Ministry before the close of the last financial year have been settled to the tune of $53 million, and the staff in the Ministry have said to me it is the first time in their recollection that
we have come into a new fiscal year with no claims. [Desk thumping] The positive news for you is that if you bring those claims into the Ministry, your farmers will be the first in line for the $24,364,000 allocated for this fiscal year. You will actually be first in line.

Madam Chairman: All right. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Question has been asked, Ma’am.

Madam Chairman: Member for Caroni Central. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 04. Again, there are requests and can the hon. Minister indicate when will, specifically, farmers from Plum Mitan and Fishing Pond, receive their reimbursement for flood damage, please? Thank you.

Hon. Rambharat: Member, at the end of the last fiscal the Ministry as at 30 September, 2018, paid out $9,674,344 to 607 farmers. Those were the claims which were received and approved. The fact that a farmer has suffered any sort of loss does not mean that the Ministry would pay. There are rules and there are guidelines, and if those claims were not submitted or if there are questions which can be resolved, those farmers would be first in line to receive from the $9 million allocated for this fiscal which is an increase over the 2 million which was estimated in the last fiscal, a $7 million increase.

Mr. Charles: Thank you. All I want is to get the assurance that if we had sent in information that we will be first in line because with respect to Dowlet farm I wrote you with registered mail. So I will bring the proof subsequently, and I am thankful for the assurance. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 05, Minister, Tourism...
Development Facilities. I am seeing an allocation for 2019 for 1.7 million, an increase by 513,000. Can you identify these tourism development facilities?

**Hon. Rambharat:** The Ministry has responsibility for various facilities which are essentially tourist facilities: Fort George, Lopinot, San Fernando Hill, Waterwheel in Diego Martin, and this money is used to do ongoing upkeep. If you go around to these facilities you would see the signs of the work, and we have an increase there which will allow us to do some additional work in this fiscal.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Thank you, Chair. Madam Chair, my colleague asked the question.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Chaguanas East.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 02, YAPA, any reason why no money was spent in 2018, and what do you plan to do with the 500,000 allocated in this fiscal?

**Hon. Rambharat:** Well, what we have done with YAPA—we have two approaches to YAPA. One is that some of the young people are absorbed in the 4H programme, the very young ones, and some of the persons who had been in YAPA are now part of the work that we do with young farmers giving them special attention. And this new agri-incentive that we have recently launched is focused, among other things, towards those people who had participated in YAPA or would have participated, and we feel that is a better approach to dealing with young farmers in the country.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** In line 03, Minister, Expansion and Development of Farmers’ Market. Have you identified any of those markets?
Hon. Rambharat: Member, you would be happy to know that we have expanded, firstly, by introducing a highly successful farmers’ market in Queen’s Park Savannah. Every Saturday about 3,000 people pass through that market. We have introduced an extremely successful farmers’ market at the Ministry’s building in Chaguanas. If we allow that farmers’ market to expand tomorrow, it would expand fourfold. The Member for Chaguanas East is a patron, and that has been a big success. We have introduced a farmers’ market on Harris Promenade in San Fernando. We have introduced a farmers’ market in Rio Claro. We have introduced one in Couva. We have upgraded what we have in Point Fortin and Diego Martin. On Sunday, I launched a farmers’ market in Valencia in a facility that had been suffering there for over 20 years. We continue to have demand for farmers’ market and you would continue to see the Minister of Finance allocate funding for those markets.

Madam Chairman: Item 010, Other Transfers Abroad; Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises. Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopessingh: 02, Estate Management and Development Company Limited, I am seeing an increase close to $.8 million. Can you give the justification for this hon. Minister?

Hon. Rambharat: Well the increase, Member, would be to meet the ongoing cost associated with operating the EMBD. It takes into consideration that because of the failure for 15 years to deal with the quarrying operations in the EMBD, the revenue stream that came from that stopped because we stopped the quarrying. We put things right by ensuring that EMBD has the title to the land and, most importantly, the mining licences, and EMBBD is now getting ready to advertise those quarries on a secure footing and this allocation is meant to compensate for the loss in
revenue while they go through that period.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 06, Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies; Item 004, Statutory Board. New book. Hon. Members, we will move on to the Draft Estimates of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly. 08 - Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Anti-terrorism, page 515. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration.

09 - National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 520; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 02, Goods and services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Line Item 16, Contract Employment. Minister, I am seeing an increase by 1.2 million. Could you explain?

Hon. Rambharat: I previously pointed to the increases in the farmers’ market and that comes with the need to contract personnel to work in those markets.

Ms. Ramdial: How many positions?

Hon. Rambharat: I will have the give you that in writing.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 007, Households; Item 009, Other Transfers.

10 - Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board. We at page 528. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 02, Goods
and Services; Item 001, General Administration.

11 - Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago. We are at page 533. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 007, Households.

Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme - Consolidated Fund, page 155; Item 001, Pre-Investment; Item 002, Productive Sectors—Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla—page 156 to 157.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Okay, you had passed it. I was talking about 155.

Madam Chairman: Item 003, Economic Infrastructure, pages 157 to 161. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 069 on page 158. I see that you want to establish a land management authority. I am asking if that is a new project. I am asking what is the difference between this line Item and what is currently in place, and do you hope for an improvement?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, there have been at least three reports since 2015 from joint select committees of this Parliament dealing with the management of state lands, and a consistent view has been the need to centralize the management of state land into a new entity. And this provision is meant to explore and do the basic work required to deal with that matter of management of state lands.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: When it is you expect to establish this authority seeing that it has been on the board for close to four years?

Hon. Rambharat: The idea of creating a special entity has been around for about
three decades. This is the first time a line Item has been put into the PSIP for the work to begin towards the creation of that entity in line with recommendations, including recommendations from three joint select committees between 2015 and now.

8.00 p.m.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Line Item 544, this is in my area so obviously, I would have particular interest in it, as to what it is that you plan to do and if it will, of course, include the rehabilitation of the road which is a major concern as well.

Hon. Rambhart: Member, as you may know, the road falls under the regional corporation and this allocation is for the improvement of the facility itself. Every year, we have been investing in Marper Farm, it is a flagship facility of Ministry, and this allocation is meant to continue the upgrading of that farm.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Page 157, 023, Forestry Access Roads. Minister, I am seeing here for 2019 Estimates, 7 million compared to 2018 with a Revised Estimates of 1.9 million. Can you tell me the reason for the increase and where these roads are that you are going to be targeting?

Hon. Rambhart: These are forestry access roads so it is essentially north in the area from Tamana go down to south-west. The reason, this particular year, last year coming into this year, the road programme has been affected by the bad weather, and we were able to do some significant work in the Brickfield area, and the increased allocation is meant, if the weather is favourable, to allow us to catch up with the work that we did not do in this year.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Hon. Minister, line 014, Commercial Repository, I
am seeing in 2018 Revised Estimates 2 million and in 2019 Estimates, 7.1 million. What does this entail, this Commercial Repository?

Hon. Rambharat: This Commercial Repository is a line Item that came in in 2015. This is where we recognized that we have been depleting the reserve of commercial forest, teak and pine, and this is a programme that is focused on replanting teak and pine for commercial purposes, in between, we have other hardwoods.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: And at 287, the Upgrade of Fish Landing Sites. Have you identified those sites? Because I am seeing only an allocation of 1 million.

Hon. Rambharat: This is an allocation that allows us because during the fiscal year, given the particular issue of rough seas, you would find that there is need to effect repairs on fish-landing sites around the country and this is spent on the basis of the facility that requires work at that particular time.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 553, page 158, Coconut Rehabilitation, I see it is in the east coast of Trinidad. I do not know if you have been in that area in a long while but it is overgrown with bush and I am wondering if this amount that is allocated of $300,000 will, in fact, be able to do justice to the programme.

Hon. Rambharat: Well, Member, what this programme is, this programme produces planting material for coconut farmers on the east coast. It is not a physical area on the east coast that is planted, it is planting material supplied to east-coast farmers, and it is an on-going programme but it is dedicated to east-coast farmers.
Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 013: Re-afforestation of Denuded Northern Range Hillside and the question is, Minister, given the importance of a project like this in the context of flooding, the pervasiveness of secondary vegetation if you look on the hills, why has no money been allocated in this?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, you would be happy to know that these documents do not include the close to 100 million that is spent on the reforestation programme. This particular PSIP programme is one that is coming to an end, so this allocation is to complete that work, but there is a reforestation programme which targets that specific issue you have addressed.

Mr. Charles: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, 039, page 157, the Caroni Swamp Management Project, I see an allocation of 1 million in 2019. Can you tell me exactly what is going to be undertaken with these moneys?

Hon. Rambharat: Well that allocation, Member, is to make you happy.

Ms. Ramdial: Me?

Hon. Rambharat: As you know, we have brought a lot of attention to the Scarlet Ibis. We have declared it an environmentally sensitive species. It will cost you now $100,000 to make the mistake of interfering with it and this allocation is to improve the physical amenities at the Caroni Swamp. It is part of an ongoing process but we have physical work, as you know, to do down there.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 003 on
page 159, if hon. Minister can advise the commencement date for this project and for line Item 001—

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, so just let the Minister answer, please. Thank you.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Sure.

**Hon. Rambhartat:** Member, the commencement date for this project is several years ago. This is an ongoing project. Plum Mitan, in case you are not familiar with it, it is an important part of the drainage network. It requires continuous maintenance improvement infrastructural work and this programme is at least 10 years old.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Has not commenced, Sir? And I am asking when it will commence under you, if I can get an answer for that.

**Hon. Rambhartat:** It is ongoing, Member.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Sir.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Just two quick questions, Minister. 552, Forage Farms at Mon Jaloux.

**Madam Chairman:** That is page 158?

**Dr. Tewarie:** Yes. What happening with that particular—

**Hon. Rambhartat:** Member, the PSIP, the development element of Mon Jaloux has been completed. As you may know, in 2015, there were buildings and unused buildings and so on. The site was not electrified so nothing could be done there. We have redone the road. We have dealt with the ponds. We have installed the electrical infrastructure. We have actually moved offices of the Ministry into Mon Jaloux, and that now, the ongoing operation is a recurrent expenditure, so it is no longer a PSIP item.
Dr. Tewarie: So what is actually happening on the site besides the management of the offices?

Hon. Rambharat: We have, as I said, offices relating to livestock there. The lab from Curepe was transferred there. We have the NADC which is the centre for disease control there and we still have the Forage bank which we will continue to expand there.

Dr. Tewarie: Okay. And the Development of an Agriculture Sector Plan, I saw no allocations there. Does that mean that the plan was completed in 2017?

Hon. Rambharat: We have done two things with the agricultural sector plan. We have done the work on an overarching plan and we have done some subsector plans. And the overarching plan is substantially completed so there is no further expenditure but we are in the final stages of proofreading and so on of the plan.

Madam Chairman: Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 001, page 159, can the hon. Minister indicate what areas that this programme will impact upon and I am looking really specifically for my area of Cumuto/Manzanilla?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, as I said before on 003, the Plum Mitan project is focused on your area and the Water Management and Flood Control Programme, 001, is focused on Orange Grove and the Caroni Basin. And it is an ongoing programme.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Line Item 426, can the hon. Minister indicate what is your plan to rehabilitate the cocoa industry?

Hon. Rambharat: Member, this allocation—the work relating to the cocoa industry is being driven by a limited liability company called the Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago for which a provision exists
elsewhere, and this particular line Item is focused on our prestigious La Reunion Estate and that is the Ministry’s internal work outside of the Cocoa Development Company.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Oropouche West.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Hon. Minister, line 546, Conservation and Preservation of Buffalypso. I am seeing there is no further allocation and why is this so, after, perhaps, I believe Dr. Bennett had done immense work in the preservation of buffalypso?

**Hon. Rambharat:** Member, the buffalypso exist. The genetic variety, the genetic strain created by Dr. Bennett is still available in Trinidad and Tobago, it is available around the world. The issue in this country is not Dr. Bennett’s buffalypso, the issue is that there is no interest among private farmers in buffalypso for meat or for milk. The private farmers have found their breeds outside of this country. The new agro incentive launched by the Minister of Finance in Paramin last week will assist livestock farmers in accessing the genetic variety that they require. Likewise in milk, the farmers have found a breeding stock that is far superior to Dr. Bennett’s variety in producing milk. And what we remain in this country to deal with, finally, is the issue of brucellosis which is a disease that has affected the buffalypso herd for more than 20 years and the Government is committed to dealing with the preservation of a brucellosis-free buffalypso herd in this country by dealing with the issues at Mora Valley.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** 558, Fisheries Management Research and Development, I am seeing there is an allocation to 1 million and I am trying to figure out whether you have a parallel research and development because at SFC, there was a fisheries processing unit and that has been shut down. So I was
wondering why it is that you are shutting down one and then we are going to reopen—do a Fisheries Management Research and Development Programme, when they were doing research and development at SFC too.

**Hon. Rambhарат:** Member, SFC continues to grow out and process tilapia. This is not tilapia. This deals with the waters that surround this country. For 102 years, we have had to manage with a piece of legislation that has nine clauses. It cannot work in the management of fisheries and Cabinet has recently approved a first draft of the fisheries legislation that will modernize the management and the administration of fisheries in this country, and this allocation is meant to continue to support that work so that we could have this legislation implemented and it has nothing to do with tilapia.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Okay and 553, Coconut Rehabilitation, what is the status of this programme?

**Hon. Rambhарат:** I just responded to the Member for Cumuto and as I said, this is to provide planting material to east-coast coconut farmers.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** At page 159, Chair. Can we move on to page 159?

**Madam Chairman:** Once you are under Item 003.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yes, it is Other Services at page 159. Hon. Minister, Provision of Agricultural Access to Targeted Commodities and Strategic Crops. Is that a list of roads also you are going to—for 5 million?

**Madam Chairman:** Did the Minister not answer that already?

**Hon. Rambhарат:** Yes, that deals with access roads.

**Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh:** Yeah, all right.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 004: Social Infrastructure; Item 005: Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Infrastructure Development Fund, page 236, Item 003: Economic
Infrastructure; Item 004, Social Infrastructure.

Hon. Members, the question is that the sum of $777,862,000 for Head 77, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries stand part of the Schedule.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 77 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Parl Sec. Thank you, PS. We now move on to the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts and in the interest of expediting the process, we are at page 307. Recurrent.

[MR. FORDE in the Chair]

*Head 62: Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, $375,250,000.*

**Mr. Chairman:** I will now invite the Minister to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts’ vision is resilient, culturally-rich communities with a three-pronged mandate to promote community bonds and problem solving, to develop positive values, attitudes and behaviours and to facilitate all forms of self-expression. In this way, the Ministry seeks to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** I would like to welcome Madam Permanent Secretary and the senior technocrats at the Ministry.

*Question proposed:* That Head 61 stand part of the Schedule.

**Mr. Chairman:** Hon. Members, the sum of $375,250,000 for Head 62, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure, under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft

**UNREVISED**

We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. Members, we have the correct book before us? Correct expenditure? Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 307, Item 001, General Administration. I recognize Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, with respect to line Item 001, the Allocation for Salaries and Cost of Living for the year 2018/2019 is $11,090,000, which is an increase of the allocation for fiscal year 2017/2018. Can you give us an idea of why there would have been close to $1 million in increase in this particular expenditure?

Mr. Chairman: Minister.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The figure of 2019 is not actually an increase over the allocation of 2018.

Mr. Padarath: Mr. Chair, the Estimates for 2019 is $11,090,000. There is an increase by $924,000. I am not sure if the Minister is on the same page as I am on, on 307.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: I am on the same page; however, that does not reflect an increase in the estimate, it reflects an increase over the revised estimate that was allocated.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, all right. Sure. Line Item 14, with respect to Remuneration to Members of Cabinet-appointed Committees, can the hon. Minister share with us how many Cabinet-appointed committees there are and the membership of those committees, please?
Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: There are none in the Ministry at this time.

Mr. Padarath: There is none at this time? Okay. Does the Minister envisage, based on any programmes, that there will be, because there is an allocation of $100,000 for line Item 14?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Not at this time.

Mr. Chairman: Another question, Princes Town? Item 002: Community Development, page 307; Item 006: Best Village, page 308; Item 008: Culture Division, page 308. Sub-Head 02: Goods and Services, page 309, Item 001: General Administration. Cumuto/Manzanilla first and then I will come to Princes Town.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and we are on 309. Right? Okay. Line Item 16, can the hon. Minister take an undertaking as indicated by the Minister of Finance to provide how many vacancies there are, how many contract employees there are? Any vacancies and the positions.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Does the Member mean overall?

Mr. Chairman: Overall for all where contract services are itemized on the Estimates?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, Madam Minister.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: At present, there are 291 vacant contract positions, 245 filled positions.

Mr. Chairman: Princes Town, still have a question?

Mr. Padarath: Yes, Mr. Chair. With respect to line Item 27: Official Overseas Travel, there is an allocation of 250,000; compared to the Revised Estimates of 2018, it appears as though it is an increase of 223,000. Can the hon. Minister
indicate whether or not there are any particular events that are coming up that will cover this official travel cost with an increase of 223,000 compared to the revised estimates of 2018?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Mr. Chair, through you, this estimate of 250,000 in 2019 is a steep decrease on the Estimate of 450,000 that was given in 2018. This figure is provided if there comes up during the year any instances where travel is necessary. At this time, none are envisaged.

**Mr. Chairman:** Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, line Item 34: University Graduate Recruitment Programme. I know that the Minister of Finance has indicated that the challenges have been resolved with this particular programme. Can you indicate in the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, what specific areas have been identified that will take up this particular Vote in terms of bringing in graduates, in terms of what spheres and what fields? If the Ministry has identified those.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Ministry awaits the guidance of the Ministry of Finance on these areas and once given that guidance, we will be able to determine exactly where graduates are placed.

**Mr. Padarath:** So, Madam Minister, while you wait for the actual funding from the Ministry of Finance, are you then saying that no area has been identified, no work is ongoing to identify which areas you will require these graduate trainees to assist in? You do not have to get the money in order to determine the areas.

**Mr. Chairman:** The question has been asked, Princes Town.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Mr. Chair, let me indicate that in the Ministry, as in
many other Ministries, vacation programmes where interns come in in different areas, it is an ongoing thing and, therefore, it takes nothing much really to apply university graduates who would be introduced into this programme. So that work is done and ready. So we are ready when the university programme comes in to accommodate whatever graduates come into the Ministry.

Mr. Chairman: Princes Town, another question?

Mr. Padarath: Minister, on that same particular line Item, the justification provided by the hon. Minister of Finance is very different from what you have just indicated. You spoke about summer interns and so on during the vacation programme. If we are to take the Minister of Finance’s words, it is really the core competencies that are required by the Ministry and, therefore, I am asking specifically: What are the core competencies that are required by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts? This is not just a simple vacation programme.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mr. Chair, I have indicated that we await the guidance of the Ministry of Finance with respect to the areas that they are bringing people in and once that is provided, the Ministry is ready to accommodate such graduates.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Princes Town, another line Item. Right, proceed.

Mr. Padarath: Mr. Chair, line Item 62: Promotions, Publicity and Printing, an increase of 190,000 compared to the Revised Estimates of 2018. If the Minister would be kind enough to share with us what would account for such an increase in this area.

Mr. Chairman: Madam Minister.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, if the Member would take into account what was actually spent in 2018, we were given 330,000 so the
allocation of 520,000 is made which is less than the actual allocation of 2018 and that of course, would be dependent on the different projects that the Ministry is engaged in in these areas.

**Mr. Chairman:** Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Madam Minister. With respect to that same line Item 62 and just for clarity, I know when we get later down to the other Estimates and the other books that we will deal with Trinidad and Tobago’s hosting of Carifesta. Can you say, based on some of these Items that we are looking at under General Administration—I know this is recurrent expenditure—that any consideration would have been thought of with respect to the hosting of Carifesta and that is why we are seeing some increases in other areas or that is one separate budget altogether?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Carifesta has its own budget.

**Mr. Padarath:** Okay, thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Item 002: Community Development Division, page 310; Item 005: Mediation Centres, page 311. Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just asking on line Item 08, the Rent and Office Accommodation for the Mediation Centres, can the hon. Minister indicate how many mediation centres there are?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Approximately seven. Seven is the figure we have.

**Mr. Chairman:** Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Madam Minister, line Item 28: Other Contracted Services, can you indicate under Mediation Centres what would constitute Other Contracted Services?

**Mr. Chairman:** Madam Minister.
Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. These constitute mainly cable, Internet and any one-off service that is contracted by the mediation centres.

Mr. Chairman: Item 006: Best Village, 312. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Sir. Minister, line Item 16: Contract Employment, would you be able to share with us, maybe not today, but give the commitment to share with us those positions that are under Contract Employment in terms of numbers and the areas of work?

Mr. Chairman: That will be provided, Madam Minister?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Certainly.


Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 05: Contribution to Community-Based Organizations, again, I know you may not have the list in front of you but if you would be kind enough to supply us with the organizations that would have benefited and also the quantums please.

Mr. Chairman: Madam Minister.

8.30 p.m.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Chair. This line Item does not deal with contributions in the way that the Member has asked.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, would you be kind enough to share with us then, in terms of
an explanation, how this particular Vote is spent?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This Vote deals with the programming of the Community Development Division.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to ask on two line Items. The first one, 06, the Operational Expenses for Community Facilities, is this specific to the community centres?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It is.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And is it involving any electricity and all of those expenses?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Those things and more.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: How many community centers do we have?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Over 250.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And $500,000 would be adequate to operationalize all of them?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Community centers are expected to sustain themselves, based on the rentals. And the other fundraising efforts of the village councils, and where there are boards, those fundraising efforts. So, those funds are set aside to assist where necessary. They are not designed to run community centres and pay all of their bills.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And finally on line Item 15, Contribution to Cultural Organizations. Is this what this line Item implies, or is it the same as 05?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This is the line Item that deals with giving to cultural organizations, yes.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: So therefore, can I ask, as my Member, to supply the
various organizations that would have received and the quantum?—[Interruption]—not now.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: In 2018?

Mr. Chairman: For 2019; what would happen for 2019. Because remember what is the scope of works we are dealing with, with these estimates.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Okay, I assume that it would be the same procedure—

Mr. Chairman: So, what is expected.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I am assuming that it might have a continuum, so.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Yes, but this is a grant. This is a fund that deals with applications for grants. So, therefore, I would not be able to predict who will apply for a grant. So I would not be able to provide to whom this is given.

Mr. Chairman: Naparima, on this same point?

Mr. Charles: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Right, proceed.

Mr. Charles: Could the Minister just indicate to us, this Item 15, Contribution to Cultural Organizations, how do they apply? Do they know?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Certainly.

Mr. Charles: Is there an advertisement?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Certainly, they apply on a form that is available on our website for download or available at all the district offices for collection, and they apply, based on that form.

Mr. Charles: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 007, Households, page 315. I recognize Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Madam Minister, line Item 08, Hosting of Cultural Camps for 2019, $900,000; what areas are these camps going to be
located or hosted?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** The camps are located around the country. Again, it depends on an application process where persons who are hosting camps apply to the Ministry for support for the camps they are already hosting and they are assessed based on certain criteria and they can receive funding to assist with their camp.

**Mr. Lee:** So, presently you are saying that you do not know who will apply, correct?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Exactly.

**Mr. Lee:** So, why is there an increase of $450,000 in 2019?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** If the Member would realize, there is not an increase in the allocation between 2018 and ’19. It is actually the same. In 2018, however, we only received, of the allocation, $450,000. So we would have made the same application. We received the exact same allocation, and if we receive more then we will be able to accommodate more persons in the application.

**Mr. Lee:** Another question?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes, go ahead, Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Madam Minister, just 02, Community Action for Revival Empowerment. Just for my own clarification and elucidation, 2.5 for 2019, what really is this line Item about?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** This offers assistance for community groups for programmes they want to hold in their communities.

**Mr. Lee:** For example?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** For example, a village council who wants to have a seminar on eyesight.
Mr. Chairman: Princes Town, you still have questions?

Mr. Padarath: Not on this Item.

Mr. Chairman: Naparima.

Mr. Charles: The applications for hosting of camps and support for community development.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: They are advertised.

Mr. Charles: On your website also?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Not at this time. They are advertised closer down to the time of the vacation, when those camps are hosted.

Mr. Charles: Right. So, therefore, the advice you would give is to look at your website.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Certainly, the website, the Facebook page, as well as the media, the newspapers.

Mr. Chairman: Would it not include also the regional offices would have the information also?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: They would also have.

Mr. Chairman: Right, the regional offices.

Mr. Charles: Yes, access. Right.

Mr. Lee: Same household.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Lee: Madam Minister, 09, Music Schools in Community, again how is this again applied? Is it the same format? I do not know.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: That programme, we have five schools that are selected on the basis of their ability to host the programme and the programme is run for the vacation for five weeks in those areas; five areas around the country.
Mr. Lee: And what are those areas?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: We would provide that in writing.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Yes, thank you, Chair. I just want to follow up on line Item 08, the Hosting of Cultural Camps. Hon. Minister, you said there are certain criteria for this line Item here. I need to know what are the criteria, one, and two, if there is a range of how much money, or the maximum, you have a minimum and maximum, that is allocated for each camp?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: There is a maximum of $30,000. The criteria, we would provide in writing for you.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes. Just to ask if there is the same for 02?

Mr. Chairman: Madam Minister, ditto, same?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: For 02, thank you, Mr. Chair. For 02, the application forms are available on our website. And they are available also, hard copy, in the district offices and can be collected and filled out and returned.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And you would have the criteria?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Certainly, the criteria is well explained on our website, under grant funding.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: And is there a maximum, in terms of how much money that can be accessed in place?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Yes, there is. It is not necessarily a set maximum, it depends on what is available and also what the group is asking for and the scope of the activity.
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Item 009, Other Transfers, page 316. I recognize the Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 11, Stollmeyer’s Castle. With an estimate of $1.8 million this year, the question is whether or not the Ministry has considered a business model plan for self-sustainability for Stollmeyer’s Castle, and if so, can you share some of those plans with us?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: That is currently being determined by the board that runs the castle.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. So, therefore, no fixed plan has been determined for Stollmeyer’s Castle is currently before the board. Yes?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: A fixed plan is being determined by the board.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, but it is still before the board? That is what you are saying?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This is the third time I am saying it, yes.

Mr. Padarath: Okay, after all these months of having Stollmeyer’s Castle been handed over—

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Is this a speech, Mr. Chair, or what are we doing? Question?

Mr. Padarath: I think the Chair determines how this is run, Madam, not you.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: But I am asking him, not you.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, Princes Town. Okay, Madam Minister. Right, an additional question, Member for Princes Town?

Mr. Padarath: Mr. Chair, what I was trying to get from the hon. Minister before she rudely interrupted—[Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Okay, one second. No. Hold on, hold on, hold on. We are going
fine. Let us keep it that way. Right? We can leave out the rude and things like that.

Question, please, Member for Princes Town.

**Mr. Padarath:** Sir, I just wanted to be certain that no fixed plan has been arrived at, with respect to the use of Stollmeyer’s Castle. And after all these months it has been handed over to the Ministry—

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Chair, this is the third time I am answering this question.

**Mr. Padarath:**—and there it is still before the Ministry and nothing has been done.

**Mr. Chairman:** Nice, okay. And as Chair, and as Chair, Princes Town, the Minister has answered and made it clear as to the status of Stollmeyer’s Castle. I have Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you. Madam Minister, come back to line Item, Stollmeyer’s Castle. The 1.8 that is estimated in your Ministry, how did you arrive at that estimate of $1.8 million for Stollmeyer’s Castle? [Crosstalk]

**Mr. Chairman:** Hold on, one second. Again, Princes Town. Are you clear on how it was arrived at, the budgetary figure?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Yes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Minister?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** That figure would have been taken into account with respect to the requirements of the castle. There are janitorial requirements and what it would take for their upkeep and the estimations were put together to come up with the figure.

**Mr. Lee:** So it is like for operating expenses in a sense?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Yes, it is for operational expenses.

**Mr. Lee:** Okay.
Mr. Chairman: Member for Naparima, you have a question on this line Item?

Mr. Charles: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Charles: Item 02, Export Centres, 6.3 million. Could you give us an idea of what they do? What is this money used for?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This is the figure for the salaries of the workers at the export centres.

Mr. Charles: The what?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Salaries for workers.

Mr. Charles: For the export centres?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Yes.

Mr. Charles: No, I am just asking. They export what, culture? What? What do they do?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: The export centres? They actually do handicraft work.

Mr. Charles: Okay.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: And advance training for handicraft.

Mr. Charles: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On 02, I just wanted to ask how many export centres are there and how many persons are employed at the export centres?

Mr. Chairman: Do you have that information here, Minister?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: No, I do not have the information with the number of persons employed. We will provide that.

Mr. Chairman: Right. It will be provided. Member for Princes Town.
Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 09, the National Philharmonic Orchestra, an increase from the revised estimates of 2018, by 100,000, this year’s estimates being 900,000. Can you give us an idea of how the National Philharmonic Orchestra has been progressing, in terms of the utilization of the Philharmonic Orchestra in national events, and so on, seeing that we continue to expend these moneys?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mr. Chair, the National Philharmonic Orchestra has at least two to three free public productions every year. In addition to that, they provide support where necessary for different national events and they are progressing very well, with regard to their performances, and so.

Mr. Chairman: On this same line Item, Pointe-a-Pierre? Okay.

Mr. Lee: No.

Mr. Chairman: This same line Item?

Mr. Lee: No.

Mr. Chairman: So I could go on to the next one?

Mr. Lee: No, I want to ask on line Item 10.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, no I am talking about in terms of the estimates. Proceed.

Mr. Lee: Minister, line Item 10, the National Registry of Artists and Cultural Workers, just for my own clarification, what is this line Item about, that expenditure? Is it for employees? I do not know.

Mr. Chairman: Minister?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: This expenditure would be for the programming of the National Registry. This is the body that registers or gives credentials to national artists, based on assessment of their productions or their experience. And they also run the Mentoring by the Masters Programme.
Mr. Chairman: Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises, page 316. I recognize Naparima and then I would go to Chaguanas East.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, 01, National Commission for Self-Help limited, I see $9 million has been allocated. Could you give us a status of the commission? Do they have a board? Do they disburse funds? Because I have written a couple of letters, about 10, and I have not been able, for various reasons, to get a satisfactory response. This is on behalf of constituents. We were told the board was not there and then we were told money is not available.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mr. Chair, this line Item refers to their salaries and for their recurrent expenditure. And there is a board in place.

Mr. Chairman: Chaguanas East, your opportunity.

Mr. Karim: So this is entirely for the recurrent expenses of the organization?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It is.

Mr. Karim: Could you tell us where, which Item we will want to discuss the suppliers that are owed?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mr. Chair, I am not certain if it is my role to direct the Members as to the different line Items.

Mr. Karim: Okay, well we will see when it comes up.

Mr. Chairman: Right. It will be identified. It should be identified somewhere in the estimates.

Mr. Karim: Yeah, I am looking for it but I am not—

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: I guess I would get the same response—the question was really—

Mr. Chairman: No, you have a question, yes or no?
Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes, the question would be—

Mr. Chairman: If you have a question, ask it and we would determine.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: The question is whether the hon. Minister would be able to advise how many persons have benefited from the self-help project?

Mr. Chairman: No, well I think she mentioned that it is not included in this line Item.

8.45 p.m.

Sub-Head 06, Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies, page 316; Item 004, Statutory Boards, page 316.

Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Revenue Expenditure of the Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies and of the Tobago House of Assembly. 20, Queen’s Hall: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 465; Item 001, General Administration, page 465; Sub-Head, 02, Goods and Services, page 465; Item 001, General Administration, page 465; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 466; Item 007, Households, page 466. 21, Naparima Bowl: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 471; Item 001, General Administration, page 471; Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 471; Item 001—[Crosstalk] Member. Sub-head 02, Goods and Services, page 471; Item 001, General Administration, page 471; Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 472; Item 001, General Administration, page 472; Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 472; Item 007, Households, page 472. 22, National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago: Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, 477; Item 001, General Administration, 477.

Hon. Members: You are going too fast.

Mr. Chairman: Am I?
Mr. Charles: “Ah lookin for Self-Help. Dais wah I cyar see.” [Laughter]

Mr. Chairman: Like you need some help, Member for Naparima, like you need some help. Member for Princes Town, we are on Item 001, General Administration, page 477. Okay, all right. That was a good intermission there.

Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 477; Item 001, General Administration, page 477. Any questions? Go ahead, Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, Other Contracted Services, under the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, an increase from the Revised Estimates of 2018, of 9.9 million, almost $10 million. Can you share with us the “Other Contracted Services” that is envisaged to utilize this Vote under the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, just to point out that the $25 million that is the revised estimate may very well not reflect some of the invoices that would come in, because you would notice that the 2018 Estimates and the 2019 Estimates are much closer in value. This line Item would deal with again, the one-off Items that come around Carnival time, security, ushers and different things that are employed at that time to deal with the festival itself.

Mr. Padarath: Okay. And also, line Item 16, under Contract Employment. Can you share with us, under the NCC, the areas of contract employment that this would cover for the next fiscal year, please?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: That, I would have to provide in writing.

Mr. Chairman: Will be provided in writing. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 478; Item 001, General Administration, page 478; Sub- Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 478; Item 007, Households, page 478; Item 008, Subsidies, page 478.
Hon. Members, we will now move on to the Draft Estimates of the Development Programme. We are going to page 128; Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 128; Item 004, Social Infrastructure, pages 128 to 130.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, line Item 056 which I had raised earlier with respect to the hosting of Carifesta 2019, estimate here of 24. Hon. Minister, would you be able to say under this Vote, whether or not this— [Interruption] —sorry? Could you say with respect to the hosting of Carifesta, just for my information really, does Trinidad and Tobago—the host country, I should not say Trinidad, but the host country—cover the expenses of the participant countries?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair, not with respect to their travel here, but once they come here, we deal with their ground travel. They pay for their accommodation.

Mr. Padarath: And this Vote will take into consideration all of these things, yes?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Yes, it will.

Mr. Chairman: Item 005, Multi-sectoral and other Services, page 130.

Mr. Charles: Given that we have a challenge on that side with patriotism, why has this been discontinued? There is no allocation in 2018 or 2019. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Hold on, Members.

Mr. Charles: What did this do, how was this conceptualized and why is it no longer valid? This is 008, Implementation of National Patriotism Campaign.

Mr. Chairman: What page are you on, Member?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: He is on page 130.

Mr. Chairman: And what line Item?
Mr. Charles: 008.

Mr. Chairman: Implementation of National Patriotism—okay.

Mr. Charles: All I am asking is why—has it served its purpose? Why is it no longer—is there no allocation?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Mr. Chair, even though we are dealing with line Items under the 2019 allocation, and this has no allocation here, I would offer to the Member that it has not been discontinued.

Mr. Charles: The question is why there is no allocation here.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It has not been discontinued, it is just that there is no allocation here for it.

Mr. Charles: I am not happy with the answer, but we will go ahead.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Well, you are asking about something that does not exist.

Mr. Charles: I will ask, why does it not exist? It does not exist because it is no longer viable?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: You cannot ask about something that does not have an allocation.

Mr. Charles: We will move on, Chair.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: The question is, why? [Crosstalk] It does not exist.

Mr. Chairman: Infrastructure Development Fund, page 220; Item 004, Social Infrastructure, pages 220 and 221.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, line Item—page 221, line Item 008, National Commission for Self-Help Limited. Can you say if this sum of money will be allocated to paying outstanding suppliers to various organizations?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: I would imagine outstanding suppliers as well as new
applications coming in for the fiscal.

**Mr. Karim:** Will you be able to give us a list of all the outstanding suppliers and the amounts that are owed to them?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Going forward as of 2019? Yes, I will be able to.

**Mr. Karim:** No, no, those that are owed, right?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Yes, as of 2019.

**Mr. Karim:** Up to this date.

**Hon. Gadsby-Dolly:** “Um-hmm.”

**Mr. Karim:** All right, and the amounts. And do you have an idea as to when you will start making payments to remove the backlog of those debts?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** The Self-Help Commission is governed by a board who would have a much better idea of that.

**Mr. Karim:** The board?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** They are governed by a board.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Page 220, 006, Academy for the Performing Arts, 2019 Estimate of 10 million. If the Minister would kindly give us an indication on what the 10 million would be spent on, the components that make up this estimated expenditure?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** This is given for the upgrades to the National Academy for the Performing Arts, both the North as well as the South campus. They have various upgrade items that have been identified and this is the budget for the both of them combined.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Thank you for that. Would you be kind enough to provide us the break-down, the components for the upgrade?

**Mr. Chairman:** Do you have the information here, Madam Minister?
Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: I do.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: If not, you can—okay.

Mr. Chairman: One second, she has the information.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Is it that you are asking for the exact Items and the amounts right next to them? Or, you just want to know what the Items are?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Both thank you, if you have it.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Well then, we will provide it in writing, because I do not have the amounts identified right close to them.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam Minister.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, you still have a question?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sir, may I just make a—for your guidance, please, before. The Minister is saying she will provide it—the Minister will provide; we are happy for that. I note in the Government assurances that only certain words will be honoured as an assurance, and I trust that when Ministers, not just this one, say that they will provide, that they will be caught within the ambit of the wording, it says “I give an assurance, I give an undertaking”. Those are caught within it. So, I trust that all the exercises here where Ministers have—not this Minister in particular, but just generally, do we have an understanding that those—when Ministers say “I will provide”, is it an undertaking or an assurance that we will be caught within assurances?

Mr. Chairman: It is an assurance. And, Leader of the House, you care to expound on the comment with regard to assurances that the information will be provided as requested by the—in the question and answer sessions?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Chairman, we have given the undertaking and we will make every effort to ensure that whatever we have been requested to provide and
that we have said we would provide in writing at the earliest opportunity, we will in fact do that. One thing that we could request and I think it has happened before, is that the assurances that we have given—the Parliament staff has sent reminders regarding the Items that we have said we would give further information on. And we will definitely comply.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I thank the hon. Minister for clarification. Can we then—are we agreeing that when the words are spoken, “I will provide, I will undertake to provide”, that we will be caught within assurances? [Interruption] The meaning of the words, Madam, this is what I am asking.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Chairman, I do not think it is the same as “assurances” in the sense that we have it in other parliamentary matters. However, given that we have said that we will provide the information, I think Members will act on their word. But I am asking that given that the Hansard is recording everything that is taking place, I am asking that the Parliament staff undertake to give us the ones that we have said we would give the information on.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So, in our questions we should ask for an undertaking or ask for an assurance? Every question should ask for that?

Mr. Chairman: Again, colleagues. Again, assurances have been given and the Parliament staff have already commenced providing the information and again, as the Chair, we will ensure that the information is provided as stated, based on the Hansard.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Chairman, this is not the first time that we on this side have said that we would give information and we have, in the main, lived up to our word.

Mr. Chairman: Sure.
Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am happy we hear “in the main”, because in the past—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Yes, I am saying in the main, because sometimes—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Maybe this year will be the first time that we get those undertakings. We have only gotten parts of them, and then at lengthy periods. So that is why I want to make sure that they are caught within the parliamentary practice of Assurances, Sir. I thank you, can we—surely, we can move on.

Mr. Chairman: And again—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Chairman, I do not want it to be said that this is caught within that. [Interruption]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is the point. That is the whole point.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: I am saying that we have given the undertaking. It is recorded in Hansard and we have said that we will give the information, and we will give the information.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, and we will move on from there. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, you still have a question, and then we will move on to the Member for Chaguanas East.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, line Item 005, Refurbishment of Community Centres. Page 221, line Item 005, Refurbishment of Community Centres, 2019, 6 million has been identified. Could the Minister indicate what community centres and the location that is identified for refurbishment in 2019?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point we have four on the cards, that is; Belmont, Surrey Village, Diego Martin Central and La Lune. [Crosstalk]
Mr. Chairman: You see again—and then we end up in a scenario. Madam Minister, could you kindly identify the four again, please?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: I did.

Mr. Chairman: Well, the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, who asked the question is saying that he—kindly, on behalf of the Chair, proceed.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: The four identified at this point are Belmont, Surrey Village, Diego Martin Central and La Lune.

Mr. Lee: And also, 003, Construction of Community Centres, $20million has been identified for 2019. Could you indicate what locations and areas that these new community centres will be built?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The centres identified at this point that are being worked on are: Bagatelle, Diego Martin North, Diego Martin South, Morvant, Cantaro, Taradale, Bon Air South, La Pastora, San Fernando North, Indian Trail, Maitagual, Quarry Road, Petit Valley, Chickland, Las Lomas, Quarry Village, Siparia, Tarouba, Techier, Blanchisseuse, Harmony Hall, Chatham, Arima, Mon Repos, Lisas Gardens, Tacarigua, Pelican Extension Morvant.

Mr. Lee: Thank you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: On the same Items 003, Construction of Community Centres, and 005 Refurbishment, my colleague has asked for the locations if the Minister can provide the amount out of the budgeted estimated expenditure to be spent on each one.

Mr. Chairman: That will be provided.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Sorry, the amount will depend on the invoices that come in and at this point, we have been able to clear the invoices. So, I cannot identify at
this point the amount that will be paid to each one.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** I appreciate your response. We are estimating an expenditure of 20 million and then 6 million. I am asking, what is the estimated expenditure for the projects you have named? These are projects to be undertaken.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** They are ongoing.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Each will have a budgeted cost.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** That is a different question from what you are asking.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** I am asking out of the 20 million and the centres that you named, what is the budgeted estimated cost, because that is what we are dealing with, for fiscal 2019?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** And I am saying that the 20 million is a block cost to cover invoices that come in from the centres that are ongoing. And at this point we have cleared the invoices that we have had in, and when invoices come in then we will honour them based on the allocation that we have.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Am I to understand you cannot tell us how much is estimated for each centre?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** You are asking a different question.

**Mr. Chairman:** Hold on, one second. Member for Siparia, is it that for each particular of the 20 identified, the amount identified—

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Not 20, it was 20 million.

**Mr. Chairman:** For each one, you would like to know what is the figure. So, if it is Tunapuna, what is the cost for Tunapuna? If it is Santa Cruz—

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** If it is La Lune, Moruga, Siparia, wherever.

[Crosstalk]

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** What you are asking depends on how the work
progresses and what invoices are submitted. And I am saying that until the invoices are submitted, I cannot tell you how much is estimated to be spent on them. The budgeted cost is a different question.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** That is what I am asking. To come up with 20 million there must have been estimates—

**Mr. Chairman:** So, the budgeted cost for each community centre?

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** That is what I am asking.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** The cost for each community centre is—

**Mr. Chairman:** Hon. Minister, can that be identified? The budgeted cost for each—

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** The cost of each community centre? The estimated cost of each community centre is what you are asking?

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Yes, that is what I have been asking all the time.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Well, that is a different question. What you are asking me is how the 20 million is going to be spent. And I am saying to you—[Interruption] that is what you asked.

**Mr. Chairman:** We are clearing it up now.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** Could the Member specify and clarify her question.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay, we are going to clear it up. The budgeted cost per community centre, can that information be provided now, Madam Minister?

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** The cost of each centre?

**Mr. Chairman:** Yes.

**Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly:** That can be provided when we are written.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Under both 003 and 005. Will the Minister give an undertaking to so provide?
Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: I am giving an undertaking to provide the estimated cost of each centre.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Karim: Mr. Chairman, given the nature of the conversations that are flowing both ways, I would like to get it very clear for my question on the *Hansard*. With respect to line Item 008, will the Minister undertake to supply a list of all those persons or agents who are owing moneys for the National Commission for Self-Help projects—owed.

Mr. Chairman: And I think that assurance has already been given.

Mr. Karim: Is the answer yes?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, that has been given.

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It was, yes, and it is, yes.

Mr. Karim: The second question really deals with Item 003 or 005, I do not know which one you want to take it under. You had provided, hon. Minister, a list of community centres that are in the process of being constructed. I am asking whether at all—I did not hear the name, but is the Enterprise community centre listed in that?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It is not.

Mr. Karim: Is it going to be given any consideration at all?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: It will.

Mr. Karim: In this fiscal year?

Hon. Dr. Gadsby-Dolly: Yes.

Mr. Karim: Thank you very much. I am very clear on the answer.

Mr. Chairman: I think we have all been, all day. I think we would have been all day.
Hon. Members, the question is that the sum of $375,250,000 for Head 62, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts stand part of the Schedule.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 62 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Mr. Chairman: Madam Minister, thank you for your time. Madam PS and all the senior executives from your Ministry, thanks for coming, do reach home safely.

Head 35: Ministry of Tourism, $80,000,000.

Mr. Chairman: I will now invite the Minister of Tourism to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Ministry of Tourism serves as a catalyst in developing Trinidad and Tobago as a premiere tourist destination. It is mandated to provide leadership and strategic direction in tourism development, formulate policy to guide tourism development, collaborate with all stakeholders on matters related to tourism development, facilitate and monitor the tourism incentives in accordance with the Tourism Development Act.

Mr. Chairman, over the last financial year, on the dissolution of the TDC, the Ministry was given additional responsibilities such as management of the operations of the cruise and airport tourism offices, the management of five sites and attractions, namely: Maracas Beach Facility, Las Cuevas Beach Facility, Manzanilla Beach Facility, Vessigny Beach Facility and the La Brea Pitch Lake Visitor Centre.

Public sector management for the tourism sector in Trinidad and Tobago is in a state of transition and the Ministry of Tourism is playing its role in supporting the operationalization of Tourism Trinidad Limited. The successor destination

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management and marketing company of the TDC in Trinidad, which we expect to be complete by the first quarter of this financial year.

The THA, as you are aware, is responsible for the strategic direction and management of tourism in Tobago.

Tourism development in Trinidad is at a crossroad, with greater strategic focus being placed on tourism as a key sector in the diversification thrust of the island. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** I would like to welcome the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry and also the senior technocrats. Welcome.

*Question proposed:* That Head 35 stand part of the Schedule.

**Mr. Chairman:** Hon. Members, the sum of $80,000,000 for Head 35: Ministry of Tourism is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure* and the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme*. We now proceed to consider the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure, page 233; Item 001, General Administration, page 233.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good night, Minister. Line Item 14, Remuneration to members of Cabinet-Appointed Committees. Can you identify for me, how many Cabinet-appointed committees exist? And an undertaking to give us a list of the members for such?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Thank you very much, Member for Couva North.

**Mr. Chairman:** That is the politeness I accept. I condone it. Proceed.

**Hon. Mitchell:** In 2018, there was the Standing Committee for the Strategic and Sustainable Development of Tourism in Trinidad. In 2019, it is expected that we reconvene that committee, as well as another committee, the National Tourism
Policy Review Committee.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services, page 233; Item 001, General Administration, pages 233 and 234.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Minister, line Item 16, Contract Employment. I see the 2019 Estimates for 3million. Could you care to explain how many positions? And the various levels or positions?

Hon. Mitchell: We have 49 positions on the organizational structure. In terms of the levels. I will have to give that to you in writing.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. So this 3million is for those 49 positions?

Hon. Mitchell: No, the 3 million is for 19 positions. The payment of 19 contract employees.

Dr. Tewarie: 62, Promotions, Publicity and Printing. There is a $14million estimate here which is a significant increase. I just wanted to have an idea how the Minister is thinking of using that? Because it is for promotions. And if the Chair would allow me, on 011, where you have Tourism Trinidad Destination Management Company, you have 9million, and I just wanted to know if that is to cover salaries or whether it is promotion?

Hon. Mitchell: Under Tourism Trinidad Limited, that is to cover their recurrent expenditure, so that is under—

Dr. Tewarie: That is separate?

Hon. Mitchell: Yes.

Dr. Tewarie: The 14 million?

Hon. Mitchell: Under Promotions, Publicity and Printing, under this Vote. This Vote deals with the printing of ads, as well as for the local newspapers, as well as
international publications, sponsorship and marketing and promotions. It is shared between the Destination Management Company, which is the TTL, as well as with the Ministry.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. And you consider this, as Minister, adequate for, I mean, given where we are in tourism and the amount that we have to do?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Well, we have to understand that we are in a transitionary period. We are dealing with a startup. So, the TTL is now being operationalized, I consider this enough until the mid-year review, where we will come back and certainly ask for more money.

**Dr. Tewarie:** All right.

**Mr. Chairman:** Couva North.

9.15 p.m.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you Chair. Minister, line Item 22, Short-Term Employment. I see the 2019 Estimates for $4.4 million. How many positions and at what levels for short-term employment?

**Hon. Mitchell:** We currently have 35 employees under the short-term contract Vote and during the cruise season, which is seasonal, we employ about 20 persons as visitor guides.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, Item 17, Training. Given where we are in tourism and the emphasis that is being placed on tourism in our diversification thrust, do you think that 50,000 is adequate to retool and reskill our staff to deal with the challenges?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Well, this Vote deals with the training for the Ministry staff. For 2019, we expect to provide training in procurement, statistical analysis evaluation
and we consider it enough.

Mr. Charles: But no training in terms of marketing, destination?

Hon. Mitchell: No, there is another Vote that deals with training and capacity building for small tourism operators and stakeholders.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Sir; 02; 01, Travelling and Subsistence. How many persons are entitled to travelling and subsistence? Is there a policy for payment of travelling and subsistence?

Hon. Mitchell: We have gone back?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: We are on the same Head.

Hon. Mitchell: Ok, Travelling and Subsistence.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Page 233, under Goods and Services; 01, Travelling and Subsistence.

Hon. Mitchell: How many persons? I will have to give that to you in writing.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. Is there a policy for payment of this allowance? How many?

Hon. Mitchell: We have 13. I am sorry. We have 13 officers.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thirteen? Okay.

Hon. Mitchell: Thirteen officers.

Mr. Chairman: Thirteen.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thirteen. Well, you have not given an answer, policy wise in terms of disbursement of this allowance.

Hon. Mitchell: The policy is provided by the CPO.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And what is that policy?

Hon. Mitchell: It is a policy for the scheduled travelling officers—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is a fixed schedule.
Hon. Mitchell: Yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: For our public officers. Thank you, Minister. May I go on Sir, with you leave on this under Goods and Services?

Mr. Chairman: I am sure your other colleagues will give way, so proceed.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. I see that the Telephones, 05, I see that there is an increase here and, perhaps, we would appreciate why there is this increase. The allocation now for 2019 is 1 million. Is this to take care of some roaming bills and so on?

Mr. Chairman: It is a genuine question, Madam?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is a genuine. What is to come in with the increase?

Hon. Mitchell: The Ministry is now responsible for an additional five sites and attractions. As I indicated before, the Ministry is also responsible for the cruise office as well as the airport. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Chairman: Member, just now. There is a procedure and a way that ought to be done. Only your voice reached my ear. So go ahead.

Hon. Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. As I just indicated, the Ministry is now responsible for five sites and attractions as well as the cruise office and the airport office. So the increase is to take care of those bills. As well, we propose to install Wi-Fi at the five sites and attractions.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am still on telephones. What is the Ministry’s estimated monthly bill for landline phones and for cellular phones? And I do have others on Telephones. Should I ask all or wait?

Hon. Mitchell: I will give that to you in writing.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: You give us the assurance, you will provide it.

Hon. Mitchell: I give an undertaking.
Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Does the Ministry have a policy or does it have guidelines concerning the use of telephones and mobile devices?


Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And would you want to tell us what that is?


Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: There is a policy.

Hon. Mitchell: There is policy for mobile phones, an internal policy, and on the landlines there are passwords, passcodes for the use of the landlines.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Would you undertake to tell us what the policy is? You can provide it in writing; give us an undertaking so to do.

Hon. Mitchell: Sure.

Mr. Chairman: It will be provided.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. What is the Ministry’s policy for the use of mobile devices on official overseas travel?

Mr. Chairman: That would not be the same answer?

Hon. Mitchell: Same policy, Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Would there be a difference between—

Hon. Mitchell: It is the same policy, Member for Siparia, and I will provide it to you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sure. But you know when you travel the cost is much higher.

Hon. Mitchell: Member for Siparia, it is the same policy.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So, you use the same policy for using the mobile in T&T and the same policy for when someone travels and roams with their phone? Okay. I am asking the Minister.
Hon. Mitchell: Member for Siparia, this is the fourth time I will answer you. [Crosstalk] The mobile policy deals with both—

Mr. Chairman: Just now, hold on, hold on, Members. The Member who made the statement just retract it please.

Hon. Mitchell:—Member, usage as well as foreign and I will provide that to you in writing.

Mr. Chairman: Hold on, one second. Just retract it please.

Dr. Moonilal: Retract.

Mr. Chairman: Come on man, we are going fine, colleagues. Come on, we are going fine. [Crosstalk] Yes, Mr. Minister, so the question, it was answered.

Hon. Mitchell: Yes, I hope so.

Mr. Chairman: Siparia, are you still on—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: The telephones? No.

Mr. Chairman: You are good?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am okay for the telephones.

Mr. Chairman: Cumuto/Manzanilla, are you okay?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: No. [Laughter]

Mr. Chairman: Question please, Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hon. Minister, coming back to line Item 62, page 234—

Mr. Chairman: I am not hearing you.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Line Item 62.

Mr. Chairman: Page?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Page 234, where you have promotions. I just wanted to ask if the promotions here are relative to any international marketing firm that may
have been hired to—

**Hon. Mitchell:** No, not on dissolution of the TDC. All those contracts were terminated.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** All right. Okay, thanks.

**Mr. Chairman:** Caroni Central, you still have a question?

**Dr. Tewarie:** Yes, line Item 43, Security Services. In 2017, it was 666,000; 2018, the estimates were 800, but the actual expenditure was 3.6 million and it is just to—

**Mr. Chairman:** There is just a revised estimate of 3.6.

**Dr. Tewarie:** The revised estimate was 3.6—sorry, and then you have an estimate for 2019, 4 million. Why the big jump?

**Hon. Mitchell:** In 2017, we did not have responsibility and possession of the five new sites as well as the cruise office and the airport office. So we now have to undertake to provide security. Yes.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you. Line Item 08, Rent/Lease - Office Accommodation and Storage. In 2019, we have an estimate of $650,000 which gives us an increase by $200,000. Minister, you care to explain this increase?

**Hon. Mitchell:** This is to cater for any increases in rental cost or if we have to take any additional car park spaces which we pay rent for.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairman:** Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases, page 234; Item 001, General Administration, page 234. Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies, page 235; Item 001, Regional Bodies, page 235. Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you. Minister, 01, Caribbean Tourism Organization. Just very quickly, I see an increase by 27,000. You care to explain what that increase is
about?

Hon. Mitchell: That takes into consideration any potential change in the exchange rate.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. And, Minister, on that same line Item, how has our participation with respect to that organization been assisting with our tourism product here in Trinidad and Tobago?

Hon. Mitchell: We access market intelligence—timely market intelligence, industry trend—we market, we network with tourism’s top executives and policymakers. There are opportunities—there were opportunities and there still are opportunities for destination marketing and access to research and technical assistance.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Item 001, Regional Bodies, page 235; Item 003, United Nations Organizations, page 235; Item 011, Transfers to State Enterprises, page 235. I recognize the Member for Naparima and then the Member for Couva North.

Mr. Charles: 04, Tourism Trinidad Destination Management Company Limited, an allocation of $9 million. Will we begin to see from this allocation—and I know this is for staff—advertisements in foreign media, inviting them to visit Trinidad as we see for Barbados, St. Lucia, Cayman Islands, Bahamas, et cetera?

Hon. Mitchell: No. This line Item, this Vote, deals with the recurrent expenditure for the entity. So for the payment of salaries, for the purchase of minor equipment, et cetera.

Mr. Charles: So for this expenditure, you will see the staff delivering what I just asked about?

Hon. Mitchell: You will see staff delivering, yes.
Mr. Charles: Okay. Yes.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you. Minister, it is increased by $5 million from the 2018 Revised Estimates of $4 million. Could you give an explanation for this increase?

Hon. Mitchell: Well, this is the estimate that it would take where we recruit the top two tiers of the organization, as well as for the purchase of minor equipment, stationery, et cetera.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, just to elucidate a little bit on that same line Item, what is the location of this head office or this company? Where it is located and how many staff members are there presently?

Hon. Mitchell: On the 18th floor of this building and there are no staff members. The recruitment exercise was done. We expect to announce the recruitment of the top management by the end of next month.

Mr. Lee: So there are presently no staff?

Hon. Mitchell: No staff.

Mr. Lee: Do you have a board in place for this company?

Hon. Mitchell: There is a board in place.

Mr. Lee: Who is the chairman of this board?


Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we will now move to the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. Sub-Head 09, Development Programme, Consolidated Fund, page 82; Item 003, Economic Infrastructure, page 82 and page 83. Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 019, Tourism Sites and Attractions Upgrade. I am seeing $8 million allocated for 2019. Do you care to
identify these sites and attractions?

**Mr. Chairman:** Information could be provided, Minister?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Well, I have identified them in my opening statement—

**Ms. Ramdial:** Could you repeat them?

**Hon. Mitchell:** I will identify them again. Yes. The Maracas Beach Facility, Las Cuevas Beach Facility, Manzanilla Beach Facility, Vessigny Beach Facility and the La Brea Pitch Lake Visitor Centre.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Line Item 027, Tourism Baseline Survey, with no allocation in 2019. Do I take it that this document has been completed?

**Hon. Mitchell:** The work has been completed. The data collection exercise has been completed so they are just reviewing and compiling all the information together.

**Mr. Karim:** By when do you think we might be able to have it?

**Hon. Mitchell:** By the end of this year.

**Mr. Karim:** And line Item 029, the Consultancy for the Development of a Strategic Tourism Incentive Plan, an allocation in 2019 of 500,000. How much moneys has been expended so far?

**Hon. Mitchell:** No money.

**Mr. Karim:** No money. And when do you intend that this—

**Hon. Mitchell:** During this financial year.

**Mr. Karim:** What is the duration of it?

**Hon. Mitchell:** The project is expected to take about eight weeks.

**Mr. Karim:** Could you give us some more details on line Item 028?

**Mr. Chairman:** Establishment of Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Regulatory and
Licensing Authority? 28, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Mitchell:** One of the recommendations from the recent Miller Report, apart from the dissolution of the TDC and the creation of the two separate destination management companies, was the creation of a Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Regulatory and Licensing Authority to make mandatory quality standards in the tourism sector. So what this line Item was created for was for a consultancy to get the draft Bill, the draft policy, the draft regulations, et cetera.

**Mr. Karim:** When do you expect that that consultancy—

**Hon. Mitchell:** During this financial year.

**Mr. Karim:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Chairman:** One second.

[**MRS. ANNISETTE-GEORGE in the Chair**]

**Mr. Charles:** Minister, I do not know if you answered the question. 019, Sites and Attractions, would any attention at all be paid to the Toco Lighthouse site or any minor refurbishment during this fiscal?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Yes. We have looked at it and we have considered it. We have also been speaking with the Sangre Grande Regional Corporation, and they would have responsibility for that site. So we will work in collaboration with them to get that done.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 057, the Operationalization of Trinidad Tourism Limited for $10 million estimated 2019. I know that this is a new project. Could you elaborate a bit on this sum?

**Hon. Mitchell:** On the $10 million, what we expect to spend it on?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Yes.
Hon. Mitchell: We expect to spend it on the preparation of the organization’s strategic plan, a strategic marketing plan, the establishment of the destination websites, executing the execution of marketing initiatives.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 058, Maracas Beach Facility Management Project for $2 million. Could you tell me the components that would be needing this funding?

Hon. Mitchell: All right. So this is for the facilities management of Maracas Beach. Recently, the Ministry of Tourism would have appointed UDeCOTT as the facilities manager to Maracas Beach. So this line Item here would take care of the cost to landscape, the cost for sanitation, the cost for security, maintenance and administration.

Ms. Ramdial: Okay. And exactly how many persons would be employed under this programme to carry out these works? Do you have an idea?

Hon. Mitchell: I cannot give you that information right now.

Ms. Ramdial: Would you take an undertaking to provide it when it is available?

Hon. Mitchell: Yes.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line Item 030, Development of a National Tourism Policy. In 2018, the revised estimate was $300,000. I am seeing now it is $2 million. Is it $2 million to do a national tourism policy?

Hon. Mitchell: Yeah. So during fiscal 2018, the project would have been tendered out and the estimate would have been $900,000 but the tenders would have come in at just under $2 million. So the RFP had to be scrapped.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Minister: Under 507, is there a board of directors in place for the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Limited? If so,
who is the chairman and how many persons are being employed into this entity?

**Hon. Mitchell:** All right. So, the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre just asked that question. There is a board of directors in place and the chairman is Janelle Penny Commissiong.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** There are two different names. It is the same thing.

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is the same thing.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** It is the same thing? *[Crosstalk]*

**Mr. Lee:** So is it two companies or one company?

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is one company.

**Mr. Lee:** So what is the correct name?

**Hon. Mitchell:** The correct name?

**Mr. Lee:** Of the company?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Tourism Trinidad Limited.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** And if I could find out, how many persons have been recruited or employed so far?

**Hon. Mitchell:** No one.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** Nobody?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Madam Chair, I just answered that question.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** I am just trying to clarify because of the name issue.

**Hon. Mitchell:** Well, it is same company. It is the same answer as previously.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just a couple line Items. The first one, 019, if the Minister will consider Fishing Pond Boardwalk. The second line Item—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Fishing Pond Boardwalk for your upgrade, if you will consider that.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Where?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: In Fishing Pond, in line Item 019.

Hon. Mitchell: Okay, we can consider that.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: 027, does the Minister have in place a company who will do the Tourism Baseline Survey? And, if yes, what procurement?

Hon. Mitchell: The work for the baseline survey has been completed. We are just putting the document together right now. That is why there is no money in the estimate.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: There is money in the estimate, 520,000.

Hon. Mitchell: But that is the 2018 Revised Estimates.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: All right. Sorry. For line Item 059, I was a little bit confused. You said just now, 057 and 059 are really one. In light of the fact—well, there two different but they more or less—

Hon. Mitchell: Sorry, could you—

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Let me ask the question. The Development of a Tourism Education and Awareness Programme for Destination Trinidad and Tobago. In light of the fact the Trinidad Tobago has separated from itself in putting their own destination in place, and the THA was given a huge chunk of money to do so, why is it that we are doing a destination Trinidad and Tobago and such a small amount of money has been allocated for that project?

Hon. Mitchell: Well, it is education and awareness programme and it will deal with getting citizens—making citizens aware of their role and the importance of
tourism in Trinidad and Tobago, because tourism, it will affect Trinidad and Tobago. And in terms of the amount of money, we expect that this amount of money will cover that education programme.

**Mr. Karim:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am not sure whether anybody asked this yet, but line Item 056, IT Infrastructure Upgrade is a new project, 460,000. Could you give us a sense as to what this upgrade is all about and has it been—a consultancy been awarded for this project?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Not as yet, but it is for the purchase of additional servers, server area network, onsite backup, operations management and maintenance costs.

**Mr. Karim:** And this is for Trinidad?

**Hon. Mitchell:** This is for the Ministry of Tourism’s office.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 060, Development of a Theatre District, $500,000, estimate for 2019— it is a new project.

**Hon. Mitchell:** Yes.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Have you identified this Theatre District?

**Hon. Mitchell:** No, it is not geographical segment or anything like that.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay, could you explain?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Think about the London theatre district or think about Broadway. So, what it is, it is a platform for the marketing and promotion of the performing arts in Trinidad and Tobago. So think of a website where you can go and you see all the productions, you can purchase tickets, you can look at the cast, et cetera.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay and is this funding adequate in the first instance?

**Hon. Mitchell:** This funding is adequate?

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay.

**Mr. Lee:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just for my own clarity, in line Item 057,
Operationalization of Trinidad Tourism Limited, which is the parent company, between Trinidad Tourism Limited and the one that is transferred to state enterprises, Tourism Trinidad Destination Management Company Limited? I am a bit confused.

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is the same company.

**Mr. Lee:** So from a company’s registry point of view, are the two companies registered?

**Hon. Mitchell:** No.

**Mr. Lee:** So why you have one name limited and the other one name limited and it is not registered? Something is false here.

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is the shortened name.

**Mr. Lee:** From which one?

**Hon. Mitchell:** Tourism Trinidad Destination Management Limited, it is the shortened name.

**Mr. Lee:** Of Trinidad Tourism Limited? I do not know. I am trying to understand.

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is the shortened name. Tourism Trinidad Destination Management Company Limited is the long name.

**Mr. Lee:** Right.

**Hon. Mitchell:** The shortened name is—well, it should be Tourism Trinidad Limited.

**Mr. Lee:** So, it is a typographical error?

**Hon. Mitchell:** It is an error in the printing.

**Mr. Padarath:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam, just really clarification on 060, Development of a Theatre District, as it relates to—

**Hon. Mitchell:** I am sorry, I am not hearing you.
Mr. Padarath: Just for some clarification hon. Minister, on line Item 060, Development of a Theatre District, I know you went into some sort of an explanation with respect to this, but could you indicate with respect to street theatre in Trinidad and Tobago, like the Ramleela, how to you intend to utilize this particular programme to bring to life street theatre, Ramleela, Krishna Leela, as the Member for Oropouche East reminds me?

Hon. Mitchell: The Ramleela—I think there is a Ramleela Association. The Ramleela Association will be consulted and they will also be invited to market and promote on the website.

Madam Chairman: Member of Princes Town. Member for Oropouche South, not Oropouche South. Member for Couva South, you know, it is kind of late in the night and you know, your voice at this stage really is kind of distracting okay. Member for Princes Town.

Mr. Padarath: Thank you, Madam Chair. In relation to the comment made by the hon. Minister, again, in light of this particular programme, seeing that the hon. Minister is hoping to support street theatre like Ramleela and the Krishna Leela celebrations through the theatre district, in light of having this particular line Item, has the Minister had any discussions or plans with the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts for the building of the Ramleela Centre that would further enhance a programme like this?

Madam Chairman: Member, I am not going to allow that under this Item, because the Minister made it clear this is not about physical spaces. Member for Oropouche West.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: Minister, line 019, Tourism Sites and Attractions Upgrade.
Hon. Mitchell: Yes.

Mrs. Gayadeen-Gopeesingh: I am seeing an allocation of 8 million. Is the Oropouche Lagoon identified as one of those tourism sites for upgrade?

Hon. Mitchell: No, Member for Oropouche West. The Oropouche Lagoon is not identified as a site or an attraction for upgrade.

Dr. Moonilal: Minister, just a quick question. I am really attracted to this idea of the theatre district. I understand the concept well, but it is not a geographical locality.

Hon. Mitchell: No.

Dr. Moonilal: It is a concept that you go all over the place and promote things. Is it?

Dr. Moonilal: You promote it on a website.

Dr. Moonilal: So the district is really a website promotion.

Hon. Mitchell: It is a website. Yes. It is abstract.

Dr. Moonilal: It is an abstract theatre district. I am much more attracted to that now. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services; Infrastructure Development Fund, page 197; Item 004, Social Infrastructure. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, the 40 million relates to Maracas Beach Facility Improvement Project.

Hon. Mitchell: Yeah.

Mr. Lee: In 2017 you had 1 million budgeted, nothing for 2018 and 14 million for 2019. What is the status of this project or is this a new project?

Hon. Mitchell: No. This is the phase two of the Maracas Beach Facility
Improvement Project. The phase one was conducted by the Ministry of Works and Transport through NIDCO.

Mr. Lee: So the Ministry of Tourism is now handling phase two by this?

Hon. Mitchell: Will now handle phase two in this financial year.

Mr. Lee: And the 14 million, what you project in phase two, how the money will be projected to be spent broken down in phase two for this $14 million?

Hon. Mitchell: We do not have that breakdown as yet.

Mr. Lee: So how do arrive at that budgeted amount of 14 million?

9.45 p.m.

Hon. Mitchell: It is an estimate.

Mr. Lee: I know, but if you arrive at an estimate, it must have some components to arrive at an estimate.

Hon. Mitchell: Well, yes, there is a landscaping component, the construction of an additional washroom, as well as additional vending booths.

Mr. Lee: So you have identified the 14 million to, part of it to be landscaping, washroom?

Hon. Mitchell: Landscaping, the construction of additional washrooms, site office and additional vending booths.

Mr. Lee: You might not have it now, but could you provide that breakdown of your budgeted amount for the different components or the different areas of phase two?

Hon. Mitchell: Yes, when I have it I can provide it.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you. Can the Minister tell us who are the
contractors engaged for phase two, and/or what was the tendering propose if any?

**Hon. Mitchell:** No, no. It has not yet been tendered.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Okay. What is the tendering process to be followed?

**Hon. Mitchell:** UDeCOTT, it will be open tendering.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Open tendering. Thank you, Madam.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Head 35 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.*

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, PS. Thank you, the members from your Ministry.

Hon. Members, if I could just have your attention for a few minutes, with respect to the undertakings I have been hearing Members saying assurances. I want to remind Members that there is a procedural bulletin regarding assurances which are not covered by committees. I also want to remind Members in cases, you know, they were here whole afternoon and it may have escaped their attention, it has already been circulated, the additional information required under Head 18 and Head 20, which would have been the Ministry of Finance and Pensions. So I just want to assure Members that the Parliament staff, and just so that they would not be demotivated by some conversations we may have had earlier, that they are trying to do their part to ensure that we get the information that has been requested.

[Desk thumping]

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** Thank you very kindly for that, Madam Chairman, that the undertakings that we gave are being already fulfilled.

**Head 13:** Office of the Prime Minister, $268,153, 240.

**Madam Chairman:** I shall now invite the Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister to make a brief opening statement for a maximum of five minutes.
Hon. Webster-Roy: Thank you, Madam Chair. Some of the major accomplishments for fiscal 2017/2018 include:

- The laying of the national policy for gender and development in the Parliament;
- The completion of the First Draft of the National Child Policy and the advancement of the National Children’s Registry to phase 2, the building stage;
- The commissioning of the Tobago Assessment Centre and the Tobago Child Support Centre;
- The completed construction handover of the South Regional Office and Assessment Centre and the completion of the Chaguanaas Assessment Centre for the operations of the Children’s Authority of the Trinidad and Tobago;
- The commissioning of the male transitional home which is fully operational and currently accommodates 11 young men;
- The initiation of the prevention mapping process for HIV and AIDS to determine where gaps in the prevention of response lie, and support the prevention scale up that is required to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS, and other STIs within the population;
- The development of the HIV and AIDS sustainability plan which will provide strategic guidance to the agencies involved in the response in the 2018—2019 period;
- The advancement of the counter-terrorism strategy which was approved by the National Security Council in the second half of 2017. The Secretariat facilitated this process by hosting meetings and
drafting the strategy on the request of the Ministry of National Security; and

- The advancement of the think tank project by the National Security Council.

The outlook for 2019, with the momentum gained in 2017/2018, it is envisaged that the high level of success will continue in 2019. Projects and programmes that are set for implementation, or will continue in the new fiscal year include:

- The completion of the National Child Policy;
- The establishment of the National Children’s Registry;
- Further enhancement of all children’s home to ensure that children receive the individual care they need and their rights are preserved, full operationalization of all the facilities where construction has been completed and the facilities handed over;
- Construction of additional facilities, including the Josephine Shaw transitional home to house our nation’s children who are in need of institutional care;
- Advancement of the refurbishment and construction activities under historical buildings;
- Commencement of research studies on the following areas, one, mothers as perpetrators and, two, factors responsible for the hyper sexualized behaviour of our children;
- The commissioning of two domestic violence shelters. These two facilities were handed over in September and we have since advertised with NGOs to partner with Government to manage these facilities;
• Expansion of the central registry on domestic violence;
• Approval and implementation of the HIV and AIDS strategic plan; and
• Submission of the National HIV and AIDS STI Policy to Cabinet.

The Office of the Prime Minister remains committed to working assiduously to become the hallmark of service excellence in the public service. Emphasis will continue to be placed on national development using Vision 2030 and the Strategic Plan 2017—2021 for direction. The central focus will remain on creating sustainable structures that enable restoration and development and the policies and legislation that remove barriers that impedes growth. I thank you, Madam Chair.

Question proposed: That Head 13 stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Hon. Members, the sum of $268,153,240 for Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure and the Draft Estimates of Development Programme. We shall now proceed to consider the Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure. We are at page 56. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure; Item 001, General Administration.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you, Madam Chairman, and let me say good night to the hon. Minister for deputizing for the hon. Prime Minister. Item 01, under General Administration, Salaries and Cost of Living Allowance. I know there is an increase in the allocation by $2.3 million. Would the Minister kindly indicate what this additional $2.3 million will be spent on?

Hon. Webster-Roy: That is for filling of vacant positions and the requisite increments and allowances for those positions. There are 105 positions vacant on
the establishment.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So this additional expenditure is for vacant posts?

Hon. Webster-Roy: The filling of vacant posts and for the requisite increments and allowances for those positions.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Okay, thanks.

Hon. Webster-Roy: You are welcome.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much. Thank you, Minister. I am at page 56, of course, 14, Remunerations to Members of Cabinet-Appointed Committees. You note the actual expenditure was $12,000 in 2017 and you are now budgeting $48,500. Would you care to give us a list, of course, to—undertake to give us a list of the Cabinet-appointed committees that are in effect now and the composition of those committees?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Okay, we will get that.

Madam Chairman: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Thank you, Madam Chair. Item 009, Remuneration to Chairman and Members of Commissions of Inquiry, and I see 200 has been estimated. What is the basis arriving at that figure, and is it a nominal figure put in there, as they say in the dialect, “should, in case”?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Well, we currently have two committees in existence.

Mr. Charles: Two commissions?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Yeah.

Mr. Charles: Excuse me?

Hon. Webster-Roy: We have two, you want the committees?

Mr. Charles: No, no, no, I asked on what basis.
Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Madam Chairman? Minister?

Madam Chairman: Go ahead.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Thank you. Madam Chairman, the amount that is put there is a nominal figure. Just in case a commission of enquiry needs to be started, we put a nominal figure there. It is not that there is commission of enquiry currently in existence.

Mr. Charles: Or contemplated?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Well, commissions of enquiry are not usually contemplated. It depends on if something happens that demands a commission of enquiry.

Mr. Charles: Good. None in the pipeline. Thank you.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: However, because there is a line Item you always put a nominal figure there just in case.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Gender Affairs Division. Sorry, Member for Siparia.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you very much. I am still on page 56, under General Administration, 08. These are Vacant Posts-Salaries & COLA (without incumbents), $300,000. In my question previously the Minister said the increase of 2.3 million had to do with vacant posts and COLA—the allowances—but there is a separate line Item dealing with the vacant posts. So again I am not clearly understanding from the answer what the additional 2.3 million in salaries, and so on, is for. Are you going to hire more people, pay increased salaries?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Member for Siparia, that is just a nominal amount. The above one would have covered the majority.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What is nominal?
Hon. Webster-Roy: The first one, the Increments and Allowances, right? The first one you would have asked me before was for increments and allowances. This one here is just a nominal figure.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So your first answer I must disregard that this included—the first one included vacant posts? Okay. We will leave it alone, Madam. I withdraw the question.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: In all Ministries there are vacant posts without bodies that have to be filled. There are also vacant posts with incumbents for positions where people have either been transferred or they got a promotion, but the post has an incumbent. So you might be an Executive Secretary but you—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I understand. I withdrew the question.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: All right. Okay. Thank you.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Gender Affairs Division. Sub-Head 02, Goods and Services; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you. Hon. Minister, line Item 23, can you indicate what is paid for using this Sub-Item, Fees?

Madam Chairman: That is Fees?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Yes.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Line Item—you said 23, Fees? Okay, that would cover legal fees and like ICT licensing fees.

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you, Madam Chair. At 04, Electricity. There must be an explanation here, the 2017 figure was $2,619, estimated 350 and then revised downward to 2,000 which is in line with 2017, and now goes back up to 415,000.

UNREvised
You get the impression that something was to happen and did not happen, and you expect it to happen this fiscal. Is there an explanation?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** So that is Item 04, Electricity.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Yes.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** That would be to cover payment of electricity charges at Saint Clair office, Trade Zone, storage rental and the Maraval Road car park.

**Dr. Moonilal:** But if that was the same thing as last year, why was it revised down to 2,000?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** We had arrears.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Oh, so it is an arrears you are dealing with?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yeah.

**Dr. Moonilal:** Okay. But you intend to pay the arrears now?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes.

**Dr. Moonilal:** All right.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva North.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My favourite line Item, line Item 16, Contract Employment. I am seeing 2019 Estimate for 13 million; consideration 2017, the Actual figure was 11.9. So there has been an increase since then. Minister, can you tell me how many contract positions exist within the Office of the Prime Minister and at what levels?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Okay. Just a second.

**Ms. Ramdial:** And if you do not, you can give us undertaking to provide it in writing.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** In terms of contract positions we have 110.

**Ms. Ramdial:** One hundred and ten. And is the 13 million budgeted here for 2019,
is it for all contract positions, 110 positions?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes, it is.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Okay. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Just a minute, just going back to line Item 16. Could we get an undertaking to get the level of positions and the pay associated with them?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Okay. Sure.

**Ms. Ramdial:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Caroni Central.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Item 36, Extraordinary Expenditure. It was estimated in 2018 and was not spent and then it is repeated. Do you know what that is for?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** That is just a nominal amount in case something comes up and we do not have the necessary Vote to cover it.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay. So it is just a provision?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes, Sir.

**Dr. Tewarie:** And then 62. There is a $450,000 increase in Promotions, Publicity and Printing. Is that to step up publicity or there is there something extraordinary, or what?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** That would cover promotion and publishing of brochures and messages, et cetera, for all the Divisions, except for Gender Affairs.

**Dr. Tewarie:** Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Thank you. Item 21, Repairs and Maintenance-Buildings, 1.5 million. I take it that this is in respect of only buildings or rented buildings?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** We have some work to do at Saint Clair so we have to change
the carpets and the chillers, and that is what we intend to do with it.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Health and safety reasons.

**Mr. Charles:** Right. So it is not a case of repairing rented buildings?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** No. We have to do those things for health and safety reasons.

**Mr. Charles:** And Medical Expenses, 58. That is in respect of who? It is which staff? All staff? Contract staff?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** No. That is for current and former Prime Ministers.

**Mr. Charles:** Current and former Prime Ministers.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Former Prime Ministers, yeah, only.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Which one is that?

**Mr. Charles:** Item 58.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Medical Expenses?

**Mr. Charles:** No, how could it be?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** That is for current and former Prime Ministers.

**Mr. Charles:** You mean this is the normal—*[Crosstalk]*

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yeah.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Not this Prime Minister.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay. All right. I thought you said this was the—

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Not this former Prime Minister.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay, I understand.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** I never benefitted from this.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Indarsingh:** My question has already been asked.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.
Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chair. Minister, line Item 65, Expenses of Cabinet-Appointed Bodies. I know on the explanation side, it says National Security Council $42 million, but looking at the expenses related to this Item, which I am assuming has already been referred to the National Security Council, what would have this increase of $8.4 million? What has created that increase in the National Security Council?

Hon. Webster-Roy: We will provide that for you in writing.

Mr. Lee: In writing? Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Item 002, Gender Affairs Division. Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases; Item 001, General Administration. Member for Couva North.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam Chair. Line Item 01, Vehicles. I am seeing an increase—well, an allocation of 1 million. Minister, can you tell me how many vehicles you all intend to purchase for the Office of the Prime Minister?

Hon. Webster-Roy: We have to preplace two vehicles at the PM’s residence fleets. One vehicle is over eight years old and the other one is over nine years old, and we have to replace them.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Hon. Webster-Roy: You are welcome.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 04, Current Transfers and Subsidies; Item 003, United Nations Organizations; Item 005, Non-Profit Institutions; Item 007, Households; Item 009—Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Page, Chair?

Madam Chairman: Item 007, Households.

Mr. Lee: Children’s Authority, in 2019 it is estimated $57.7 million, an increase in
2.7. What are the changes related to the 2.7 for the Children’s Authority?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** You want to know why we have an increase for the Children’s Authority?

**Mr. Lee:** Yeah.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Okay. We have the new centres I would have listed out before in the introductory statement. Apart from that, remember in the budget we would have announced that we are increasing penalties for matters related to children, so obviously we need to strengthen the staffing at the Authority, and all of that, to ensure we are better able to respond to the needs of children in Trinidad and Tobago. So it is for staffing. So the new facilities is for all the work that goes into ensuring the children of Trinidad and Tobago are protected.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you. Hon. Minister, just to reiterate what it is you said, it also includes expenditure for staffing, this figure here?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes, Ma’am.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Would you be able to provide how many persons this expenditure will—

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** You will get it in writing.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 009, Other Transfers. Member for Naparima.

**Mr. Charles:** Item 12, Response to HIV/AIDS. Could the Minister give us some information with respect to, are we winning the battle of AIDS? Is there a decrease or anything based on this allocation?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** What I can say is that we have heightened our interactions with the different groups, and so on. We have also started partnering with the
Tobago House of Assembly, and I could definitely say that because all hands are on deck. So when we ask you all to partner with us, I am hoping that you will accept that call.

Mr. Charles: We do. We do. On this matter we will.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Very well.


Mr. Lee: Thank you, Madam. I am on the new book. Line Item 085, Customisation and Outfitting of an Assessment Centre in Tobago, 2 million was spent in 2018 but it is a new Item that was there and nothing in 2019. Could the Minister explain what this line Item is about, please?

Hon. Webster-Roy: The Assessment Centre in Tobago? That would be—

Mr. Lee: Yeah, the Customisation and Outfitting of the Assessment Centre—

Hon. Webster-Roy: Yes. We are doing that in collaboration with the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development in the Tobago House of Assembly, and it is on stream. We did not have an assessment centre in Tobago before and we have partnered with the Tobago House of Assembly to ensure that that is up and running.

Mr. Lee: Okay.

Madam Chairman: Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Minister, just for my own—084, you have Refurbishment of Two (2)
Safe Houses in 2018. That has been completed and everything—

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me, where are you?

**Mr. Lee:** Page 17.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, we are on 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Is that where you are at?

**Mr. Lee:** No. Okay, go ahead, Madam Chair. There are several areas under Welfare Services.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** We are at page 17?

**Mr. Lee:** Yeah.

**Madam Chairman:** We are at 005, we are finished with 004.

**Mr. Lee:** We are? I only asked one question.

**Madam Chairman:** Member for Naparima under 005.

**Mr. Charles:** What is the 002, the Strengthening of the Strategic Threat Assessment, 800,000? What is that?

**Madam Chairman:** That is in 2018?

**Mr. Charles:** None for this year?

**Hon. Member:** None for this year.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay. All right.

**Hon. Member:** Has it been discontinued?

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** No allocation.

**Mr. Charles:** Could I ask the question? Why was it discontinued?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** I cannot speak to that.

**Mr. Charles:** Okay.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** May I?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, please.
Mrs. Robinson-Regis: It is no longer under the Office of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Charles: Okay.


Mr. Lee: Madam Chair, Members, 177, Item 002 to the Minister, the modernization of the St. Michael’s School for Boys. I see nothing in 2019. Has the modernization stopped?

Hon. Webster-Roy: You are really asking me that question? St. Michael’s closed.

Mr. Lee: St. Michael’s School for the Boys?

Hon. Webster-Roy: It is closed. That is why I asked you if you are asking me that question. [Laughter]

Mr. Lee: I am just holding up for my colleagues.

Madam Chairman: Item 005—Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla, you have a question.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Yes, please.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Hon. Minister, line Item 007, can you give a status on 007 and 008?

Hon. Webster-Roy: In terms of 007, we are at the stage of renovation of the IT lab for the children. It is expected to be completed in the first quarter. Installation of CCTV cameras in the first quarter. We are currently at the design phase of the construction of the new administrative building. Construction is expected to begin this fiscal. In terms of 008, we are currently in the design phase for the construction of community residences for St. Jude’s.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: How many young ladies this will now accommodate? The
reconstruction, how many children it will accommodate, the new structure?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** In the 40s. And what we are trying to do, Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla, and I do not know if you remember during the budget debate when I would have noted that what we are trying to do is to use adoption and foster care as the, you know, to place children into homes. We are looking to really promote adoption and foster care. So what we are doing now, instead of building large institutions to put children in, we are encouraging people to come on board in terms of adoption and sign up to be foster care parents.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** I hope that the necessary checks and balances—

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Definitely through the Children’s Authority.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:**—are in place to prevent perversion of children.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Definitely.

**Mrs. Newallo-Hosein:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Item 005, Multi-Sectoral and Other Services. Member for Siparia.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Madam, there are several of the line Items, so when I ask one question can I be allowed thereafter so I can get it out of the way?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, you can.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Thank you very much. Line Item 007, Whitehall Restoration. There is an increase of $14 million in the—there is an estimate of 14 million in the 2019 which does represent a substantial increase from the 2018 Revised. Would the Minister want to tell us what specifically this 14 million is now going to be used for, given that several other millions have already been spent on Stollmeyer’s?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Thank you, Member for Siparia. In terms of the Whitehall...
Restoration, we have to ensure that we complete the asbestos treatment, so that will take a large portion of the finances.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Restoration of the Red House, 008. I note there is no allocation for 2019. Is there a reason for that as we moved elsewhere?

Hon. Webster-Roy: In terms of the Red House, you would not see it because the finance is coming out of Hyatt. Whatever profits we made from the Hyatt through UDeCOTT, it is going towards the restoration of the Red House.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But previous it was allocated under here, under this line Item. Has it been moved, and can you tell me if it has, where can I find it? I think that is very important for us as parliamentarians to know what is happening with the Red House. So we would be very grateful to know where this thing has gone.

10.15 p.m.

Hon. Webster-Roy: It was always here, no, but I am saying the financing was always through the Hyatt, whatever profits we make from—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: “Hyatt building de Red House.”

Hon. Webster-Roy: The project was done this way. The majority of the funding was coming through the surplus from Hyatt; part of it came from the Consolidated Fund. Now that we are almost at the end of the work, restoration works, all funding is coming from the Hyatt. We are almost there.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is okay where the funding is coming from, the question is how much is to be allocated in fiscal 2019. There is nothing here.

Hon. Webster-Roy: None.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: There is no allocation here. Please tell me where to find the allocation?
Hon. Webster-Roy: There is none because we would be moving into the facility soon.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So the work is complete?

Hon. Webster-Roy: Almost, yes. That is what I am saying.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Almost is different from complete.

Hon. Webster-Roy: Yes, it is practically complete. I mean, just recently I saw in the papers where they were asking people to tender for the—was the hoarding?—asking people to purchase the hoarding and whatever.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: But there is no allocation to do it. In any case, Minister, you should know from the Ministry, not from the papers.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: May I just please be allowed to interject? What we are looking at here is the IDF, the Infrastructure Development Fund, which means this is money allocated to special-purpose companies in order to do the work.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Projects.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: The money for the Red House restoration, or the payments for the Red House restoration, is coming from the profits that we are getting from the Hyatt, so it would be in the Consolidated Fund. So there is not going to be an allocation here in the IDF, because remember that UDeCOTT—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So why every year—it was always UDeCOTT. It was probably this financing arrangement, but it was always allocated so we could see how much.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: No, this financing arrangement is relatively new.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is a new arrangement?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Yes, relatively new, because instead of us having to allocate funds here, the fact that the Hyatt has been quite profitable, it means that
we can do the funding through the Hyatt.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Is there any estimated amount?

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** Remember that UDeCOTT is in charge of the Hyatt.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Always was.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** Yes; so I am saying that that money would be under the Consolidated Fund through the Hyatt.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** I thank you, but I think we need to find out how much money is going to be spent on something as important as the Red House in this fiscal year. So I thank you for your attempt to clarify. Moving along under the same Public Buildings, Construction of the Prime Minister’s Tobago Residence, 011, I note $5 million revised for 2018; and then 2019, there is a $5 million estimate. What is the status of this project? What is this $5 million going to be spent on in fiscal 2019, and what is the expected completion date of this project? It appears to be an ongoing project.

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** It is an ongoing project. In terms of the completion date, I will have to give you that at a later date.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** No, what is the status of the project?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** It is ongoing.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Are there posts or blocks on the ground? Five million appears to have already been spent from the revised estimate, you want to spend another $5 million on what?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** The building that was there was demolished and work is ongoing at the site.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** So $5 million to demolish?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** I said work is ongoing at the site.
Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, and I am asking what is this $5 million going to be spent on—the roof, the windows, the foundation? That is why I am asking you the status, the stage. If you cannot tell us—

Hon. Webster-Roy: You will get that in writing.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I thank you very much, and there is just one more which I find an extraordinary increase, something called “Cabildo retrofit”. The revised estimate for 2018 was $2 million. I am now seeing for 2019, $35 million. What is this for, Cabildo retrofit?

Hon. Webster-Roy: That would be the companion building for the Parliament when we move into the Red House.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Is this a new building?

Hon. Webster-Roy: No, it is not a new building. [Interuption]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: And he would go where? To the tower.

Hon. Webster-Roy: What would happen is that that building, as I said, would be the companion building to the Red House that would house the Parliament staff. So they will retrofit the building and create a skywalk to connect the Red House and Cabildo building.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Skywalk sounds nice. We could do underground. [Interuption] No, no, it is not a joke. You may want to consider, instead of going up, we go down.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Because of the water table in Port of Spain—


Mrs. Robinson-Regis:—it would be difficult to do underground, so a skywalk is better.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sure. So what is the status of the retrofit, how much
has already been done and what is left to be done, apart from the skywalk?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Okay, so the demolition work is ongoing.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** It is being demolished?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Inside of the building, remember I said we have to retrofit. Are you hearing me?

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Yes, I am trying to understand. Is this what is the AG’s Chambers?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** So they are demolishing?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** They are not demolishing the building. The inside would have to be gutted.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Will have to be?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** Yes. So that is ongoing, yes.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** So where is he? Where is the hon. Attorney General in this building being retrofitted, with walls and so on?

**Hon. Webster-Roy:** They moved to the Campus.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** He has moved? Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** The AG is in the AGLA towers. Let me just, if I may—let me just indicate that the Cabildo building is for the ancillary services that will feed the Parliament.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** The Minister said that.

**Mrs. Robinson-Regis:** The Minister said it was for the staff. It is for the ancillary services, not for the parliamentary staff.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC:** Both Ministers, I thank you very much. I hope you have a very good night.
Mrs. Robinson-Regis: You are welcome. So that, for the services remain, the committees, the television studio, the library. I am just trying to be as fulsome as possible so that we do not have to give an undertaking that we will give information in writing.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Fair enough.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: So the Cabildo building will be for committees, for the television studio, for library services, et cetera, ancillary services to the Red House.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: All will happen after the general election.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Am I being listened to?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am totally satisfied with the answer.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Thank you so much. So that we get a complete and fulsome answer to the question.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Siparia, I see you are indicating that, you know—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Good night.

Madam Chairman: Good night, but you have two other Members with questions. Is it that they are now declining?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: I could never adjourn this Parliament, Madam.

Madam Chairman: Okay, good. I thought you were telling your Members, so that is what I am trying to find out.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Are you clear on—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Repeat please.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: You would like me to repeat? Ma’am, could I, should I?

Dr. Moonilal: I did not hear the last part.
Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Okay. Cabildo Building is for the ancillary services to the Red House which will house the main Parliament, and those ancillary services include committees, library services, the television studio, security, et cetera. “Ay, ay, Oropouche, yuh walking off?”

Madam Chairman: Member for Oropouche East, you are no longer asking questions?

Mr. Charles: All I am asking is the President’s residence, what is the target date for completion?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is under the same Head.

Madam Chairman: 010.

Hon. Webster-Roy: We are looking at April 2019.

Mr. Charles: Of this year?


Mr. Charles: Okay, thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 13 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. PS and your team; thank you, Madam Minister.

Head 38: Environmental Commission, $6,853,740.

Madam Chairman: So that we will be all on the same page—page 241 of the Recurrent. I will now invite the hon. Minister of Planning and Development to make a brief opening statement not exceeding five minutes.

Hon. Robinson-Regis: Thank you very kindly, Ma’am. The Environment Commission was established by section 81(1) by the Environmental Management Act, Chap. 35:05 and by section 3 of the Act. The Environmental Commission is
established as a Superior Court of Record with all powers inherent in such a court. The commission has jurisdiction to hear appeals from decisions of the Environmental Management Authority, and in specific cases an individual can institute proceedings before the commission with respect to environmental matters. Madam, may I just indicate that the Environmental Commission comes under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General’s Office. Thank you very kindly.

**Question proposed:** That Head 38 stand part of the Schedule.

**Madam Chairman:** Hon. Members, the sum of $6,853,740 for Head 38, the Environmental Commission, is comprised of moneys proposed for expenditure under the following Sub-Heads and Items to be found in the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*. We shall now proceed to consider the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*.

**Hon. Robinson-Regis:** Ma’am, sorry, I hate to interrupt but it is $9 million, not $6 million.

**Madam Chairman:** Let me just put the question—

**Hon. Member:** What page are we on?

**Hon. Robinson-Regis:** What we have to agree upon would be the $9 million. We have to agree on $9 million, not $6 million.

**Madam Chairman:** Just check and see what the Bill has. [Interruption]

**Hon. Robinson-Regis:** Check the Bill for me, please.

**Madam Chairman:** Minister, the Bill has six. The Bill has the figure that I have read out.

**Hon. Robinson-Regis:** Thank you very much, Ma’am.

**Madam Chairman:** We shall now proceed to consider the *Draft Estimates of Recurrent Expenditure*. Sub-Head 01, Personnel Expenditure: Item 001, General
Ms. Ramdial: Thank you, Madam. Line Item, 08, Rent, Lease, Office Accommodation and Storage. I see an estimate for 2019 here at $1.5 million, a $485,000 increase. Could I get a clarification for that increase?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: I am advised that at present the commission occupies two floors of the building that they are in now, but by May 2019 they will occupy four floors and that is the increase that is reflected there.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Member for Couva North, are you still in Sub-Head 02?

Ms. Ramdial: Yes, Goods and Services. Yes, Madam. I see line Item, Short-term Employment. I see a substantial decrease by $250,000 for fiscal 2019. Explanation, why?

Hon. Robinson-Regis: The staff that had been taken on was to deal with a certain backlog that existed. In the main, that backlog has been reduced significantly, so that that is the result of the decrease.

Ms. Ramdial: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Sub-Head 03, Minor Equipment Purchases: Item 001, General Administration.

Question put and agreed to.

Head 38 ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much to the AO II, the Registrar and the other members of the Environmental Commission.

Hon. Members, I want to thank you all for your cooperation and eager participation today. I want to wish you all a very safe and happy weekend.
Standing Finance Committee is suspended to Monday, 15 October 2018 at 10.00 a.m. This meeting is now suspended.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: May I just indicate that by agreement we have made certain shifts, but the information will come. But I will just indicate that Ministry of Works and Transport will be first; Public Administration will be second; Service Commissions will be third; Statutory Authorities Service Commission will be fourth; Social Development will be fifth; and then we will have Trade; Foreign Affairs; and Planning and Development. That is on Monday. Planning and Development is last. [Crosstalk] No, “is you all” who fixed this.

10.31 p.m.: Standing Finance Committee suspended.