



3rd REPORT OF THE

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON

STATE ENTERPRISES

on

An inquiry into the operations of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) with specific focus on the proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives of the National Environmental Policy and Trinidad and Tobago's progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

February, 2022

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The Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises

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Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises

An inquiry into the operations of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) with specific focus on the proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives of the National Environmental Policy and Trinidad and Tobago's progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3rd Report 2021/2022 Session, Twelfth Parliament

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The Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises

Establishment

1. The Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises was appointed pursuant to the directive encapsulated at section 66A of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The House of Representatives and the Senate on Monday November 09, 2020 and Tuesday November 17, 2020, respectively agreed to a motion, which among other things, established this Committee to inquire into and report to Parliament on State Enterprises falling under its purview with regard to:

- their administration;
- the manner of exercise of their powers;
- their methods of functioning; and
- any criteria adopted by them in the exercise of their powers and functions.

Current Membership

2. The following Members were appointed to serve on the Committee:

Mr. Anthony Vieira

Mr. Foster Cummings, MP

Mr. Adrian Leonce, MP

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh, MP¹

Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie, MP

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon

Ms. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing

Mr. Wade Mark

Powers

3. The Committee is one of the Departmental Select Committees, the powers of which are set out principally in Senate Standing Orders 91 and 101, and HOR Standing Orders 101 and 111. These are available on the Internet via www.ttparliament.org.

Secretarial Support

4. Secretarial support was provided by Mr. Brian Caesar, Clerk of the Senate, who served as Secretary to the Committee, Mr. Johnson Greenidge, Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Krystle Gittens, Graduate Research Assistant, and Mrs. Safiyyah Shah, Graduate Research Assistant.

Contacts

¹ Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh, MP was appointed to the Committee w.e.f. 12.11.2021 in lieu of Mr. David Lee, MP

5. All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary to the Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises, Parliamentary Complex Cabildo Building, St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain. The telephone number for general enquiries is 624-7275; the Committee's email address is jscse@ttparliament.org.

Table of Contents

GENERAL FINDINGS	6
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	9
REPORT SUMMARY	11
1. INTRODUCTION.....	13
BACKGROUND.....	13
POLICY BACKGROUND.....	16
OBJECTIVES OF THE INQUIRY.....	17
2. CONDUCT OF THE INQUIRY.....	18
3. KEY ISSUES, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	20
OBJECTIVE 1: TO ASCERTAIN SWMCOL'S PROPOSED MEASURES TO ASSIST IN ACHIEVING THE GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY;.....	20
<i>Recommendations</i>	24
OBJECTIVE 2: TO DETERMINE WHETHER SWMCOL IS ADHERING TO THE FRAMEWORK FOR OPERATIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE STATE ENTERPRISES PERFORMANCE MONITORING MANUAL	25
OBJECTIVE 3: TO UNDERSTAND SWMCOL'S CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING ITS MANDATE AS A STATE ENTERPRISE.	26
<i>Automation of SWMCOL's operations</i>	27
<i>Technological advancement at SWMCOL's operations</i>	28
<i>Recommendations</i>	28
4. CONCLUSION	29
APPENDICES.....	31
FRAMEWORK FOR STATE ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS.....	32
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.....	43
VERBATIM NOTES.....	51
ATTENDANCE REGISTER	97

General Findings

During the inquiry, the Committee made the following findings:

- (i) There is a clear linkage between SWMCOL's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, to be completed end June, 2021, and its achievement of objectives of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the National Environmental Policy (NEP).
- (ii) SWMCOL is progressing towards the establishment of an engineered landfill at Forres Park.
 - The plans to close the Beetham landfill have been paused until the Forres Park engineered landfill is commissioned.
- (iii) SWMCOL observed a 10% increase in voluntary recycling through the EMA's iCare programme.
- (iv) Trinidad and Tobago citizens' general disregard for the environment is the reason for many environmental issues.
- (v) There is a need to educate citizens concerning the co-mingling of waste and how waste should be separated.
- (vi) SWMCOL is already prepared to receive recyclables in support of the National Recycling Policy.
- (vii) SWMCOL's marketing initiatives targeting youth, for proper disposal of solid waste include:
 - Revitalised "Chase Charlie" campaign; and
 - Development of new "superheroes".
- (viii) The proclamation of Beverage Container legislation is highly anticipated by SWMCOL.
- (ix) SWMCOL collaborates with other stakeholders such as beach communities for clean-ups and post disaster assistance groups.
- (x) SWMCOL is not responsible for bio-medical waste as it falls under the purview of the Ministry of Health;
 - There are other elements in the waste space that do not fall under the purview of SWMCOL, such as hazardous waste and "white-waste" e.g. refrigerators and stoves;
 - The producer of hazardous waste is responsible for disposal;

- SWMCOL only accepts hazardous waste rendered inert;
 - There is no legislation or Authority to govern the disposal of hazardous waste; and
 - There is no system of zoning for disposal of hazardous waste.
- (xi) SWMCOL, with partners, is giving consideration to harness methane gas from waste to assist in power generation.
- (xii) SWMCOL runs on high operation costs, which gives little funding for its macro objectives;
- The majority of spending is on collection of waste and operation of landfills; and
 - SWMCOL has not received enough funding to pursue other macro objectives.
- (xiii) SWMCOL is challenged with funding support for human and capital programmes. While funding is always provided to support the programmes, it is not sufficient to facilitate a full rollout of programmes.
- (xiv) SWMCOL's competitive advantage is landfill management and commercial waste management services.
- (xv) To deal with SWMCOL's funding issues, alternative sources of funding are being investigated from the Private Sector and International Agencies.
- (xvi) SWMCOL has challenges to fully comply with the OSHAct;
- Gaps are currently being addressed with a timeline for completion of June, 2021.
- (xvii) PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has been contracted to conduct a diagnostic for SWMCOL to provide recommendations for actions to address issues identified in its most recent audit.
- (xviii) SWMCOL is not responsible for monitoring illegal dump sites.
- (xix) SWMCOL collects between 800,000 and 1,000,000 tyres annually on behalf of the government and is currently exploring different options for processing.
- SWMCOL is assessing the feasibility of a pilot project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, to use tyres to address the issue of coastal erosion.
- (xx) SWMCOL is currently developing its Information Technology infrastructure through the implementation of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and Performance and Financial Management Systems, to be completed by the end of June, 2021;

(xxi) The Ministry of Public Utilities believes there is room for improvement of how waste management is conducted and is assessing an integrated Waste Recycling Management System. The Ministry is in the process of identifying;

- opportunities for grant financing and technical expertise; and
- Stakeholders for consultations.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of the recommendations proposed by the Committee:

1. The Committee requests a copy of SWMCOL's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.
2. The Committee recommends that SWMCOL partner with the Ministry of Health and Municipal Corporations to develop a waste management system for the proper disposal of bio-medical and similar hazardous waste. A status report should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.
3. The use of tyres to address the issue of coastal erosion is very commendable. The Committee looks forward to this pilot project becoming a reality through SWMCOL's collaboration with MoWT and MALF. A status report should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.
4. To strengthen all aspects of its operations, and accommodate the e-Auction system, SWMCOL should prioritise the development of its IT platform and provide the Committee with timelines for implementation.
5. SWMCOL should ensure that all bidders vying for contracts at SWMCOL, are notified of the status of their applications.
6. The Committee strongly encourages SWMCOL to focus on improving its working conditions and its compliance with the OSHAct within the current fiscal year. In this regards, the Committee requests a list of all outstanding activities with timelines for completion.
7. The Ministry of Public Utilities should provide any necessary support to assist SWMCOL with its efforts to achieve compliance with the OSHAct.
8. A status report on the completion of necessary activities related to SWMCOL's adherence to the SEPMM should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.
9. The Committee understands that the efficiency of any organization can be affected by the size of its workforce. SWMCOL should prioritise filling all approved positions in a timely manner.

10. The Committee recommends that SWMCOL develops a robust training schedule for its employees, to close the skills gaps within the organisation. This should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.
11. The Ministry of Public Utilities should provide any necessary support to assist SWMCOL with its efforts to close all skills gaps.
12. SWMCOL's procurement of an unmanned aerial system is applauded. Other innovative and cost-effective technology should be sourced by SWMCOL, to improve its work environment and outputs.

Report Summary

This report examines the operations of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) with specific focus on the proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives of the National Environmental Policy and Trinidad and Tobago’s progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). During the inquiry, the Committee focused on the following objectives:

- i. To ascertain SWMCOL’s proposed measures to assist in achieving the Government’s National Environmental Policy (NEP);
- ii. To determine whether SWMCOL is adhering to the framework for operations as outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual; and
- iii. To understand the challenges faced by SWMCOL in achieving its mandate as a State Enterprise.

In summary, the Committee considers SWMCOL to be working toward achieving its mandate, and the objectives of the National Environmental Policy, within identified constraints. The success of SWMCOL’s initiatives depends heavily on the citizens mentality toward environmental issues and available funding to progress strategic initiatives such as the Forres Park engineered landfill and implementation of a National Recycling Programme. .

During the Committee’s interrogation of the pertinent issues surrounding its defined objectives, an additional concern arose pertaining to smog surrounding the Beetham landfill site. Through a request for information, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) clarified that,

“Sources of smog in Port-of-Spain can be attributed to a combination of sources including vehicular emissions, Saharan dust, and smoke from fires...Smog also tends to be prevalent in the morning period because Port-of-Spain is near to the coast and surrounded by mountains with land and sea breeze and low altitude being important factors that affect the dispersion of the smog. Based on the data currently collected from the Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (AAQMS) located in Port-of-Spain, trends observed typically show peak levels of pollutants during the morning and evening periods typically in line with increased traffic volumes during rush hour.”

Recommendations proposed by the Joint Select Committee on State Enterprises are intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of SWMCOL. As well as, underscore the need for the Ministry of Public Utilities to address the issues related to SWMCOL's OSHAct compliance, and achieving the NEP's objectives.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1. The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL) was established on November 12, 1980 and is a limited liability company exclusively owned by Corporation Sole.
- 1.2. The company is responsible for the management, collection, treatment and disposal of all waste, including solid, liquid, hazardous and special waste in Trinidad & Tobago.
- 1.3. In March 2018, Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a Waste Recycling Unit within SWMCOL to implement the National Recycling Policy, 2015, more particularly, the development and implementation of a National Recycling Programme.
- 1.4. The current commercial lines of business of the company are General Waste, Special Waste, Liquid and Hazardous Waste, Waste-Paper Recovery and Portable Sanitation Rentals.
- 1.5. The operational arms of the company are divided into two (2) components:
 - i. Landfill Management: This arm is fully funded by Government through the allocation of an annual subvention. It entails the management of the three (3) Landfills controlled by SWMCOL
 - ii. Commercial Solid Waste Management: This arm comprises the profit-based commercial waste collection and disposal services offered by the company.
- 1.6. SWMCOL earns income through the provision of services for the collection and disposal of waste and earns interest by investing in equity investments.
- 1.7. SWMCOL receives subventions from its Line Ministry, the Ministry of Public Utilities, to cover recurrent expenditure in relation to management of the three (3) Landfill Sites on behalf of GORTT.

Landfill Management

- 1.8. SWMCOL currently manages the three (3) out of four (4) landfills in Trinidad, as depicted below:
 - i. Beetham Estate, which serves the northwest region of Trinidad;

- ii. Forres Park, which serves the southern and central regions; and
- iii. Guanapo, which serves the northeast region of Trinidad.

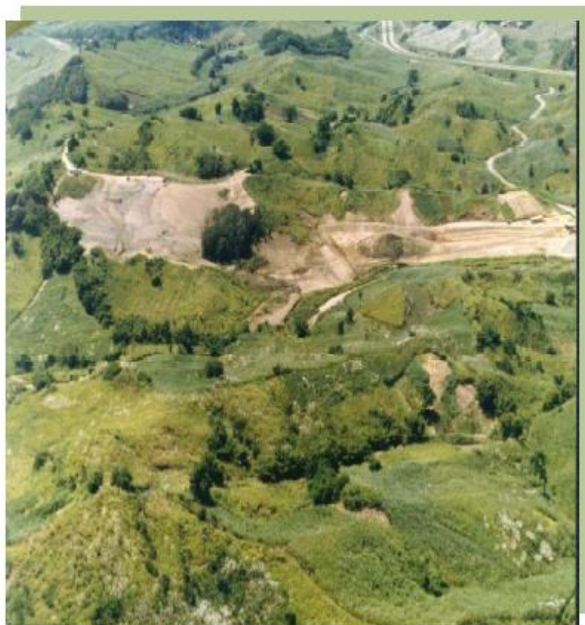
BEETHAM LANDFILL



LOCATION	
South of the Beetham Highway and less than 2km East of Port of Spain	
HISTORY	
Converted from an open dump to a landfill in 1980	
AGE	39 years
SIZE	69 hectares
APPROX DAILY MSW TONNAGE*	401 Tonnes
WASTE RECEIVED	MSW, faecal, construction & demolition, special waste (white goods, offal etc.)

FORRES PARK LANDFILL

LOCATION	
East of the Solomon Hochoy Highway at the Claxton Bay exit	
HISTORY	
Established in 1983 as the only partial engineered landfill	
AGE	36 years
SIZE	22 hectares
APPROX DAILY MSW TONNAGE*	350 Tonnes
WASTE RECEIVED	MSW, construction & demolition, special waste (white goods, offal)



GUANAPO LANDFILL



LOCATION Foothills of the Northern Range (Guanapo Heights) 2km east of Arima	
HISTORY Converted from an open dump to a controlled landfill in 1980.	
AGE	39 years
SIZE	12 hectares
APPROX DAILY MSW TONNAGE*	92 Tonnes
WASTE RECEIVED	MSW, special waste

1.9. The Trinidad Solid Waste Management Programme: Waste Characterisation & Centroid Study Final Report, September 2010 estimated that Beetham, Guanapo and Forres Park Landfills annually receive over 700,000 tonnes of solid waste, which represents 95% of waste generated annually. The Study also identified the main sources of waste to be:

- a. Households which generate approximately two thirds of the annual tonnage of which 84% is recyclable; and
- b. Institutional, Commercial and Industrial (ICI) sources which generate approximately one-third of the annual waste tonnage.

Water Recycling Management Unit

1.10. There are four (4) National policy documents and one (1) international policy document that influence and direct the Water Recycling Management Unit's functions namely:

- i. An Integrated Solid Waste/Resource Management Policy for Trinidad and Tobago;
- ii. National Waste Recycling Policy;

- iii. Government’s 2015 Manifesto: “Let’s Do this Together”;
- iv. Vision 2030: Many Hearts, Many Voices, One Vision; and
- v. Sustainable Development Goals (2030 Agenda), United Nations.

Policy Background

1.11. **The State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual** outlines the framework within which State Enterprises and the Minister of Finance (Corporation Sole) interact.

It defines:

- i. the roles of the major interacting agencies involved in monitoring the State Enterprise Sector;
- ii. the Monitoring Mechanism;
- iii. the Performance Monitoring Indicators applicable to the Sector; and
- iv. Compliance as well as the inputs for generating synergies within the Sector.

1.12. The rationale for this document is to facilitate the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago’s (GORTT’s) thrust to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the State Enterprise sector.

1.13. This five-part manual is the result of extensive consultation with stakeholders and the collaborative effort of officials of the State Enterprises and the Ministries.

1.14. See **Appendix II** for the Framework for State Enterprise Operations.

1.15. **The National Environmental Policy (NEP) of Trinidad and Tobago**² lists six priority areas that are all linked to the Nation’s achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Protecting Environmental & Human Health through Pollution Control
- Sustainably Managing Natural Assets

² National Environmental Policy of Trinidad and Tobago 2018

<https://www.planning.gov.tt/sites/default/files/National%20Environmental%20Policy%20%28NEP%29%20T%26T%202018.pdf>

- Improving the Local Environment
- Evolving a Greener Economy
- Fostering an Environmentally Responsible Society
- Addressing Climate Change & Environmental and Natural Hazards

Objectives of the Inquiry

- i. To ascertain SWMCOL's proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives outlined in the National Environmental Policy 2018;**
- ii. To determine whether SWMCOL is adhering to the framework for operations as outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual; and**
- iii. To understand the challenges faced by SWMCOL in achieving its mandate as a State Enterprise.**

2. Conduct of the Inquiry

- 2.1 At its second (2nd) meeting held on November 30, 2020, the Committee agreed to conduct an inquiry into the operations at SWMCOL.
- 2.2 Prior to the public hearing, SWMCOL responded to a request for information on the general objectives of the inquiry on March 25, 2021. These responses provided a frame of reference for the questions posed during the hearing.
- 2.3 The public interaction took place virtually via Zoom on April 12, 2021, with entities listed in **Table 1** below.
- 2.4 The Minutes of the Meeting during which the public hearing was held are attached as **Appendix III** and the Verbatim Notes as **Appendix IV**.

Table 1

Persons who appeared and provided oral evidence

Name of Official	Portfolio	Organization
Public Hearing Held on April 12, 2021		
Mr. Ronald Milford	Chairman	SWMCOL
Mr. Kevin Thompson	Chief Executive Officer	SWMCOL
Ms. Sylvia Derby	General Manager - Finance and Corporate Services	SWMCOL
Ms. Marie Allong	General Manager - Health Safety Environment & Quality	SWMCOL
Mr. David Manswell	General Manager - Communications Sales & Marketing	SWMCOL

Ms. Nicolette Duke	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Public Utilities
Ms. Beverly Khan	Deputy Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Public Utilities
Mr. Ryan Maharaj	Director Agro-based Manufacturing & Services Sector (Ag.)	Ministry of Finance, Investments Division
Mr. Junior Atwarie	Senior Business Analyst (Ag.)	Ministry of Finance, Investments Division

2.5 During the hearing, the Committee proffered supplementary questions for written response.

2.6 A concerned citizen provided photos and video footage of smog, in September 2021, purportedly emanating from environmental pollution at the Beetham Landfill which is managed by SWMCOL. As such, a request for additional information was sent to entities. Responses to this request were received from:

- SWMCOL on November 14 2021;
- Ministry of Public Utilities on November 17, 2021; and
- Environmental Management Authority on November 17, 2021.

3. Key Issues, Findings and Recommendations

Objective 1: To ascertain SWMCOL’s proposed measures to assist in achieving the Government’s National Environmental Policy;

3.1 **Table 2** presents notable information submitted to the Committee regarding SWMCOL’s progress in achieving the UN SDG Environmental Targets:

SDG Environmental Targets	SWMCOL Action Plan	Achievements To-Date
Target 6.3: By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	Improve the existing site operations at Beetham, Forres Park and Guanapo in compliance with international standards for environmental quality, pollution prevention, and resource conservation.	<p>Conducted an Environmental review, the significant environmental aspects were identified for mitigation action.</p> <p>Engineered Landfill: Planning and Design Stage</p> <p>Landfill Remediation: Remediation Plan – Guanapo Completed</p> <p>Nine Water Quality Tests were done at all three landfills.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring of Leachate in Guanapo and Forres Park.</p>
Target 11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	<p>Conduct an environmental review on the operations of SWMCOL and establish environmental controls (air, land, water, energy and resource consumption).</p> <p>Develop an Environmental Monitoring Programme and conduct air quality tests at sites. Conduct Air Quality Assessment at landfill sites to improve Compliance with the EMA Air Pollution Rules 2014 and mitigate environmental impacts.</p>	<p>Environmental review conducted and significant environmental aspects identified for mitigation action.</p> <p>Air quality tests conducted. Made applications to become registered Source Emitter under the Air Pollution Rules (2014).</p>

Target 12.2: By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.	Revise and implement Fire Prevention and Mitigation Plan. Construction of engineered landfill and closure of the controlled dumpsites (Beetham and Guanapo)	Fire Prevention and Mitigation Plan completed. Procurement and installation of thermal imaging solution for Beetham site.
Target 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all waste throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	Explore the feasibility of establishing waste-to-energy facilities in conjunction with the Ministry with responsibility for renewable energy and the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission. MoU with UWI on waste energy optimization has been approved by the Board January 2021.	No achievements to date.
Target 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all waste throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	In line with the Basel Convention, Establish protocols regarding the disposal of special waste at Beetham, Forres Park and Guanapo.	Protocols have been established and implemented.
Target 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all waste throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	Partner with the Ministry of Health and Municipal Corporations to develop a waste management system for the proper disposal of bio-medical waste and similar hazardous waste.	No achievements to date.
Target 12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled	Establish and implement deposit-refund systems where feasible for recyclable materials such as beverage containers, end-of-life tyres, electronic waste, car batteries etc.	The Beverage Container Refund System proposal has been approved. Collaborating with line Ministry (Ministry of Public Utilities) and the office of the Attorney General to draft Regulations.
Target 12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled	Establish convenient drop off zones for recyclable material.	The Tyres Stewardship System proposal was drafted and submitted to the line Ministry (Ministry of Public Utilities) for consideration. Rollout private and public sector recycling programme to conveniently collect

Target 12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

Target 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

Target 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

recyclable waste at the workplace.
Rollout municipal curbside programme to conveniently collect the recyclables directly from the households.

SWMCOL’s Public Education Department continually advocates the need for sustainable development and lifestyles through programmes aimed at schools, business organizations, and communities.

SWMCOL’s outreach and recycling programmes include:

- The Community & Youth Outreach Programme (CYOP) primarily targets schools.
- The Public Sector Recycling Programme (PSRP).
- The Workplace Waste Reduction and Recycling Programme (WRAP) targets private sector organizations.
- The Municipal Curbside Recycling Programmes (MCRP) targets communities in partnership with the municipal corporations.

Conducted Marine Environment Education Programme (MEEP) and outreach activities in schools, organizations, etc. in partnership with Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD)

Roll-out a public education campaign on benefits of recycling to minimize waste entering water ways.

Mitigate environmental contamination and the adverse socio-economic impacts by rehabilitating unsanitary and illegal dumpsites throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Developed and implemented bio- remediation and Waste Stabilisation ponds in Beetham.

Ongoing water quality testing from leachate.

SWMCOL is a lifetime member of the National Planning Committee for Trinidad & Tobago’s participation in the International Coastal Clean-up (ICC).

Since the 1990s (with the exception of 2020), SWMCOL has hosted annual beach clean-ups as part of the ICC and has contributed data collected at these events to

<p>ICC/T&T clean-ups require the collection and collation of every item of waste collected. This data contributes to the country's report to the ICC to highlight the sources of waste commonly found along beaches, coastlines and waterways and thereby inform the implementation of mitigating measures.</p>	<p>the preparation of the Country Report.</p>
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3.2 At the time of this Report, the following steps were taken by SWMCOL to minimise the levels of pollution caused by its landfill operations:

- An Annual Fire Mitigation Plan: Early Detection, Rapid Response and Quick knockdown of fires has resulted in a consistent decline in the numbers and intensity of landfill fires over the last five years, with no major landfill fires on site. In 2018, 2019, and 2021 there were zero landfill fires which contributed significantly to minimizing the level of air pollution in and around the landfills.
- Landfill Operational Procedures: Compacting and covering of waste to prevent the infestation of rodents, pests, reduces odour, potential for fire, and solid waste pollution along drainage and nearby communities.
- Maintenance of Retention Ponds: Dredging of the leachate retention ponds to improve leachate passive treatment preventing outflows from the sites.
- Road paving: The access roadway was paved at the Beetham landfill resulting in the reduction of dusty conditions upon entering the site.
- Installation of a wheel wash at the Beetham Landfill to reduce the debris deposits and dusting along the shoulder of the Beetham Highway.
- Completion of Site Remediation Plan for the Guanapo Landfill. The plan will implement an Environmental Risk Management Programme (ERMP), which is 98% completed. The findings of the ERMP will complete the Terms of Reference for the implementation of a Leachate Treatment System (LTS). SWMCOL is poised and committed to implementing this LTS in 2022.

- Initiation of the Air Quality Assessments as per Terms of Reference from the EMA. These assessments would give an in-depth analysis of present air quality, environmental and health risks and a mitigation plan for each site would be produced. The goal of this undertaking is for all SWMCOL Landfill Sites to be registered under the EMA Air Pollution Rules and to implement air quality improvement measures where applicable.

3.3 The Committee learned that the relocation of the Beetham landfill will be undertaken via the Project: *Establishment of an Integrated Sustainable Solid Waste Management System in Trinidad and Tobago*. This project will be undertaken in 4 phases, with the closure of the Beetham landfill being in phase 4 (2025). SWMCOL informed the Committee that they are currently in Phase 1 of the Project, which comprises the technical, financial, social, environmental, and economic studies of the Project.

3.4 SWMCOL collects between 800,000 and 1,000,000 tyres annually on behalf of the government and is currently exploring different options for processing.

- the feasibility of a pilot project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (MALF), to use tyres to address the issue of coastal erosion, is being assessed.

Recommendations

3.5 The Committee requests a copy of SWMCOL's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

3.6 The Committee recommends that SWMCOL partner with the Ministry of Health and Municipal Corporations to develop a waste management system for the proper disposal of bio-medical and similar hazardous waste. A status report should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.

3.7 The use of tyres to address the issue of coastal erosion is very commendable. The Committee looks forward to this pilot project becoming a reality through SWMCOL's collaboration with MoWT and MALF. A status report should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.

Objective 2: To determine whether SWMCOL is adhering to the framework for operations as outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual

3.8 The Committee notes that in SWMCOL's most recent audit, the following issues were flagged:

- Internal Fraud Policy
- Unreconciled differences
- Effective Maintenance of the Fixed Assets Register
- Provision for impairment
- Provision for obsolescence
- Non-accrual of liabilities
- Delays in document retrieval Compliance with IFRS 7

3.9 SWMCOL submitted that an accounting firm was engaged to do a diagnostic and provide recommendations for actions to resolve the above issues. Additionally, SWMCOL has approved a Fraud Policy and work is ongoing on several other supporting policies including a cannibalization policy.

3.10 With respect to adherence to tender rules and procedures, SWMCOL reported that there have been occasions when unsuccessful bidders may not have been notified.

3.11 The Committee is concerned with SWMCOL's non-utilisation of the e-Auction system. Some work was done to address the fundamental infrastructure necessary to enable this solution.

3.12 It is alarming that over the past five years (2016-2020), SWMCOL has not been fully compliant with many provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHAct).

3.13 The Committee recognises that SWMCOL is working toward being more compliant in its submission of Annual Audited Financials to the Line Ministry.

Recommendations

3.14 To strengthen all aspects of its operations, and accommodate the e-Auction system, SWMCOL should prioritise the development of its IT platform.

3.15 SWMCOL should ensure that all bidders are notified of the status of their applications.

3.16 The Committee strongly encourages SWMCOL to focus on improving its working conditions and its compliance with the OSHAct within the current fiscal year. In this regards, the Committee requests a list of all outstanding activities with timelines for completion.

3.17 The Ministry of Public Utilities should provide any necessary support to assist SWMCOL with its efforts to achieve compliance with the OSHAct.

3.18 A status report on the completion of necessary activities related to SWMCOL's OSHAct compliance and its adherence to the SEPMM should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.

Objective 3: To understand SWMCOL's challenges in achieving its mandate as a State Enterprise.

3.19 The Committee learned that SWMCOL is not operating at full capacity. All approved positions have not been filled but efforts are being made to fill them.

3.20 A significant number of SWMCOL's operational workforce were originally hired for manual labour, hence the current high level of semi -literate, semi/non-skilled workers at the operational level.

- SWMCOL conducted training of mechanics and welders at the NESC facilities in Pt. Lisas.
- SWMCOL has noticed a reduction in contractor cost and an improvement in worker morale.

3.21 SWMCOL requires funding to assist with improvement in infrastructure to align with OSHA requirements and to provide a decent working environment at all satellite sites.

3.22 The Committee was also informed that there is inadequate funding for both recurrent and capital expenditure. Shortfalls in capital expenditure requirements have resulted in delays to planned programmes such as the Engineered Landfill.

3.23 SWMCOL identified the undermentioned gaps in its organisation:

- Lack of modern Technology
- Limited web and social media presence
- Improvement of Monitoring and Evaluation framework necessary

- Aged assets – vehicle, plant, and equipment. SWMCOL’s commercial equipment, vehicles and other assets are aged and requires significant maintenance which impacts the company’s expenditure and performance.

3.24 The Committee notes that SWMCOL is attempting to deal with some of their challenges.

Alternative sources of funding

3.25 SWMCOL is partnering to obtain access to UN Environment Programme funding for research into leachate at the Guanapo landfill. As well as support for the implementation of protocols related to household hazardous waste.

3.26 SWMCOL is currently engaged in ongoing discussions with the Canadian High Commission and the Japanese High Commission to access opportunities for technical assistance and potential funding.

3.27 Through collaboration with Ministry of Public Utilities, and the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, SWMCOL plans to identify potential donor ship/sponsorship from Multilateral Agencies including the Inter- American Bank (IDB) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

Automation of SWMCOL’s operations

3.28 Presently SWMCOL sorts recyclables at three locations:

- NAMDEVCO Material Recovery Facility (MRF) located at Sea Lots
- Forres Park MRF and
- Guanapo MRF located at SWMCOL’s Forres Park and Guanapo Landfills.

3.29 The sorted material from the three MRFs are then processed via baling and production of PET (Polyethylene terephthalate) flakes at the NAMDEVCO MRF only.

3.30 As a result, the process for sorting of beverage containers and other recyclables is only semi-automated at the Guanapo MRF, however the processing of the recyclables at Namdevco is automated.

3.31 The operations at SWMCOLs three (3) landfill sites and commercial garbage collection operations are semi-automated.

Technological advancement at SWMCOL's operations

- 3.32 The implementation of fibre optic connectivity at Head Office/Beetham/Namdevco and Tobago has improved data and communications services and reliability to these sites.
- 3.33 The migration to a cloud platform and upgrade to Microsoft Office 365 productivity suite impacted positively for SWMCOL. More so during the current pandemic situation where remote work had to be instituted, SWMCOL was able to continue its administration support functions without disruption. The main challenge was the availability of laptops.
- 3.34 The procurement of an unmanned aerial system (uas/drone) has allowed SWMCOL to routinely inspect its landfill sites from the air.

Recommendations

- 3.35 The Committee understands that the efficiency of any organization can be affected by the size of its workforce. SWMCOL should prioritise filling all approved positions in a timely manner.
- 3.36 The Committee recommends that SWMCOL develops a robust training schedule for its employees, to close the skills gaps within the organisation. This should be submitted to Parliament by September 30, 2022.
- 3.37 The Ministry of Public Utilities should provide any necessary support to assist SWMCOL with its efforts to close all skills gaps.
- 3.38 SWMCOL's procurement of an unmanned aerial system is applauded. Other innovative and cost-effective technology should be sourced by SWMCOL, to improve its work environment and outputs.

4. Conclusion

In light of the above, the Committee notes that SWMCOL is committed to the framework set out in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual and is optimistic that the organisation is strategically moving towards achieving its mandate, and the National Environment Policy objectives.

Your Committee therefore awaits the response of the Minister of Public Utilities and the Ministry of Finance to the recommendations listed on **page 9**, in accordance with Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively which states inter alia that –

“The Minister responsible for the Ministry or Body under review shall, not later than sixty (60) days after a report from a Standing Committee relating to the Ministry or Body, has been laid upon the Table, present a paper to the House responding to any recommendations or comments contained in the report which are addressed to it....”

Your Committee therefore respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Houses.

Mr. Anthony Vieira
Chairman

Mr. Foster Cummings, MP
Vice-Chairman

Mr. Wade Mark
Member

Mr. Adrian Leonce, MP
Member

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh, MP
Member

Mr. Stephen McClaishe, MP
Member

Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon
Member

Mrs. Laurel Lezama Lee-Sing
Member

APPENDICES

FRAMEWORK FOR STATE ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS³

³ State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual, 2011: <http://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/State-Enterprise-Performance-Monitoring-Manual-2011.pdf>

The following framework provides the guidelines for the effective operations of a State Enterprise as outlined in the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual. These guidelines were used as a benchmark against which the JSC on State Enterprises conducted exploratory assessments of State Enterprises operations.

Criteria	Policy	Compliance Requirements
Appointment, Removal And Resignation Of Board Directors	Strong Boards are vital for the effective governance of State Enterprises. GoRTT appoints and removes Directors of Boards of State Agencies which must be done via the respective Line Ministers of State Agencies incorporated under the Companies Act, Chap 81:01 and by statute. The statutes specify the composition and required skills/experience of Directors. Letters of resignation of Directors of State Enterprises incorporated under the Companies Act, Chap. 81:01 must be forwarded to the Minister of Finance (Corporation Sole) under whose responsibility this lies	The Investments Division maintains a register of Boards of Directors of State Agencies.
Annual Meetings		<p>The Agenda of Annual Meetings (AM) should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirmation of minutes of the previous AM 2. The consideration of the financial statements 3. The directors' report 4. The auditors' report, if any 5. The sanction of dividends 6. The election of directors

		7. The election of auditors
Appointment And Removal Of An Auditor	State Enterprises are no longer required to appoint the Auditor General as their Auditor unless required under the relevant statute of incorporation or if so desired. Auditors are appointed at an AGM with prior approval of the Corporation Sole.	
By-Laws	Special provisions are included in the Model By-Laws of State Enterprises to govern the interaction between the Minister and Companies. Changes to the By-Laws of Companies are to be approved by the Minister of Legal Affairs then accepted by the Corporation Sole and presented at an Annual or Special Meeting	
Procurement Procedures	GoRTT has agreed that the Minister of Finance review and audit contracts awarded by State Enterprises as considered necessary and appropriate.	State Enterprises are required to submit to the Minister of Finance within fourteen (14) days following the end of each month, lists of all contracts which were awarded during the month, together with the value of each contract. Tender rules and any amendments must also be submitted to the Minister of Finance for approval. Details on the Standard Procurement Procedures for the Acquisition of Goods, Provision of Services, Undertaking Works and Disposals of Unserviceable Items in State Enterprises/Statutory Bodies (State

		Agencies) are given at Appendix B of the SEPMM.
E-Auction	All State Enterprises have been mandated to use e-Auctions to procure items of large spend.	The Ministry of Finance, in keeping with its initiative to reform Public Sector Procurement, is facilitating the implementation of e-auctions among State Enterprises. The e-Auction system is a procurement tool using web-based software that allows suppliers to bid online for a contract to supply goods and services. The e-Auction or online/electronic reverse auction (e-RA) is a bidding event sponsored by a buying organisation and forms a single part of the greater e-Procurement strategy. It is an online dynamic negotiation or bidding process between suppliers who compete to supply products by successively bidding prices downward.
Dividend Policy	GoRTT has agreed that the profitability of the Enterprise, its liquidity, legal restrictions/loan covenants and the replacement cost of essential capital goods are considered in determining the quantum of dividends that a Company would be required to pay. State Enterprises are also required to pay interim dividends based on semi-annual financial results. Actual distributions of profit are to be agreed with the Minister of Finance and appropriately disclosed in the financial statements. State Enterprises with Retained Earnings in excess	

	of Working Capital requirements may be required to pay a Special Dividend.	
Approval For Overseas Business Travel	Managers (include Managing Directors and Executive Directors) and other senior personnel of State Enterprises who are required to travel obtain the approval of the Board of Directors of their Companies, who may delegate this authority. Chairmen and Non-Executive Directors who are required to travel obtain the approval of the Line Ministers responsible for their respective Companies.	The Company is required to meet only the expenditure related to official business. The costs associated with foreign travel should comply with the guidelines published by the Comptroller of Accounts or the Company's Business Travel policy approved by the Minister.
Board Fees And Allowances	Board Fees and Allowances for State Enterprises are determined by GoRTT.	
Use Of Cellular Phones And Laptop Computers	State Enterprises may wish to utilise wireless portable communication devices at the level of the Board of Directors to enhance the efficiency of their operations. State Enterprises may therefore adopt the policy approved by GoRTT on the use of Cellular Phones and Laptop Computers for the members as outlined at Appendix C of the SEPMM.	
Appointment Of Executive Directors And Consultancy Contracts	Boards of Directors are required to obtain the written non-objection of the Minister of Finance (Corporation Sole) to authorise the following: (i) appointment of Directors to be the holder of any executive position;	

	<p>(ii) entry of Directors into consultancy contracts with their companies.</p> <p>In each case, the detailed rationale for the proposal must be provided.</p>	
<p>Procedures Regarding Negotiation Of Pay And Other Terms And Conditions Of Employment</p>	<p>GoRTT has agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the monitoring of wage and salary negotiations, the establishment and/or revision of pay and other terms and conditions of employment of employees of State Enterprises, including managerial staff and persons employed on contract should fall under the purview of Ministerial Committee for monitoring remuneration arrangements, a sub-committee of Cabinet. terminal benefits such as separation packages and gratuities, other than those already specified in Collective Agreements, which State Enterprises propose to pay to employees be also subject to the approval of the Ministerial Committee for monitoring remuneration arrangements. 	
<p>Payment Of Bonuses</p>	<p>Bonuses are payable on the attainment of a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of the approved performance targets, after approval by the Line Minister. The bonus to be paid to each employee is limited to one (1) month's salary annually.</p> <p>Payments which do not conform to the policy require specific approval of the Ministerial</p>	<p>At the beginning of the fiscal year, each State Enterprise is required to provide the respective Line Minister with identified performance targets, which could include, but not necessarily be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profits

	<p>Committee for monitoring remuneration arrangements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of product and service delivery • Productivity <p>The targets to be used in the evaluation of progress in achieving objectives should be verifiable, feasible, measurable and consistent with the Business Plan of the State Enterprise. These targets must be agreed upon with the Minister to whom the State Enterprise is required to report on its performance. The Annual Performance Review and Appraisal Reports (Appendix K) certify the Company's performance. Requests for approval of the payment of bonuses should be made within four (4) months of the end of the Company's financial year and the response time from Line Ministries is within six (6) weeks after receipt of requests.</p>
<p>Approval Of New Assets/ Investments, Debt And Contracts</p>	<p>State Enterprises or their subsidiaries are required to obtain prior approval of the Minister of Finance for the acquisition of significant assets, new investments in non-government securities, the incurrence of new/additional longterm debt and entering into significant contracts (relative to the Company).</p> <p>In addition, all GoRTT guaranteed borrowings of State Enterprises under the Guarantee of Loans</p>	

	(Companies) Act, Chap 71:82 are to be negotiated by the Ministry of Finance on behalf of the enterprises.	
Inter - Agency Debt		State Enterprises are to inform the Ministry of Finance on matters related to Inter-Agency Accounts Receivables and Payables that are unmanageable as detailed in the Quarterly Returns Report
Litigation Proceedings	State Enterprises are to utilise avenues other than the courts for resolution of disputes. Under no circumstances should legal action be initiated by one State Enterprise against another without prior approval of the Minister of Finance.	State Enterprises are to inform the Ministry of Finance on matters related to litigation proceedings as detailed in the Quarterly Status Report
Publishing Of Financial Statements	State Enterprises are required to publish in at least one (1) major daily newspaper a summary of its audited financial statements within four (4) months following the completion of the financial year and a summary of the un-audited half-yearly statements within two (2) months of the mid-year date subject to the approval of the Minister of Finance. These summary statements should contain the disclosures required by the Securities Industry Act, 1995.	
Shares And Transfers	State Enterprises are required to submit to the Investments Division original Share Certificates in the name of Corporation Sole and the Government Nominee Shareholders within five (5) weeks after	

	the allotment of these shares and within two months after the date on which a transfer of any of these shares is presented to the Company for registration. The issuance of Government Shares must be with the approval of the Minister.	
Statutory Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment of Royalties and Taxes • Integrity in Public Life • Occupational Safety and Health • Environmental Management 	<p>Occupational Safety and Health</p> <p>State Enterprises are required to comply with the Act (as amended), which came into force in February 2006.</p> <p>Environmental Management</p> <p>In accordance with the Environmental Management Act, Chapter 35: 05, State Enterprises are required to collaborate with the Environmental Management Authority to facilitate the proper management of the environment and to achieve the goal and objectives of the National Environmental Policy</p>
Performance Monitoring		<p>Strategic Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies are required to submit their Strategic Plans to both the Investments Division and the respective Line Ministry at least six (6) months prior to the start of the implementation period of the plan, for those receiving subventions to allow for National Budgetary Preparation activities and one (1) month for others.

		<p>Annual Operating Budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Companies that require subventions from GoRTT are required to submit their annual Budgets to the Investments Division and respective Line Ministry for assessment at least six (6) months prior to commencement of the Fiscal year. The Investments Division and Line Ministry will review the Budget and respond within one (1) month prior to the start of the Fiscal Year. <p>Project Management Protocol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GoRTT has agreed that a Project Management Protocol be adopted as part of the governance framework for the management of some of the State Enterprises with specific mandates. <p>Risk Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The success of risk management will depend on the effectiveness of the management framework providing the foundations and arrangements that will embed it throughout the organisation at all levels. <p>Audited Financial Statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Enterprises are required to submit the following:
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		<p>a) Audited Financial Statements (2 originals and 120 copies) to the Minister of Finance within four (4) months of their financial year end. These reports are to be laid in Parliament and subsequently submitted to the Public Accounts and Enterprises Committee for consideration;</p> <p>b) Copies of their Management letters issued by Statutory Auditors.</p> <p>Administrative Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under Section 66D of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Act No 29 of 1999, State Agencies are required to report to the public on their performance annually. <p>Board Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Minutes should be made available to the Investments Division and respective Line Ministries to ensure that the Board is proceeding within the framework of the Strategic Plan and GoRTT policy decisions.
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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF THE 8th MEETING
JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE
STATE ENTERPRISES
HELD ON
APRIL 12, 2021 AT 9:15 A.M.

PRESENT

Committee Members

Mr. Anthony Vieira	Chairman
Mr. Foster Cummings, MP	Vice-Chairman
Mr. Stephen McClashie, MP	Member
Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing	Member
Mr. David Lee, MP	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	Member

Secretariat

Mr. Brian Caesar	Secretary
Mr. Johnson Greenidge	Assistant Secretary
Mr. Jean-Marc Morris	Assistant Secretary/Legal Officer
Mrs. Krystle Gittens	Graduate Research Assistant
Mrs. Safiyyah Shah	Graduate Research Assistant

ABSENT / EXCUSED

Mr. Adrian Leonce, MP	Member
Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon	Member

The Meeting was held virtually via Zoom Video Conference

ALSO PRESENT:

Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL)

Mr. Ronald Milford	Chairman
Mr. Kevin Thompson	Chief Executive Officer
Ms. Sylvia Derby	General Manger -Finance and Corporate Services
Ms. Marie Allong	General Manger -Health Safety Environment & Quality
Mr. David Manswell	General Manager – Communications Sales & Marketing

Ministry of Public Utilities (MoPU)

Ms. Nicolette Duke
Ms. Beverly Khan

Permanent Secretary
Deputy Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Finance – Investments Division (MoF)

Mr. Ryan Maharaj

Director Agro-Based Manufacturing & Services
Sector (Ag.)

Mr. Junior Atwarie

Senior Business Analyst (Ag.)

CALL TO ORDER

1.1 The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:22 a.m. and welcomed Members present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2.1 The Chairman indicated that Ms. Paula Gopee-Scoon asked to be excused from the meeting due to a conflicting engagement.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE SIXTH MEETING

3.1 The Chairman invited Members to consider the Minutes of the Seventh Meeting held on Monday March 29, 2021 and inquired whether there were any amendments.

3.2 There being no amendments, the motion for the confirmation of the Minutes was moved by Mr. Foster Cummings and seconded by Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 **Paragraph 10.1, page 8:** The Chairman informed Members that the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL), the Ministry of Public Utilities (MoPU) and the Ministry of Finance - Investments Division (MoF) had all confirmed their attendance.

4.2 The Chairman informed Members that the Committee had received correspondence from JD Sellier & Co. with copies of affidavits from legal proceedings between Mr. Keith Eddy and Ms. Nicole Gopaulsingh and Guardian Media Limited, which is at variance with the oral submissions made on March 29, 2021 re: Increase in Salaries.

4.3 The Chairman advised that said correspondence was received in physical copy and will be scanned and circulated to Members as soon as possible.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION: SWMCOL INQUIRY

- 5.1 The Chairman informed Members that an *Issues Paper* was prepared by the Secretariat based on the written submission received from SWMCOL.
- 5.2 The Chairman informed Members that officials of the following organisations will join the virtual meeting to participate in the public inquiry:
 - i. Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL);
 - ii. Ministry of Public Utilities (MoPU); and
 - iii. Ministry of Finance – Investments Division (MoF).
- 5.3 Members discussed the approach to be adopted with respect to questioning during the inquiry. Members took note of their preferred areas of focus for the interaction with SWMCOL.

SUSPENSION

- 6.1 The Chairman suspended the meeting at 9.38 a.m.

PUBLIC HEARING: SWMCOL INQUIRY

- 7.1 The meeting resumed at 10:00 am in public.
- 7.2 The Chairman welcomed officials and introductions were exchanged.
- 7.3 The Chairman outlined the purpose of the inquiry.
- 7.4 Opening remarks were delivered by the Principal Officers of each organisation.
- 7.5 Hereunder is a summary of the issues/concerns raised and the responses provided during the hearing with the officials of CEPEP, MoRDLG and MoF:
 - (xxii) The clear linkages between SWMCOL's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, to be completed end June, 2021, and achievement of objectives of UN SDGs and the National Environmental Policy (NEP);
 - (xxiii) SWMCOL's progress towards establishment of an engineered landfill at Forres Park;
 - (xxiv) The 10% increase in voluntary recycling observed by SWMCOL;
 - (xxv) Trinidad and Tobago citizen's general disregard for the environment;
 - (xxvi) The need to educate citizens concerning the comingling of waste and how waste should be separated;
 - If public is able to reduce the amount of recyclable waste that goes to landfills, the waste management process will automatically become more efficient.
 - (xxvii) SWMCOL's support of the National Recycling Policy;

- SWMCOL is already prepared to receive recyclables; and
 - There is also interest by the Private Sector to participate.
- (xxviii) SWMCOL’s marketing initiatives targeting youth, for proper disposal of solid waste:
- Revitalised “Chase Charlie” campaign; and
 - Development of new “superheros”.
- (xxix) SWMCOL’s draft position paper on how electronic waste may be better processed;
- (xxx) Suggested laws or amendments to laws that will assist with SWMCOL’s achievement of its mandate;
- SWMCOL’s anticipation for proclamation of the Beverage Container legislation;
- (xxxi) SWMCOL collaborations with other stakeholders such as beach communities for clean-ups and post disaster assistance groups;
- (xxxii) SWMCOL is not responsible for bio-medical waste as it falls under the purview of the Ministry of Health;
- There are other elements in the waste space that do not fall under the purview of SWMCOL, such as hazardous waste and “white-waste” e.g. refrigerators and stoves;
 - The producer of hazardous waste is responsible for disposal;
 - SWMCOL only accepts hazardous waste rendered inert;
 - There is no legislation or Authority to govern the disposal of hazardous waste; and
 - There is no system of zoning for disposal of hazardous waste.
- (xxxiii) The consideration by SWMCOL, with partners, to harness methane gas from waste to assist in power generation;
- (xxxiv) SWMCOL’s high operation costs, given little or no progress made on macro objectives;
- The majority of spending is on collection of waste and operation of landfills; and
 - SWMCOL has not received enough funding to pursue other macro objectives;
- (xxxv) SWMCOL’s competitive advantage is landfill management and commercial waste management services;
- SWMCOL has also exported this expertise.
- (xxxvi) SWMCOL’s relationship with the unions representing SWMCOL employees;
- (xxxvii) SWMCOL’s challenges to fully comply with the OSH Act;
- Gaps are currently being address with a timeline for completion of June, 2021.
- (xxxviii) SWMCOL’s current litigation matters;

- (xxxix) SWMCOL's funding issues;
- Alternative sources of funding are being investigated from the Private Sector and International Agencies.
- (xl) PriceWaterhouseCoopers has been contracted to conduct a diagnostic for SWMCOL to provide recommendations for actions to address issues identified in its most recent audit;
- The diagnostic is will be completed by the end of April, 2021.
- (xli) SWMCOL is awaiting its next Annual General Meeting to accept the 2018 audited financial statements;
- Once completed the 2019 financials will be audited.
- (xlii) Whether SWMCOL currently has optimum staffing;
- SWMCOL is currently satisfied with its staff complement;
 - Over the last year a competency gap assessment identified training gaps that needed to be filled at SWMCOL. National Energy Skills Centre (NESC) is conducting training will be completed by the end of the second quarter; and
 - SWMCOL however has gaps at the management level of the company and is depending on the diagnostic by PWC to highlight.
- (xlili) SWMCOL is not responsible for illegal dump sites;
- Legislation is sufficient to manage this issue however there needs to be greater enforcement;
 - SWMCOL is willing to get involved in enforcement once given the authority; and
 - While SWMCOL is not an Authority, it has the power to under current legislation to bring action against persons who breach existing legislation.
- (xliv) What is in place for collection of used tyres and "white-waste":
- SWMCOL collects between 800,000 and 1,000,000 tyres annually on behalf of the government and is currently exploring different options for processing;
 - SWMCOL is assessing the feasibility of a pilot project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, to use tyres to address the issue of coastal erosion;
 - There is also potential to use tyres for repairing coral reefs and encouraging growth; and
 - "White-waste" collection is the responsibility of the Municipal Corporation and SWMCOL's responsibility is for processing of the waste through engagement of other stakeholders; and

- SWMCOL is willing to schedule collection times for “white-waste” to supplement the efforts of the Corporations.
- (xlv) The plans to close the Beetham landfill have been paused until the Forres Park engineered landfill is commissioned;
- The Beetham Facility upgrade has however been completed.
- (xlvi) SWMCOL is currently developing its Information Technology infrastructure through the implementation of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and Performance and Financial Management Systems, to be completed by the end of June, 2021;
- (xlvii) The Ministry of Public Utilities believes there is room for improvement of how waste management is conducted and is assessing an integrated Waste Recycling Management System. The Ministry is in the process of identifying;
- opportunities for grant financing and technical expertise; and
 - Stakeholders for consultations.
- (xlviii) The Ministry of Finance is pleased with SWMCOL’s performance despite certain outstanding submissions that are required to be in full compliance with the SEPMM; and
- (xlix) The JSC on State Enterprises can support SWMCOL’s efforts by supporting requests for changes to relevant legislation.

(Please see Verbatim Notes for detailed oral submissions)

7.6 The Chairman thanked the officials of SWMCOL, MoPU and MoF for attending and they were excused. The Chairman also thanked the viewing and listening audience for tuning in.

SUSPENSION

8.1 The Chairman suspended the meeting at 12:51 p.m.

POST-HEARING DISCUSSION

9.1 The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 12:52 p.m.

9.2 The Committee discussed the proceedings of the public hearing.

NEXT MEETING

10.1 The Committee agreed that its next meeting date would be on April 19, 2021 (in camera) to discuss the submission from JD Sellier & Co. and determine the next steps as regards CEPEP.

ADJOURNMENT

11.1 There being no other business, the Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and the meeting was adjourned.

11.2 The adjournment was taken at 1:05 p.m.

I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

Chairman

Secretary

April 14, 2021

VERBATIM NOTES

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE EIGHTH VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON STATE ENTERPRISES HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021, AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT

Mr. Anthony Vieira	Chairman
Mr. Foster Cummings	Vice-Chairman
Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing	Member
Mr. David Lee	Member
Mr. Wade Mark	Member
Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie	Member
Mr. Adrian Leonce	Member
Mr. Brian Caesar	Secretary
Mr. Johnson Greenidge	Assistant Secretary
Mr. Jean-Marc Morris	Assistant Secretary
Mrs. Krystle Gittens	Graduate Research Assistant

ABSENT

Mrs. Paula Gopee-Scoon	Member [<i>Excused</i>]
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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMPANY LIMITED

Mr. Ronald Milford	Chairman
Mr. Kevin Thompson	Chief Executive Officer
Ms. Sylvia Derby	General Manger -Finance and Corporate Services
Ms. Marie Allong	General Manger -Health Safety Environment & Quality
Mr. David Manswell	General Manager –Communications Sales & Marketing

MINISTRY OF FINANCE – INVESTMENTS DIVISION

Mr. Ryan Maharaj	Director Agro-Based Manufacturing & Services Sector (Ag.)
Mr. Junior Atwarie	Senior Business Analyst (Ag.)

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

Ms. Nicolette Duke	Permanent Secretary
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Ms. Beverly Khan

Deputy Permanent Secretary

Mr. Chairman: Good morning, it is now ten o'clock and I would like to call this meeting to order. This is our third public hearing and it is regarding an enquiry into the operations of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited with specific focus on the proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives of the National Environmental Policy and Trinidad and Tobago's progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Anthony Vieira and I would like to extend a cordial welcome to participants and to the viewing and listening audience as well. We appreciate your attendance here today. Before I ask Committee members to introduce themselves formally for the record, may I just indicate that member Gopee-Scoon has asked to be excused and member Adrian Leonce will be coming in and out as he has some Ministerial duties to attend to.

I will now ask Committee members to please formally introduce yourselves.

[Introductions made]

[Technical difficulties]

Mr. Chairman: Okay, it appears that we are having some technical difficulties but member Mark, member Lee and member Cummings will join us when they are reconnected.

So while we await those members we do have with us officials from the Solid Waste Management Company, officials from the Ministry of Finance and officials from the Ministry of Public Utilities. May I now ask those who are giving evidence today to please introduce yourselves?

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. So I see member Mark is now joining us. Before we start the official proceedings, a couple of housekeeping matters. Remember we are participating in a live public hearing which involves video link, hearings by electronic means are conducted as though you are physically present. So when speaking, please do so clearly and directly but not too quickly in the event there is a time lag.

Also, when you are speaking please make sure that you mute your microphones so that when you are not speaking that will keep background noises to a minimum. Also, if you could please adjust your cameras so that your faces are clearly visible and ensure that notifications from your cell phones and other electronic devices are muted during the course of the meeting.

Time is limited, we need to conclude by 1.00 p.m. and I will be trying to keep us on time as there is a lot to cover. I remind participants that we proceed by question and answer and we want to find out information and views from the witnesses. I encourage everyone to keep questions and answers as brief

and focused as possible so that we can maximize the number of the persons who have a chance to contribute. Committee members and participants are reminded to direct their questions and comments through the Chair. Let us talk one at a time, use a raise hand feature, stay on point and let us not interrupt when others are speaking.

The purpose of this enquiry today, of course, is in relation to the administration, the manner and exercise of powers and the methods of functioning at the Solid Waste Management Company, but with specific focus on the proposed measures to assist in achieving the objectives of the National Environmental Policy and Trinidad and Tobago's progress towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Participants are reminded that this session offers you a forum to share your challenges, your disappointments, your achievements, to voice concerns and to make recommendations. They provide a unique opportunity to increase public awareness to foster understanding and to gain support in respect of your operations.

This session is being broadcast live on Parliament Channel 11, Parliament Radio 105.5 FM and the Parliament's YouTube Channel. Viewers and listeners can participate by sending comments relating to today's engagement via email to parl101@tpparliament.org or on our Facebook page at facebook.com/tpparliament or on Twitter@tpparliament.

I now invite the Chairman of the company to make brief opening remarks and to provide us with some salient information about the company. Chairman.

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, Chairman. A very good morning to the Committee. We thank you for the opportunity to report on SWMCOL's stewardship, the mandate given to us by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. That mandate in brief includes, establish and operate landfill sites in accordance with sanitary standards, manage the treatment and disposal of solid waste, promote, establish and operate resource recovery systems and finally, public education and awareness.

As the Committee is aware, SWMCOL's mandate is linked to Trinidad and Tobago's fulfilment of the environmental and development goals. Today the Committee affords SWMCOL an opportunity to encourage the further expansion of our recycling programmes which are key to transforming activity in the waste sector.

Our strategic plan for the five-year period 2021 to 2025, which is currently in its final development phase and due to be rolled out by the end of April 2021, has clear linkages to the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs, and the National Environmental Policy, NEP.

SWMCOL can report on specific areas such as our progress towards its establishment of a new

engineered landfill at Forres Park, having developed the conceptual designs and having advanced the requisite studies to develop detailed designs. We can also report that voluntary cycling of plastics has increased by 10 per cent through the programmes we administer. SWMCOL recognizes the continued need for public education and is working on initiatives that specifically target our youths, the leaders of tomorrow for whom the SDGs are becoming increasingly important.

In this regard our litterbug Charlie character from a popular 1980s “Chase Charlie Away” campaign will become more visible and will be facing off against a cast of unique eco-heroes to provide advice and guidance on protecting the environment.

Our objective is to deepen our engagement with the population in our waste reduction and recycling efforts as we cannot continue commingling waste in the way we have over the last few decades. While SWMCOL manages the main landfills in the country, the waste we treat with by either landfilling or recycling is derived from the population and we see our citizens and visitors as stakeholders in the business that we manage in trust for them. The NEP calls for a new approach to the human impacts on the environment and SWMCOL is engaged in developing new approaches with various stakeholders to move us in that direction.

Internally, our work on position papers for consideration by our line Ministry during this physical year would continue to focus on solutions to other waste streams such as e-waste and organics. Other areas of our mandate include collaboration with others, such as beach, community and coast disaster clean ups, as well as other events that we support with our partners. To achieve the goals of the NEP and the SDGs, SWMCOL needs to continue to collaborate with other entities, Ministries, agencies and of course the general public.

We thank you again for this opportunity and look forward to all of your questions. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: And thank you, Mr. Milford. Well, I have been asked by my members to start the ball rolling, so I have a few questions to warm up and then member Mark will ask some questions, followed by member Cummings and then member Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing.

So Mr. Milford, the company was established in November 1980? You are about 41 years old now. Yeah? Your vision is to lead environmentally responsible waste management and to be the preferred service provider in Trinidad and Tobago. And your mission is to provide integrated and environmentally sound waste management solutions that promote maximization of resource value and a culture of care for the environment. That is correct?

Mr. Milford: That is correct, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: Would you agree that climate change and environmental concerns are at the forefront of most countries today and most responsible thinking people?

Mr. Milford: Chairman, that is something that we all as citizens of this country should be aware of and make that high in our priority listing.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, yes. Future generations deserve a clean and green environment, so waste management is critical to protect the country's soil, the country's ground water and our seas. Where would you say we are today in terms of having a culture of care for the environment?

Mr. Milford: Chairman, that is a question, that is a very important question in the sense that I feel that we are so far away quite frankly from achieving our goals. As a people I do not think we are there, even close at this point in time when it comes to our regard for the environment. A drive to Maracas on any day through the Saddle Road will show you the amount of waste being accumulated along that stretch of road. I live in Santa Cruz so I can tell you about that. I think companies like KFC and Royal Castle can actually look at market share if they count the number of boxes that they see on the side of the roads. It is atrocious. Visit our rivers, visit our beaches and you will see that we do not have the care that we should have for the environment.

Mr. Chairman: So just by a rule of thumb, I mean, I am not holding you to this, but how would you rate us as an environmentally responsible people on a scale of, say, one to 10; one being the lowest, 10 being the best.

Mr. Milford: I think we are somewhere between three and four, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: As bad as that.

Mr. Milford: Still to go, yeah.

Mr. Chairman: Hmm. Now, I see that you have done a lot of very successful work with our landfills, Beetham, Guanapo, Forres Park. They receive an estimated 700,000 tonnes of waste a year and that represents about 95 per cent of the country's waste.

Mr. Milford: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: So you are mandated with responsibility for among other things, managing, collecting, treating and disposing of all waste in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Milford: That is correct.

Mr. Chairman: Educating the public on their role in maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

Mr. Milford: Correct.

Mr. Chairman: And you have just said that from your perspective, waste, the disposal of waste is one of the biggest problems facing the country.

Mr. Milford: Yes, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: In terms of the solid waste ecological footprint and achievements, where are we today with recycling?

Mr. Milford: Well, Chairman, I know we have actually, if you look at where we have reached with recycling in terms of plastics, we have been moving in that—the number from what we did a few years ago, year over year we are about a 10 per cent increase. There is still a lot of work to be done. We have our facilities at Guanapo, we have Forres Park, as well as Beetham. Collection points have been established. We have various collection points throughout Trinidad and Tobago for waste, for recycling, but I think we still have a long way to go to educate the population with regard to the importance of separating your garbage, as simple as that. And we are hoping that with the new Beverage Containers Bill that is coming—that is supposed to—that we are presently working on through our line Ministry, that that comes to fruition very quickly.

I think it is unacceptable that when you look at our Caricom partners such as, for instance, Barbados, they already have a very comprehensive recycling policy in place and it is unacceptable that we as a country, we do not have it in the present much less for the future. So we have a lot of work to do, but we are committed to ensuring that it gets done. I use the analogy of, we have got to make a start somewhere. It is like flying the plane and trying to at the same time improve the engines. But we have got to get started and the Beverage Containers Bill is one of those items that are high on the agenda for SWMCOL to ensure that we give the Ministry and the Government all the support in ensuring that the Bill is proclaimed in a short time. It is long overdue.

Mr. Chairman: So I am going to come down to that later on about the legislative improvements that you have been asking about. But when you talk about separating in recycling, we are talking about separating glass, paper, plastics. Yeah?

Mr. Milford: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Where are we with the disposal of vehicle waste and things like hospital waste?

Mr. Milford: Well, we are not—unfortunately, when you come to bio-waste, we depend on others to do that—we will then take it from there. We do not have the facilities to really accommodate that. I think the Chief Executive Officer could step in here, he is in a better position to answer that question, Chairman.

Mr. Thompson: Chairman, with your permission, as our chairman has said, the current legislative framework has biomedical waste under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. We work with them as partners for remediation but biomedical waste in particular is not under the broad responsibility of SWMCOL.

Mr. Chairman: Should it not be though? I mean, because you are supposed to be the specialist waste disposal company.

Mr. Thompson: Well, Chairman, I would not disagree with you, however the current environment that we find ourselves and just for clarity, there are other elements in the waste space that do not fall under SWMCOL but this is the current legislative environment. You may be better placed to make those observations and to advocate for those changes, but this is where we are right now.

Mr. Chairman: So biological waste would be as you said, you depend on others. What about things like the disposal of old and discarded electronics?

Mr. Thompson: So e-waste would fall under our purview. We are working on a position paper for the attention of the Ministry and then for further consideration by the Cabinet.

Mr. Chairman: Right. Now, I know you talk about legislation—now, I have travelled in different parts of the world where I see waste is actually being converted into energy, into fuel like in Denmark. Is that on our agenda at all?

Mr. Milford: Chairman, if I may, yes, to answer your question. Like you, that is one of the areas that this board is closely looking at. In fact, we have had enquiries from international institutions to assist us in that process. You could well imagine that waste—garbage has money, it is just that we have not been able to effectively harness the methane gas. That is what they do, they harness the methane gas and use that to assist in power generation. For instance, in Toronto, coming from the airport on the highways you will see those mounds, green, very attractive mounds. They are actually waste that is being harnessed, the methane is being harnessed from there to—and captured to assist in the power generation of their power plants.

So there are certainly opportunities for us there and it is the intention of this board to seek out those organizations that are willing to assist us in that process. And, you know, I do not think many people understand how many organizations there are out there that are willing to assist. And my line Minister and I have had several discussions on this and we will be pursuing that avenue.

Mr. Chairman: Well, I am glad you mentioned the question about waste and money because I want to talk about money now and about the possibility of solid waste becoming entirely self-sustaining and not just sustaining itself but generating income. When I looked at the submissions and I looked at the operating costs for 2018, 2019, 2020; \$41-plus million in 2018; \$42-plus million in 2019; \$32-plus million in 2020; we are talking about over \$200 million over the last five years. That is a lot of money. I accept that the company has done a lot of work in terms of preparing reports and position papers to guide policy development and I know that, for example, like with facilitating the management of emerging

waste streams.

And I saw that you have presented very nice organizational charts showing the structure of the company and you appear very proficient in terms of your internal governance and administration. Lots of plans, lots of goals but I get the sense that the company is still very much in a state of flux and I am very concerned about the fact that there has been little or no progress in some of the macro-items, for example: harmonization of national policies relating to waste management, no progress; facilitating reduction of food waste at retail and consumer levels, no progress; sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, no progress; amending existing legislation, no progress; combating marine litter, no progress. A cynical person may enquire, are we spending millions of dollars for outreach programmes, nice reports and annual beach clean-ups? So my question is: In light of all of these failings, this lack of progress, what would you say to those who may accuse the company of underperformance or that we are not getting value for money?

Mr. Milford: Mr. Chairman, I would say that the business of garbage is, as well as we could earn income, is a very expensive undertaking also. Majority of those funds that you see being spent there are really being spent on operational issues such as the collection of garbage, the operation of our landfills. The issue with SWMCOL is that we are hamstrung and we are hamstrung because we have not gotten enough, I hate to say this, but we have not gotten enough funding to really do those outreach programmes, to do the marketing that is required. The moneys that we are getting right now is really—goes towards maintaining the operations of the landfills and the collection of garbage. That is why it is so important for us to look at other avenues, as I said just a while ago, for SWMCOL to become more proficient in the collection of money rather than the spending of money. There are opportunities and we have to seek out those opportunities so that we could assist in reducing our dependence on the Treasury.

Mr. Chairman: Right. So you spoke about it and the CEO spoke about the hazardous waste, for example. Now, this is a company that was set up to control, treat and dispose of waste yet you do not handle this hazardous waste. You said that you rely on, you depend on others, so other entities will treat hazardous waste before you can accept it. Who are those others who handle hazardous waste?

Mr. Milford: I will hand over to the CEO because I am not familiar with all of the details with respect to the handling of hazardous waste.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman, I am going to defer to Marie Allong our HSEQ-GM.

Ms. Allong: Hi, good morning everybody. Through the Chair—are you all hearing me?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, loud and clear.

Ms. Allong: This waste, hazardous waste, the characteristics of hazardous waste, currently SWMCOL

facilities will not be able to handle. So what happens is that there are several entities in the country who handle hazardous waste. They would treat it, make it inert and then they would actually dispose of it or we can actually dispose of it via entombment once they are rendered inert. I am unable—I do not think—I am unable to actually name those persons or entities at this forum but there are facilities who are able to handle hazardous waste within the country.

Mr. Chairman: So do you pay those other entities to handle hazardous waste for you, I mean, how is it dealt with?

Ms. Allong: Okay, so through you, Chair, again, just as the NEP has— [*Technical difficulties*] —will then be responsible for engaging those contractors to treat and dispose of that waste.

Mr. Chairman: Sorry, so is it the person who generates the hazardous waste that has the responsibility. So it is not to say like it is another waste disposal company. It is a generate of the waste.

Ms. Allong: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Right. So what would you say is your competitive advantage, solid waste competitive advantage?

Mr. Thompson: Chairman, we are mindful of our mandate, SWMCOL is doing two things. SWMCOL is providing a service that is a public good in terms of the managing the landfill on behalf of the Government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago. But on the other hand, in terms of our commercial side we do provide services in terms of commercial waste management. And our competitive advantage there has to do with the deep technical bench that we have, the SWMCOL brand, as you mentioned, we are over 40 years established and in fact that we can provide and we have provided services not just in Trinidad and not just in setting up of the landfill in Tobago, but over time we have provided services throughout the Caribbean in terms of setting up structures to deal with waste management.

Mr. Chairman: So thank you. I am going to come back a little later to talk about some of the gaps that you have identified and about the legislative aspects. But I would like to hand over now to member Mark. Member Mark.

Mr. Mark: Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and let me welcome as you have done on our behalf, the officials. Mr. Chairman, if I may ask a question arising out of your enquiry before I deal with my specific areas, I would like to ask the chairman or the CEO: When contractors dispose of hazardous waste, is there a system of zoning that is known to SWMCOL for those hazardous waste to be deposited or can contractors choose their own areas for disposing of the waste, the hazardous waste? Can you clarify for this Committee?

10.30 a.m.

Mr. Milford: Mr. Chairman, through you, I will refer that question to our Chief Executive Officer.

Mr. Thompson: Sure. Member Mark, thank you for your question. It is our understanding that there is no legislation related to what you have spoken about, but with respect to how SWMCOL treats with it I will reinforce what has already been advanced, an IGM through HSC. When we are alerted to any hazardous material, we at SWMCOL, on behalf of the Government and the people, ensure that the hazardous material is rendered inert before it can be accepted at one of our facilities. So we help both the producer of the hazardous material. I think PowerGen comes to mind. They have in the recent past asked us to assist in that regard. We have identified for them a competent person to render the material that they had identified inert, and then we have created a space on our facility where we provide entombment of the treated material that is now inert and now unable to cause adverse effects to the watercourse or the soil in the area. So that is how we would treat with it.

As member is aware, as all of us, there are people out there that do things outside of the legislation and outside of the recommended practice. SWMCOL does not have any—we do not have any enforcement division in that regard and we are not an authority under the current legislative arrangement either. So all that we can do is provide the assistance when asked to ensure that the laws are complied with.

Mr. Mark: So, may I—

Mr. Chairman: Member Mark, sorry to interrupt you. We got a question from a member of the public, and while we are just on this on point—and I will come back to you—the question that was asked is: What is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal for the purpose of recycling plastics, glass and waste; and is there a national recycling policy?

Mr. Milford: CEO, would you?

Mr. Thompson: In terms of the SDGs, we do not generally differentiate SDG one, or two, or five. We know inside SWMCOL our focus is on SDG six, and more so with SDGs 11 through 17 as they affect our particular operation. In fact, SDG 12 I think would speak to that matter of plastic recycling, but our approach is, as is the national environmental plan, to look at ways that we can more sustainably engage with the materials that come to us. So it not just about whether it is plastics today or e-waste tomorrow. But all of what is coming to us, we are stewards entrusted, for the Government and the people, with products that are coming to us. As the Chairman mentioned through our education programmes, we hope to reduce the amount of waste coming to us and also through our recycling programmes we hope to transform the waste that is coming to us, and hopefully as the Chairman also mentioned, to do so profitably to assist in our subvention from the Government.

Mr. Chairman: But Mr. Thompson, as a steward would you not be operating within a policy? Is there a national recycling policy?

Mr. Thompson: I believe there is—there is a national recycling policy and we do operate within that.

Mr. Chairman: Member Mark, sorry. Yours.

Mr. Mark: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if there is a national recycling policy, is Solid Waste responsibility for generating that policy; or is there another entity that they are aware of that is responsible for that national recycling policy?

Mr. Milford: If I may? Sen. Mark, we are the ones that have been tasked with leading that charge in terms of ensuring that the national recycling policy is in place. We are the ones that actually have been tasked with doing the research, and we have been working very closely with our line Ministry in ensuring that that policy is supported. Hence the reason we have taken a very active role in the development of the Beverage Containers Bill. We have been the ones leading that charge and continuing to do so. So to answer your question, yes, we are out in the front of this whole policy in designing the policy with regard to how we manage waste or recycling in this country.

Mr. Mark: Through you, can I ask whether you can make available to this Committee a copy of the SWMCOL's national recycling policy?

Mr. Milford: Sure.

Mr. Mark: Now, Mr. Chairman, may I also ask: In the absence of a centralized, coordinated policy framework for the disposal of hazardous waste, would you share with us whether there is chaos, recklessness and irresponsibility by certain entities that may be engaging contractors without your awareness, without reference being made to you, and those contractors are dumping whimsically, arbitrarily, hazardous waste throughout Trinidad and Tobago without the knowledge of SWMCOL and without the knowledge of the relevant authorities? Can you clear the air for us on that matter?

Mr. Milford: I would say, Sen. Mark, that as an organization we are unable to police the entire population with respect to how and where they dispose of garbage, whether they have not waste or other waste. That has always been a challenge. That is a real challenge for our organization, but it goes deeper than that. It goes to the psyche of the people of Trinidad and Tobago and the whole legislative framework that is designed to assist us in combating that. You talk about hazardous waste, but when you look at tyres and how they are dumped all over the country, SWMCOL cannot police—we do not have the infrastructure to police that. We do not. What we are asking for eventually is legislation that will assist us in doing that you know. We have antilittering laws in this country, but is it enforced? These things—and you raised a very good question Senator. How do we manage our environment if we as a people are not doing enough

on our own to be part of the solution? One of the things is that we all want change, all want a better environment, but when the time comes for the change there is where we meet with resistance from various quarters and that is the issue.

Mr. Mark: And this is why, Mr. Chairman, I would like you to share, maybe with this Committee, the need for us to assist SWMCOL in the areas that you consider to be quite crucial to deal with the whole question about the environment and the role that you must play but you can play, but there are gaps, there are limitations, there are deficiencies. Let us know and let us see how as a Committee we can bring these matters to the attention of the Parliament. So I just wanted to leave that with you.

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much.

Mr. Mark: Now, the other question I would like to raise and I do not know who would be able to answer this one, is simply this: What is the relationship like between the Industrial General and Sanitation Workers Union and SWMCOL today, can you share with us what is the relationship like?

Mr. Milford: I will put that question, through you, Chairman, to our CEO. He is in a better position to answer that question.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, member Mark; thank you, Chairman. The union is—the Industrial General and Sanitation Workers Union is one of two recognized unions here at SWMCOL. With both unions we meet regularly. That is to say, there are issues that come up from time to time that we deal with. I would not want to characterize our relationship with them without their agreement, but if I am to judge from our past interactions where they had very vociferous and public disputes with us, and now where we have been working together as partners and stakeholders, as we ought to, to resolve various issues and we are doing so I think internally and speaking to each other as we should on a regular basis, I would say our relationship has improved but I would also say it is not perfect and there remains room for other work to be done.

Mr. Mark: There was a claim some time ago made, of course, by the union that they are members with the lowest pay in the country in relation to sanitation workers, would you want to advise us as to the veracity of that statement?

Mr. Thompson: Chair, sorry, member Mark, thank you for your question again. I believe we investigated the claim. I believe that with respect to one or two of the categories that they identified there was some difference with similar-type jobs in the Port of Spain Corporation, but in that investigation we also identified that we were also paying at better rates for other positions. So better can always be done, and if we are to compare I think the approach that the CPO has taken is to do market-based surveys which I agree with. I think that that provides a good platform to have a discussion rather than trying to identify

always the lowest, but to ensure we are treating fairly with our workers in the marketplace. I think that is an approach that I can support and as I understand, it is the approach that is being taken.

Mr. Mark: Could you identify the name of the other union?

Mr. Thompson: Yes. The name of the other union, it is the Banking and Industrial General Workers Union?

Mr. Mark: Okay. Now in your submission, pages—I think it is page 11, you indicated that SWMCOL continues to work with the Occupational Safety and Health agency to improve its working conditions and compliance. Could you tell us, what is the reason for SWMCOL's failure to comply fully with the OSH Act?

Mr. Milford: Thank you, Sen. Mark. Before I hand you over to the CEO because he might be in the better position to identify some of the gaps, you know over the last five years we have been working towards improving the way we manage occupation safety and health. One of the major issues we have in addressing all of the issues is really a matter of funding and finding the necessary funds to ensure that every aspect of our operations are safe. And I am going to be frank, it is a work in progress. It has been engaging the attention of the board in a very serious way. We have seen some improvement, but we still have some gaps and those gaps are presently being addressed. I will hand you over now to the CEO if he wants to add anything else, but from where the board sits we see some of these areas of opportunity for improvement.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman; thank you, member Mark. Our approach has been to conduct a programme of activity. Having identified inefficiencies, we continue to conduct a programme of activity to address inefficiencies. As the Chairman says, we do have some challenges with the funding at times, but that notwithstanding we try to prioritize the working conditions and the safety of our workers. So that takes prominence. In terms of the compliance, I would like to say that of the areas identified I think 67 per cent has already been fully rectified. All of the other areas are in progress and our expectation is by the end of June that we should have these other works done. Again, with respect to some of the major things that require capital outlay such as a new—we need new plant facility at Beetham to deal with the number of people that we have there. We have through the kind intervention of the previous Minister had a new building at the Beetham, but other things remain to be done to ensure that we are in compliance fully with the OSH Act. But we are making good progress as the Chairman has identified and we believe that we will get there shortly.

Mr. Mark: And, Mr. Chairman, my final question for this rounds. May I ask the Chairman of SWMCOL: We read in your submission that there are several litigation matters involving a number of private entities

and SWMCOL, would you like to share with this Committee what are these matters, the entities that are involved; and can you provide us with the cost associated with those litigations?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much for the question, Sen. Wade Mark. Again, after my statement and to the response to your question, I will revert to the CEO, but there is one in particular where a contractor's employee was damaged on one of our location—and he was a contractor's employee—and that case is presently being contested. There was a judgment against us which we tried to decide. So right now we are in the negotiation phase to try to reduce the amount of the exposure. Initially it is around 1.5, however, we are trying to bring that down and I would not like to go into all the details—

Mr. Mark: Yes, yes, yes.

Mr. Milford:—with the negotiations, but it is something we are working on to settle that particular case. I do not know about another other. Maybe the CEO, over to you, if you can address Sen. Mark's question?

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. With respect to the other litigation matters they deal with, as the Chairman has noted, same and similar type of incidents as well as individuals. Employees that have identified grievances, they have taken through the normal industrial process. But we will be able to provide that answer in writing so that you can get a full idea of the cost involved as we estimate them at this point.

Mr. Mark: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, member Mark. Member Cummings?

Mr. Cummings: Chairman, I will allow member Lee Sing to go—[*Inaudible*]

Mr. Chairman: Okay, thank you. Member Lee Sing?

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Thanks very kindly, member Cummings. Chairman, thank you so much. Good morning again everyone, and thank you so much for being here with us. First of all, I must establish my appreciation for the entity that is SWMCOL and the work that it is required to do as we try to meet the requirements of the sustainable developmental goals with a target of just over eight years away of 2030, and I heard your CEO speaking to the fact that SWMCOL is responsible or would take the lead rather for goals 6 and 11 to 16, if I am not mistaken. I must establish as well that I have heard you speak about the campaign of Charlie and it brought me back to my very, very early childhood. I was just about four or five I think when Charlie would have just come about. And recently I was having a discussion with somebody who told me that Charlie was actually coming back.

Now, I remember Charlie to have been a very effective campaign back in the mid-80s just around there, and I really would hope that the Charlie campaign would in fact take full flight very soon because I am not sure that—I have children who are at the age that I would have been back then and I do not

know if they are sufficiently aware of Charlie or of things of that nature. So I wanted to start by encouraging you please to do as best as you can, given your resources to come up with creative ways of creating campaigns really for environmental consciousness. That said, I noted as well, Mr. Chairman, that you have would have spoken about—there is a 10 per cent increase in voluntary recycling and there is a need for your company to deepen engagement with the population, and I wanted to know, besides the Charlie campaign what other initiatives would have been put in place or are on the table for that deepening the engagement with the population. So I will start with that question and then I have several other questions, but I will not take all your time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. Milford: Sure. Thank you very much. The communication process is a very important one. Let me begin by saying that, and yes we are coming back with the Charlie campaign, but Charlie 2021/2022. We are giving Charlie an upgrade to be more relevant in today's environment. The process of education has to start with really educating the population and as to where we are right now as a country when it comes to the waste that we generate. I mean, we generate as a population way too much waste which we estimate more than—and maybe the CEO could correct me on this—60 per cent to 70 per cent can be recycled. So the entire process that we will be engaging in is not only to put the garbage in the bin, but put the garbage in the right bin whether it be for bottles, plastics, paper products. That has to be part of the whole campaign, not just putting it into one garbage as we are accustomed doing. Worldwide that does not happen. And what I would to say is that you know we have grown so accustomed in Trinidad and Tobago—and I am not saying that will discontinue—to having our garbage picked up three times a week.

In many developed countries you would find that happens once a week, sometimes even twice a—sorry, once a fortnight, and there are strict limitations with regard to how the garbage is separated into plastics. And the communication process has to take that into consideration, how to educate our population in starting to recycle from home. That is where it starts. And so, when it gets to the landfills or it gets to our sorting structures or provisions that we have at the various landfills, we are in a lot better place to manage the waste. But to answer your question, we are going to be using all forms of media to communicate in our message. Whether it be social media, traditional media, posters, billboards, et cetera, we really need to get the message out there and that is the format we will be— Generally speaking it is all included in our strategic plan for 2021—2025 which as I said earlier will be ready at the end of April.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Okay. Thank you very kindly for that. Can I ask you then, therefore, if we are encouraging our citizens to have their garbage sorted in different ways, so plastics, glass, paper, aluminium, et cetera, what is the state of readiness of the receiving sites for these different things? So we sort it on our end in our homes and in our communities, what is the state of readiness for the receiving

sites?

Mr. Milford: Well you know this is all also dependent on the Bill. Now, we have been working assiduously to achieve the ability for us to—we are already separating at some of our sites already. We already have the equipment doing that. And I will tell you this, as I said, you know it is like flying the plane and trying to upgrade the engines at the same time. We have to make a start somewhere and I think we have made the start. We just need the material to start sorting. Once we get that done we will upgrade our facilities to ensure that we could handle all of the recycle items coming to us.

I will tell you this, there are private sector companies that have approached SWMCOL throughout the years to assist us in showing us the way forward. We have companies that are interested in plastics, in plastic recycling for exports, for instance biodegradable plastics for exports, and that may be another form of income for SWMCOL and the country in general because they will be exporting and that is US dollars coming into the country. Those are the kinds of opportunities we have to look for. So SWMCOL I would say will be ready. Once we start the process—and we have started the process already. Once we continue the process and we have the legislative support.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Thank you very kindly. So this leads then to something that you have submitted to us which speaks to what we are speaking of now, the alternative sources of funding through international agencies. Now, can you clarify that for me in the first instance please: Is it grant sourcing or are you talking about business transactions and partnerships with other international organizations or organizations situated in other countries that have a similar mandate? Could you please clarify that for me?

Mr. Milford: Yes, most certainly. Thank you for that question actually. It is a mix of all. We have private sector companies that are interested, international agencies that are interested in assisting us with the full process. We have private sector companies and Government agencies external to Trinidad and Tobago that are willing to assist us. In fact, the Minister and I—my line Minister and I have a meeting this week with a particular Ambassador who is willing to assist us in funding some of these projects. So to answer your question, there is a wide range in my opinion of opportunities for us to access funding whether it will be grants in some cases, or direct investment into some of the projects that we are looking at.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: All right. Wonderful. Thank you very kindly. I want to ask you now please, in your most recent audit which you would have submitted, question 10, pages 2 and 3, you listed eight issues that had been flagged: as SWMCOL engaged an accounting firm to do a diagnostic and provide recommendations for action to resolve the issues that would have been identified; in addition, SWMCOL has approved a fraud policy and work is ongoing, can I ask you please if you could let us know which

accounting firm was engaged to complete that diagnostic; when will you receive the recommendations; and if you have any timelines for the completion of the supporting policies? Thank you.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. Milford: Yes, the completion of the exercise will be presented to us at the end of April this year. Through the tendering process, we awarded the contract to PWC. They are the ones that are actually doing a complete diagnostic of our operations, which would include finance, IT, our HRIS system and taking an in-depth look at our operations in order to highlight those opportunities for improvement and close the gaps. We thought it was prudent for us to go that route to get somebody with international exposure to help us in this entire process.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: All right. Thank you kindly. Chairman, I just have two other questions please, if that is all right? I will be very, very brief.

Mr. Milford: Sure.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: In your submission manual you indicated that SWMCOL's most recent audit for fiscal 2018, yes. Given that the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual requires that within four years of the end of the financial year you need to submit that, is there any particular reason why audited financial statements have not been submitted within the stipulated time frame for 2019/2020?

Mr. Milford: I would have to defer that question to the Chief Executive Officer. This board has been around December 20—

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: 20? Yes, I know you're a very recent appointee.

Mr. Milford: So, if I could ask the Chief Executive Officer to step in here and assist in answering your question?

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman; thank you, member. Again, as the Chairman, I am of fairly recent vintage as well, at SWMCOL. But what I can say is that within the last year, not only have we done the 2018 and the 2017 audits, but we are in the process of completing 2019. So what I can say is that, coming into SWMCOL we identified that there was a gap according to what is stated in the second, and we try to bring the company into compliance. The only thing now that is keeping us back from 2019, is simply having the 2018, which we are awaiting feedback as to the AGM for that to be accepted, and then we would be moving forward with 2019, and shortly thereafter we expect to have 2020 in compliance with the guidelines.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Thanks kindly for that response and so then I have to take this opportunity to congratulate this new incarnation of leadership of SWMCOL, Chairman Milford and the CEO and your team. I am very happy. I am delighted to see that you are making it a priority to have those audited

financial documents submitted in the shortest possible order and I want to congratulate you for all the work that you have done and I just want to encourage you please, because the communication part of it and the population buy-in and mindshare is critical to even your own financial sustainability and your survival in the future and the survival of our island.

We are seeing exactly what is happening around the world. Global warming is a real thing. Climate change is happening. We are a small island developing state. We are very vulnerable and we are seeing what is happening right now, for instance, with our neighbours in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and we do not know what else is going to happen throughout the region otherwise, and we do not know what will happen to our islands in the future.

So I want to thank you and encourage you to work on getting that national population buy-in insofar as the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals and insofar as the importance of recycling and preservation of our environment. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Chairman Vieira.

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, member Lezama-Lee Sing. Member Mc Clashie.

Mr. Mc Clashie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me say on the offset that I am impressed with the operational work that SWMCOL is doing and your look into the future with regard to what will become SWMCOL. However, the only way you will get this done is through people. And therefore, I would like to enquire—a couple questions—with regard to your establishment and where your skill sets for achieving these things could come. So I note that the staff would have moved in 2016, from 221 to a high of 334 in 2019 and then to 300 in 2020. But what exactly is the establishment, the approved establishment for SWMCOL at this point in time?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much for that question. I would have to divert that question to the Chief Executive Officer with respect to the staffing and how many staff we have and what is the optimum staff requirements for SWMCOL.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, member. With respect to the variance in numbers that you have identified, there is a direct correlation between the new activities that SWMCOL has been asked to undertake and the expansion of our mandate by the Government.

I believe in 2018, we would have received an expansion to our mandate by giving us some of the powers of the proposed waste management authority. That expansion would have been about 20 persons that were added to the structure, through Cabinet's approval.

And then in addition, as the Chairman would have mentioned, we have already started and in respect to member Lee Sing's question, the Chairman would have mentioned that we have already started,

in terms of processing the bottles, the plastic, the cans, the aluminium, the paper at SWMCOL and again that jump in staff has to do with those numbers. Some of it is a seasonal activity. But at this point we are working with our line Ministry on strengthening the policy around what, or the shape really around what the new beverage Bill would be and we are also trying to keep the numbers fairly steady. We do not want to expand, given that there are a number of questions that we need to be given policy guidance on before we can make commitments in terms of our human resource.

So, we feel at this point that we have a staff complement that is able to treat with the challenges that we have and we continue to work with that staff. Importantly, member Mc Clashie, with respect to some of the training, which I believe is where your question may be headed, we have, over the last year, done a competency gaps and identified training, partnered with the NESC and we have engaged them and our people, in terms of training, in terms of the basic craft that are needed here at SWMCOL and we do see good, positive outcome from that at this point and we expect that training, again, to be completed within the end of the second quarter.

Mr. Mc Clashie: Okay. A follow-up question. Your mandate is quite wide, and where you are taking SWMCOL seems to be going exponentially in a different dimension from where you have been operating. Are you satisfied that you have the right skill sets at the management and middle management level to accomplish this mandate?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much for that question, Sir. The simple answer is no. There is a lot of room for improvement and that is why we have engaged the services of PWC to help us identify those gaps as we prepare the company for the future; all these projects that we want to undertake and to really revamp how we look today. That is, we have sought and we have gotten expert assistance in preparing the company for the future.

I think we have a strong leadership team. I think what has to happen is the line management is, I would say, strong also. We do have some gaps in terms of training, which we hope that the PWC report will highlight. We also did another report, I think a year ago, which was the Odyssey Report. That also pointed to some gaps that we had within the organization as we prepare the organization to achieve all of these things that we want to achieve in the future.

We also have a sub-committee set up by the board to actually go through and have an understanding for what the suggestions that are being made, so that we can track the implementation of those recommendations.

Mr. Mc Clashie: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that. Chairman, I think that is it for me.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, member Mc Clashie. Member Cummings.

Mr. Cummings: Thank you, Chairman, and welcome to the team from SWMCOL and from the Ministry as well. I am quite pleased myself with some of the work that SWMCOL has been doing. I want to welcome the new Chairman, Mr. Milford on board. I want to ask, I think member Mark touched on it a bit, but I wanted to ask, in relation to illegal dumpsites across the country, does that fall under the responsibility of SWMCOL, and if so, what is in train to treat with that issue?

Mr. Milford: Again, these sites are illegal. So normally what happens in a case like—what I know is that these dumpsites are actually, if they are identified, the regional corporations are actually called to assist with the removal of the waste material. I think, in order to—we have to look at that this whole situation from a very holistic standpoint. There is legislation in place to prevent that type of activity from happening. I think what has happened over the years, quite frankly, is that the enforcement has not been as effective as it should be.

As we have seen, recent examples or tyres being dumped in some areas, in rural areas in Trinidad and even in Tobago. And I think once the—I do not think we need to have more legislation. I think we need to have more enforcement. And if SWMCOL, you know, can recommend anything at all is that we start enforcing our laws and we start holding people accountable for when they practise this very illegal activity. I can tell you where I live, just in the street to come into where I live, that is an illegal dumpsite. I have to be calling the San Juan Regional Corporation on a regular basis to have the waste materials removed.

I think this also goes towards what we are talking about earlier, the education process. When we talk about the illegal dumpsites, a lot of them are within our waterways, which leads to flooding, severe flooding. And then we have, you know, the complaints that we are not dredging our rivers properly. But, when we dredge the rivers, we have seen refrigerators, stoves, washing machines coming out of the waterways. Should we accept that? What we should be doing is ensuring that those kinds of illegal activities cease and desist. And those who are perpetrating those, I call it criminal activities against the environment, should be held accountable. And if SWMCOL needs to get involved—right now we are not the police—but if we need to get involved in some way or fashion with regard to assisting in that process, I can tell you would certainly be willing to do so.

Mr. Cummings: Chairman, do you see, for instance, Solid Waste playing a role in assisting or coordinating with the corporations to address an issue like that? Is that a possibility, one? Two, in terms of the collection of tyres, could you update us on what is in place for drop-off sites for tyres, whether we have centres across the country that people can do that? And what is the possibility also of a collection site for white waste? So that—because the regular garbage collection will not take that up, and therefore

residents might be able, if they know that there is a location, they can drop off their used refrigerator or stoves, et cetera. They can do that. That will help us with not having so much of these items in the waterways, and so forth. Those three matters, please.

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, Member of Parliament. To answer your first question, most definitely. I will say that we as SWMCOL will be willing to work with the regional corporations to address this situation of illegal dumps. We are prepared to offer whatever assistance that we can to alleviate this illegal activity from continuing.

With regard to the other question, if you would allow me, I would hand you over to our Chief Executive Officer who can answer and I am sure can address those questions. I will like, however, after he is completed, to let you know something that we are doing, with respect to the tyres that has come up very recently. Mr. CEO, if you can?

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, member. With specific regard to the white waste question asked by the member, I would offer a slight modification in terms of his perspective. The white waste is supposed to be collected by the municipal corporations and our understanding is that it is. And when it comes to us, we would normally take care of it by identifying stakeholders in the informal sector that would then work with the white waste and produce either parts or they would look to recycle particular elements of the waste. So there is some effort being made in that regard. There is a structure for the white waste to be considered and it is being handled in that way.

With respect to the tyres, I hand back over.

Mr. Thompson: Firstly, we do collect tyres. We do so on behalf of the Government, as part of our mandate. Through the direction of this board and the previous board, in 2020, SWMCOL stopped disposing of the shredded tyres in the landfills. We continue to look for opportunities with partners to, not just be part of an old way of doing things, as members would have seen and would have come to the view, but we continue to look for other opportunities. And Chairman, I think you have some more to offer in that regard.

Mr. Milford: Yes. Thank you, CEO. The problem with, the perennial problem with tyres, I mean we estimate between 800,000 to a million used tyres annually that we have to deal with as a country. And there are some very innovative ways to use the whole tyres. And one such way that we are looking at and we are exploring and we are doing all of the background work is the protection of our coastline.

We have a major issue, especially on our east coast, with regard to coastal erosion. We have seen in the past few years ago what happened in the Manzanilla area and there are companies out there that are actually using old tyres, believe it or not, to assist with the prevention of the erosion of our coastlines.

There is a pilot project, which we are considering right now. SWMCOL has undertaken to do all of the analysis with regard to the feasibility of that project. We will be engaging various Ministries, from the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, who I understand is responsible for coastline in our country, and we will be engaging the Ministry of Works and Transport also. This is a way, and a very economic way, for us to use used tyres in order to prevent further erosion of our coastlines. And it is just one opportunity that we have.

I think we need to look for more like that. This simple project that we are doing with a relatively short portion on the east coast is going to consume 30,000 tyres; 30,000 tyres, one shot. And we feel that we may not have enough tyres to shore up the entire east coast. So that is an opportunity and so we are going to be exploring that definitely and that would be coming shortly through our Ministry to our line Ministry for consideration and approval.

Mr. Cummings: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your responses. Thank you, CEO. I just wanted to say that, in terms of the collection of white waste, it is very inadequate, in my opinion. My own experience in my constituency is that there are significant gaps. We usually, from my office, we run a programme to assist residents in collecting white waste. We do this quite often and we collect a lot of white waste. So certainly something, whatever is being done, has to be improved from on the corporation end, in relation to the collection of white waste. Yes?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much for that comment and that suggestion. I think you are right. There has to be more collaboration between ourselves and the regional corporations. We will reach out, through our CEO, to ensure that we improve the collection of our white waste material. And, you know, we, hopefully with that communication and improved communication between ourselves and the regional corporations, we can see an improvement. Like you—I do share your view that there is a lot of room for improvement, and hopefully we can work together with the regional corporations to improve the collection of those items.

We already have, we are already collecting like the green waste, which is tree cuttings, et cetera, and maybe they can introduce a new way to collect white goods on a periodical basis. I mean, to have it done like every fortnight, the way the tree cuttings are done, may be unreasonable, but at least we will have a way where individuals who want to dispose of these goods will know when we are coming and the time of the month that we will be in your area.

Mr. Cummings: Thank you very much, Mr. Milford. Back to you, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, member Cummings. So I have a round of questions of my own. But before coming to my round of questions, I have a comment to make about the tyres. Because I think the tyres

are something we should be paying close attention to and particularly as in your strategic plan, you talk about turning waste into gold. Tyres, yes can be used to prevent erosion, but I also understand that they can be used as artificial reefs, which would help with fishing and the breeding of fishes.

Also, I understand that there is a shortage of rubber in the world at the moment. Because remember that rubber comes from trees, the sap of trees, and so the question of recycling tyres is something I think there is potential with there. Now, I do not know if, Chairman or CEO, you have any comment on that?

Mr. Milford: You are correct. In fact I will tell you, the same company that has approached us with respect to the coastal erosion protection, they also showed us the ability to actually have the tyres placed in the ocean to establish artificial reefs. It is an amazing process. So you are quite correct, Chairman, in saying that.

To the shortages of rubber, our information is this, that everybody worldwide is recycling their tyres. So what is happening, everything is going to China and there is—very preliminary information that I have received, there is not such a shortage of recycled rubber. There is quite a lot of rubber moving in particular to China right now and, one, cost is very expensive. So one has to carefully consider how we approach that whole issue of recycling. So that is why we are looking for these low hanging fruits where we could take the whole tyre and how we can use it to protect our environment.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Now, I have a question from someone in the public and then I am going to ask some questions of the Ministries and then I will come back with my round of question. So the question from the member of the public had to deal with the landfills.

Was the Beetham Landfill supposed to be closed? Also, does SWMCOL have any plans to create a new modern landfill/recycling facility within the country, as opposed to the old dump methods and what is the time frame for such?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, Chairman. To answer the first question, yes, the Beetham Landfill was supposed to be closed. That is on the cards still. We will have to revert to the committee with respect to the existing time frame. That is all dependent on the establishment of our upgraded engineered landfills at Forres Park and other areas. There is some work to be done there.

What is the second question, if you can again? I'm sorry. The first question was that. I'm sorry, and the second question?

Mr. Chairman: Do you have any plans to create a new modern landfill/recycling facility—

Mr. Milford: Yes.

Mr. Chairman:—as opposed to the old dumping methods.

Mr. Milford: Yes, yes. So certainly the new engineered landfills will take into consideration, this is where the new engineered landfills will be fully equipped for recycling purposes. That is the way we are heading right now. I do not know if the CEO wants to add anything else to my comments.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. So, I think that our Chairman has set out the argument very well. I think the challenge is, and we have to understand why the Beetham has not been closed, I think successive governments and other stakeholders have identified the closure, not just at the Beetham but also at Guanapo.

But the challenge is, if we close those landfills today, there is nowhere to put the waster that is being generated by the population. So what the Chairman and I, and the other members of my team have spoken to is public education that gets the general population involved in reducing the 70-plus per cent of what is being sent to the landfills, which is recyclable, separating that and having it treated with properly will reduce the need for a landfill. But also more importantly with the new engineered landfills that are being spoken about, we cannot take the new and do the old, because we will end up right where we are today.

So we have to engage the participation and the support of our stakeholders in the public domain, because they are critical to not just having a new engineered landfill, but also to sustaining it. It has to be done in a sustainable way. What we have done before has not worked and we cannot continue with the same formula and expect to get a different result. So, those would be my comments in that regard.

Mr. Chairman: And when you speak of sustainable landfills, I assume you are also talking about non-toxic landfills, where you can put these films and you could use biodegradable methods.

Mr. Thompson: Yes, Chairman, exactly. Our Chairman would have spoken about using the methane from the landfills. An engineered landfill will afforded you the opportunity to collect the gas, use it possibly at the Point Lisas Estate as a for instance and reduce your overall greenhouse gas emissions.

11.30 a.m.

So there is tremendous opportunity here, not just for one of the SDGs but for multiple of the SDGs to be achieved if we can get that buy-in and that support from the public in changing that behaviour around how they treat waste, and partnering with us in terms of going forward.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. I have some questions for the Ministry of Public Utilities. Is the Ministry satisfied with SWMCOL's performance in achieving its mandate?

Ms. Duke: Thank you for that question, Chairman. In terms of the achievement of SWMCOL's mandate, from the discussions that we have had since we started this meeting, we would observe that the protection of the environment, recycling waste, managing our solid waste, and other types of waste, are spread

across several entities. So we have the EMA, which deals with, you know, the regulations for solid and hazardous waste; we have the Ministry of Planning and Development that is responsible for environmental matters; we have SWMCOL which has the responsibility for treating with the solid waste and, of course, we have the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government which deals with municipal waste.

So while there is an appreciation that SWMCOL has a specific role, from the Ministry's perspective, we feel that there is room for there to be an integration of how we approach the management of waste and the preservation of the environment. So I do not want to say that the Ministry is not satisfied with SWMCOL's performance because SWMCOL's performance is mitigated again by the funding that it does not receive, let me say, and the fact that we need to have all players on board to treat with waste management in an integrated manner.

And if I may go further, if you would allow me, Chairman, there was significant mention of the beverage containers deposit-refund system and as is well known, the Cabinet would have approved that policy in 2019. And as you said, this is something that has been in the making for decades. At the end of the last term of the last Government, the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs had advanced the requisite legislation to Cabinet, it was sent to the F&GP but unfortunately, it did not make it out of Cabinet before the term closed.

So we are in a new term and we took opportunity to look again at that system and, of course, one of the things that for any system to work we must have buy-in and we must make it as simple as possible for the players, especially the citizenry. So we are having a look at that now. And within that context, we again want to bring all the research to bear from all the players to look at an integrated waste recycle management system.

So we are in fact engaging the Ministry of Planning and Development at this point in time. As you know, the EMA falls under the Ministry of Planning and Development, and we know that at some point we will also have to engage the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government. But at this point in time, we can say that we have the concurrence, the support of the Ministry of Planning and Development and the EMA to look at this integrated waste recycling management system of which beverage containers will only be one stream. We also have other streams, as was mentioned before; the e-waste and the tyres and so on.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. So may I take it that with this integrated waste management policy, there is going to be at some point some stakeholder consultation?

Ms. Duke: As we go along, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: And does the Ministry have any advice for SWMCOL regarding its funding challenges?

Ms. Duke: Well, I think the Chairman would have—the Chairman of SWMCOL would have mentioned some of those before. As we look at challenges mainly in the operations area and looking at funding for dealing with some of the capital expenditures, there is a need to explore other types of financing and grant financing as well. And there are in fact a couple initiatives that SWMCOL is currently undertaking that has explored alternative financing arrangements. Maybe I can ask my Deputy Permanent Secretary to speak to a couple of those? DPS?

Ms. Khan: Thank you, PS, Chairman, and members. So one of the key projects for us with SWMCOL is the engineered landfill that the CEO spoke to and we have been in discussions with multilateral agencies to look at both a mix of technical cooperation grant resources as well as the possibility of a longer term loan as the need arises. So we are in that process of identifying the opportunities for accessing grant resources.

In addition, the Chairman of SWMCOL had also indicated that we are also engaging with some countries to see if bilateral assistance, both in terms of grant financing and in terms of technical expertise in all areas, including that of getting the behaviour change that is so very critical for any successful solid waste management system in the country. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Ministry of Finance. Does the Ministry of Finance feel satisfied with SWMCOL's performance and its adherence to the SEPMM?

Mr. Maharaj: Chairman, thank you. Overall, it is good except where we hear that the financial statements for '19 and '20 are still outstanding. In terms of the other reports, I would like to go through the other reports. The strategic plan, the last one we have on file is for the period 2015—2019. However, there was a plan from 2018—2022 and the Ministry commented on the plan but we are yet to receive the approved strategic plan for that period.

In terms of annual meeting, the last meeting was held for the financial end September 30, 2017. In terms of the debt portfolio, the last report we have was for September 2020. The last confirmed minutes were for the meeting held on February 23, 2021. In terms of cash flow operation, the last quarterly report the Ministry has was for June 30, 2020. Litigation proceedings, June 30, 2020; return of awards for contract, August 2020. So basically, with the quarterly reports probably they can do plenty better in that area. But all in all, I think it is “overallly” good but they can continue to be more timely in those reports.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Now, I know we are in a period of economic hardship or decline, and we have heard a lot about the challenges facing inadequate funding. What impressed me on my last visit to the Baltic countries was I saw that some countries are actually importing waste to convert waste into fuel

and to earn income. Do you see, as SWMCOL has identified in their strategic plan, that there is potential gold in waste, and that is a way that they can become an income earner for the country?

Mr. Maharaj: Chairman, I think I should defer that question to the line Ministry who will be more in the operational issues. That is a more operational question and they should be able to put forward a response.

Mr. Chairman: All right. Well, before we go to that, how can the Ministry assist with funding for SWMCOL to become more OSHA compliant?

Mr. Maharaj: Chair, I think SWMCOL should put in a request through their line Ministry and then it could come to the Budget Division of the Ministry of Finance, and that is where we normally—the company will—to be more compliant with those matters or those issues, I think they should put that in their budgets. And that could be done for the 2021/'22 budget period.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much. So, if I may now come back to the company, I had a round of questions. I think we—Mr. Chairman, may I take it that we can agree that environmental guiding principles, values, policies and legislation, should be framed properly and they should be followed strictly for ecofriendly sustainability?

Now, you have identified in your submissions a number of gaps for the country, achieving a holistic integrated and environmentally sound waste management system, and I want to focus on a couple of the areas that you identified. One was weak legislation and enforcement, and you spoke about that. The other was socioeconomic issues, inadequate public education and awareness, institutional and organizational inadequacies. Now, can you indicate what is being done to eliminate or reduce some these deficiencies?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, Chairman. In terms of the legislative side, you know, we will support whatever our line Ministry—through our line Ministry, we will support whatever legislation is necessary to get this thing right in terms of how we treat with waste. Okay?

In terms of the social issues, this has been given a lot of attention in our 2021—2025 strategic plan; how it is we plan to address the education process to the population of Trinidad and Tobago and why they should recycle, why they should not create illegal dumps, et cetera. That is the method that we are using in order to address the communication gap between what it is we are trying to achieve at SWMCOL and the general population.

In terms of the institutions, I would turn you over to the CEO. He is in a better position to answer that question. So, CEO, if you could step in here?

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. The Cabinet would have approved a new unit inside SWMCOL

and we would have referenced some of the output of that unit in terms of the institutional strengthening that needs to be done. So, our Chairman has already mentioned that we address public education as part of our new strategic plan. But also very importantly, in this strategic plan, we are linking very clearly our monitoring and evaluation of that public education, so that we can come back to this Committee and give an account as stewards as to the effectiveness of these programmes in terms of changing the behaviours. So that is also part of the institutional strengthening, because the work that is being done internally here by our unit, whether it is to develop the position papers or to support research related to legislation that our line Ministry may or other Ministries may be interested in, that has to be done within the broader context.

I think PS Duke would have spoken to it as well, in terms of we are not an island unto ourselves here at SWMCOL, but we work very closely with other stakeholders. I am pleased to say who we partner with frequently, on an ongoing basis and from whom we sense a great deal of support.

So not just with our line Ministry but with the other Ministries and with the other agencies of government, and even with NGOs we find that we have good support in terms of the work that we are approaching, and we are very pleased to hear of the reception that we are getting from the Committee today in terms of the work that we have done and that we are doing. We continue to feel that it is important work and we continue to feel that the work that we are doing will make a difference in terms of the environmental and social outcomes to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Now, one of the things that I picked up as a theme in this discussion is the lack of enabling legislation. And I think Chairman Milford talked about the—you are not an enforcement division, you are not an authority so you cannot police. There is legislation in place but the enforcement is weak. You need more enforcement. And so, I want focus for a moment on the multiplicity of the lack of enabling legislation. Was there ever supposed to be a solid waste management Act making you into an authority or was that proposal ever on the cards?

Mr. Milford: Chairman, I am not sure quite frankly. I am not sure if there was. I am not too sure whether or not the other members from SWMCOL are aware of that. Maybe they could answer the question but—

Mr. Chairman: But more importantly, am I sensing that you could see that you would be in a much better position to carry out your mandate as stewards if you were in fact an authority rather than operating as a limited company?

Mr. Milford: I would say that we would have to give that question a lot of thought, Chairman. You know, we would like to see enforcement. At this point in time, we do not have—as I said earlier, and you just pointed out Chairman—the authority at all. It would entail us, really, reorganizing how we do

business in order to become an authority, in order to enforce, to be able to police the removal of waste in this country or providing for the removal of waste in this country.

I will say this, however, that I think it is incumbent on all citizens of this country to first of all understand the impact when they throw garbage out the window, it is having on our environment. And the economy also because it costs money for us to be cleaning up this all the time.

Mr. Chairman: Chairman, just I wanted to ask you though—I am trying to imagine forward. We have an Environmental Commission which is a superior court of record dealing with environmental matters. We have an Environment Management Authority and we have SWMCOL. We have legislation under the EMA Act, we have legislation with Litter Act, and I know that there are things that—one can bring private prosecutions both under the EMA Act and also generally in the law. Is it that SWMCOL has never thought about the possibility of bringing private prosecutions or bringing proceedings under the EMA Act in the Environmental Commission? I am just wondering—or are you just comfortable relying on complaints to the police or to the EMA?

Mr. Milford: Well, I will put it this way, Chairman, if you would allow me to. I think we have a lot of laws on the books and to say that were going to have another authority to enforce the laws, we do not see that as—at least I do not see that as necessary. What I see as necessary is that the laws that we have existing on our books, that we enforce them.

Mr. Chairman: But who? Who is enforcing them? Is it the police? Is it the EMA? Who are you envisaging enforcing these laws? Do we need more litter wardens for example?

Mr. Milford: Well, I think yes, you are right, we need more focus on the litter warden programme. We used to have litter wardens in past. I am not too sure where that is right now to be quite frank. But I think that if we can—you know, I always draw reference to the Breathalyzer and the Act, and how we had existing laws in place if you drink—if you get into an accident and you are intoxicated, there is prosecution under that. But with the introduction of that Act, we have seen a drastic reduction, in my opinion, in fatal accidents in Trinidad and Tobago year over year.

And so, we have the laws and it just shows how we just need to enforce the laws. And whether it be the EMA, or the police, or the litter wardens who have the authority to go out into areas and take evidence and charge people for the dumping of rubbish, in my opinion, it already exists. I think sometimes we bring in all of these new authorities and we try to solve the problem that way. If we just work on enforcing the laws we have on the books right now, through the various agencies, I think we can see a big improvement in where we are today.

Mr. Chairman: So do you have any specific recommendations in terms of any amendments to our laws

or the need for new laws that will help Solid Waste?

Mr. Milford: Yes. I think specifically it is the fines that go with these, you know, illegal activities. I think the fines need to be increased, you know, fining somebody \$500, \$1,000 for littering, to me, that is not sufficient. I mean, if these fines were significant enough to deter people when they are caught, Chairman, I think that will go a long way. And not only increasing the fines, you know, you have to catch them, and when you catch them, you prosecute them, then I feel that will go a long way in preventing individuals from throwing garbage out the window. How many times you have seen people—you are driving wherever and people just arbitrarily throwing bottles and paper out of the windows? If we can capture those people and increase the fines, I think that will go a long way in deterring the activity.

Mr. Chairman: And you talked about weak legislation. Do you have any specific recommendations to strengthen legislation?

Mr. Milford: I think the legislation should give the police, for instance, more power to investigate and really get the police involved in a—because you would see someone dumping garbage and you call the police station and there is no reaction at all from the police. That has happened in the past, unfortunately. Some of them try and then, as with everything else, the police force is stretched also.

So I think any legislation that would give the police more power to prosecute these individuals would assist. But to be quite frank, I am not in a position at this time to say what areas within the specific legislation can be improved. What we can do at SWMCOL is have a look at the legislation again and provide recommendations as to how we could strengthen the legislation to address this unfortunate situation we have in this country.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Now, I understand that member Lee has joined us, so I am going to invite him to ask a few questions, and then we will go to member Mark. Member Lee?

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chairman. Are you hearing me?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, we are hearing you.

Mr. Lee: Thank you. Sorry for joining late, I had an emergency. I apologize. Chairman Milford, as the Member of Parliament for Pointe-a-Pierre, we have always had an issue and have had an issue again in the dry season, where the Forres Park dump, especially when you have the crosswinds and the smoke that is coming from the landfill has been sweeping across, and it is a perennial thing year on year. So it is a question that has always been raised and somehow, you know, we have always had in the past where under previous Chairmen, or previous CEOs, that they would talk about doing something within the dump to avoid that from happening but to date that does not seem to have worked.

So I am asking for the people of especially the Claxton Bay, Couva South area, when you get the

east to the west winds blowing, it is really a health hazard and makes life unbearable for the people of Claxton Bay, Springvale and Couva South. Could you respond or is there anything in place to correct that?

Mr. Milford: Welcome to the meeting member, Mr. Lee. This problem has been a challenge for SWMCOL, and I will hand you over to the CEO who might be in a better position to answer your question. But I would just like to say that I understand the problem firsthand having grown up in that area and I will say this, we have seen a reduction year over year with regard to the fires at that location.

It is an issue. There is opportunity for when we establish, for instance, the engineered landfills, we would be in a position to capture that methane that is coming out of the ground. Sometimes, you know, these fires are started in all different ways. It could be deliberate, it could be a bushfire that starts up, and once they get ignited—and I will ask the CEO to speak just in a short while—it is a task to bring under control, and that is why we have people on standby 24 hours a day to address any fires that may take place at our locations. But I agree, it is an issue of great concern to all of us.

We have done some air quality tests in the past and, you know, they have not triggered any major—shown any major issues. I think what you are referring to is that when we have these fires and how do we control them, and so I will hand you over now to our Chief Executive Officer who will speak to that further.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Chairman. I want to first agree with you, Chairman, that this is an area of concern for us here at SWMCOL. And that being said, we have over the last few years—the records will show—been able to manage fires at our landfills, not just at Forres Park but also at Guanapo and Beetham.

As you have indicated and as the member has asked, all of these fires can have a negative effect on the air quality of the citizens who surround our landfills, and so we have taken steps. We have an annual fire programme where we take mitigation measures, our Landfill Fire Prevention and Control Mitigation Plan that we execute every year with the dry season in order to reduce—and it has shown in terms of our results, good effect.

Having said that, and this is no way to say that fires cannot occur at our landfills, they can and they do. As Chairman would have mentioned and as the Committee well knows, part of the collection of waste, as a by-product, there is methane gas. And if that is not being collected and transported away in a structured manner, the gas collects and is available for incineration. And various actors, as the Chairman has indicated, may for whatever reason cause those ignitions. But having said all of that, we continue to work to reduce and ensure that those things do not happen to us to the furthest extent possible.

In addition, with particular respect to Forres Park, we do have a challenge in the area again with,

I want say, illegal dump sites that are not under the purview of SWMCOL and with actors in the waste management space that takes advantage of opportunities related to the length of the road to dump waste indiscriminately, and then set it on fire in order to retrieve some product or the other.

12.00 noon

And, in fact, member Lee, coming up from San Fernando, I did see a fire on the road way to Forres Park such that our team would have helped to put out but it would have brought some discomfort to the residents of Springvale and Claxton Bay. As you would have said, these things, I think the Chairman of the Committee would have alluded to, there are actors out there in the space creating—doing illegal items which are not under the purview, nor is SWMCOL structured to control.

Having said that, as well we have increased patrols and we are working with the National Operations Centre to include cameras so that we can have live 24-hour feed of the road. We continue to engage with the regional corporation in terms of their municipal police patrolling and any support that the member can offer us in persuading or encouraging the municipal corporation to support us in that regard would also be appreciated. But we have engaged with them, they have been very open to our discussions and they have sent the municipal police to police the area because, again, they have requisite authority to control the activity in a way that SWMCOL cannot as a private entity. So I hope that that treats with the question asked, member Lee.

Mr. Lee: Thank you so much, Mr. CEO. As a follow-up question—well you got into any second question, that link road as you come up the Claxton Bay Flyover exit. About three years ago we had met—I had met with SWMCOL, the CEO, at Springvale, about three, four years ago and that—complaining about that same link road and the state of the garbage collection that is being done out there at that link road at the exit and SWMCOL had assured us as a community that they would ensure that that is kept clean. Sometimes it is cleaner than other times but it is not on a consistent basis and I am a little bit surprised that you talk about the municipal corporation police manning that area or providing some sort of security support. I always got the impression that SWMCOL would have been doing that, given that the location of the dump and that that road is the access road to enter Forres Park. So I do not know if you could clarify that issue because it is an issue for the residents of the unsightly state and also the individuals who gather out there as a work site. So if you can add some clarity to that.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, member. It must be clear that SWMCOL is a limited liability company and clearly does not have responsibility for roadways here in Trinidad and Tobago. So I want to make clear that our support and participation is from the context of our mandate where we are trying to ensure that the environment on the whole in the communities that we operate are in as good a condition as they can

be. And so we continue to provide that support in terms of cleaning the roadway, and we do this regularly and almost daily because what does in fact happen and what is quite a challenge for us and does impact our expenses, is the fact that people are, on a daily basis, multiple times a day, sometimes starting as early as four o'clock in morning illegally, dumping on that road and that is a concern for us. And the municipal corporations are our stakeholders. They are partner with us, we work closely with them, but again SWMCOL is not an authority, it is not a municipal corporation, it does not have a police force at their disposal.

Mr. Chairman: CEO, may I interject here?

Mr. Thompson: Sure.

Mr. Chairman: Because as a limited liability company you are a person in law.

Mr. Thompson: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Now, we are looking at enforcement and there are many laws in place as we have heard dealing with littering offences. Summary Offences Act, public health Act, Litter Act, Municipal Corporations Act, Dry River Act, Agricultural Fires Act, Forests Act. Under a lot of these offences it is not only the police who can bring and prosecute complaints. Any person can lodge a complaint under the Summary Offences Act and bring that complaint, including a company. Also, if you look at the Environmental Management Act there is something called a direct private party action. Section 69 of the Environmental—62 of the Environmental Management Act lays out the environmental requirements and they talk about releasing pollutants into the environment, unauthorized activities in environmentally sensitive areas; they list a number of EMA violations. And 69 says:

“Any private party can institute a civil action in the Commission against any other person for”—
any of those violations.

So even though you are a limited liability company, what I am suggesting to you is that you do have the potential of being able to prosecute matters both in the summary courts and in the civil courts. And I say this in the context of your mandate is:

“...educate the public on the hazards of poor sanitation and on their role in maintaining a clean and healthy environment”—and—“maintain close liaison with community groups and other public and private agencies in planning and undertaking country-wide and region-wide cleanup campaigns.”

So I do not know whether in your new Charlie reincarnation you can be stressing the enforcement and compliance aspects. But I am also going to suggest—to say that we are going to leave it entirely to the police or to leave it entirely to the municipal corporations may not be sufficient because you are the

experts when it comes to waste and the prosecution of waste.

Mr. Thompson: Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to clarify. I would like to say if that was the impression that was being given, I would like to apologize, but that is not our position. In fact, we have, using the vehicle that you just mentioned, brought action in the courts against persons in the past, and is something we intend to continue doing and in fact my mention earlier of the cameras in close proximity and our work again with another stakeholder, the National Operations Centre, to have 24-hour viewing is also to support that kind of activity. So where we can, we will ensure—again we are not structured. My thing is, as organization, you have to be focused on what it is that you want to do.

We have some very big goals related to the engineered landfill which is long in waiting, which has the potential to affect the lives of every citizen here, we have big goals around recycling, and those things require focus. At the same time, we need the cooperation not just of the man in the street but also, municipal corporations, wherever SWMCOL finds stakeholders, our mandate, we interpret it as broadly as that, is to engage with them. But then, as with everywhere in Trinidad and Tobago, there are those who misbehave, and so we will treat with them as well with the tools that we have and we continue to strengthen both our private security related to the landfill, our partnership with the security forces, and where we can establish that someone has committed a crime and particularly where it would be on video, we would expect that the courts would support us in making sure that they are paying for their mistakes.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, sorry about that member Lee, please continue.

Mr. Lee: Okay, just one final question, Chairman Vieira, to SWMCOL. I am heartened about the cameras, I think that is a good initiative and I hope that, that happens sooner than later. It would go a long way in that particular area of Forres Park in the security aspect also. My final question would be, I do not know if it was asked, Chairman Vieira, because I came in late, at a point in time a couple years ago, maybe three or four years ago, at one point in time there was a discussion that the Forres Park dump or landfill, would have been the country's only landfill and everything was going to be coming to the Forres Park landfill and the residents of my area were very concerned about that, so I want to bring that question back up. Is that still on the table, or that has now gone away? I need a clarification on that. I do not know if that question was asked this morning?

Mr. Thompson: It was not asked in that way, member, but I embrace the opportunity to explain the position and perhaps clarify. You know the challenge, not just in Trinidad and Tobago but in other domiciles, is that everybody wants progress, nobody wants change. But change is part of the progress equation, so we have to embrace it as an element. What we have said in our earlier testimony here before this Committee, was that our intention is and still is to build an engineered landfill at Forres Park.

However, we have also said that we cannot continue with the same behaviours that we have over the last few decades with respect to how we deal with waste. And we have called both myself and my Chairman along with our line Ministry, had called for a deeper engagement with the national community in terms of personally assessing how their own impact on the environment. In terms of assessing whether that 70--plus per cent of recycled material that is put into the bag and sent to the landfills should actually be there and whether they could assist SWMCOL in taking those waste streams and packaging them appropriately, starting with recycling at home which we intend to support with our education campaigns and bringing those, allowing an opportunity to create entrepreneurship, to create more of our progress against the SDGs, to create an opportunity for the engineered landfill to work as it should. Because you are right and the residents in the communities that you serve, and that you have mentioned are also correct, there is no way that we could now take 700tonnes and place it in Forres Park in the same way that we have done over the years and expect anything but that it would be—first it would be filled in short order and secondly it would pose some sort of threat to them. But that is not what is being envisaged.

What is being envisaged is a fundamental rethinking of our approach to waste management. Starting on a personal level, we are engaging here in SWMCOL in identifying the different waste streams, providing position papers and with the support of our Ministry, getting policy decisions on how we approach these things so that as we move into an engineered landfill we will not be producing waste at the volume that we are and causing some discomfort to the residents in the communities that you have mentioned.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Chairman; thank you, Mr. CEO, for enlightening me; I think that is about it for me at this point in time, Chairman Vieira.

Mr. Chairman: Just a follow up, you said that you have this proposed model landfill. Do you have a time frame for it?

Mr. Thompson: We do not have the exact time frame. As we would have mentioned, funding is one of the elements that we continue to clarify but in the meantime the constituent elements around the studies that need to be done, the position papers that need to be done, the public education that needs to be done, we continue to work on those elements which are not currently being constrained in terms of our progress and as soon as we can get funding clearly ironed out then we will be able to be in a better position to give an answer as to date.

Mr. Chairman: Okay thanks, I have a question from a member of the public. Does SWMCOL have any formal relationship with the scrap iron dealers where you can sell valuable items sourced from the white waste to be recycled?

Mr. Thompson: The short answer to that is no, and again, Chairman, for the benefit of the public, waste iron—scrap iron—does not fall under the purview of SWMCOL. Right, just in general, under the current arrangements that falls under the remit of the Ministry of Planning and Development. So there—again as we have noted and as our Permanent Secretary has noted, there are a number of areas where we would benefit as a country from clarity and just having maybe either inter-governmental or some other kind of committee consider how all of these things can come together in a way that is beneficial. But as the Chairman says that is not within my remit to speak to, that is just to advise and note to the Committee.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, so I am going to be passing you on to member Mark but before that I just wanted to see if I understood what you were saying just now. So you are advocating a fundamental rethinking of our approach to handling waste and you are hoping to create a more economically responsible society here in Trinidad and Tobago using a mix of things. One is through better education aimed at fostering buy-in by the citizenry. The other one is through trying to create an entrepreneurship where people could see the value in waste and recycling, and then the third thing is using enforcement measures to those who are being irresponsible. Is that a fair assessment of what you are hoping to see?

Mr. Milford: If I may Chairman, yes, you are correct.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Member Mark.

Mr. Mark: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I ask the Chairman of SWMCOL the following question? Mr. Chairman, in light of what the Chairman of our Committee has just said, and in light of all of what we have been discussing earlier, would you agree with me that there is need for consideration or some coordinating mechanism in the interim involving all the major agencies and governmental Ministries that deal with the environment and waste, hazardous inclusive, so there would be a coordinated approach whilst we are appending the appropriate legislation to deal with the environmental challenges and for us to attain the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations? Can I have your thoughts on this?

Mr. Milford: Yes, thank you, member Mark. To answer your question, yes. I would say this, that there is, as the CEO pointed out earlier, there is significant in opinion collaboration between various stakeholders, however, there is always room for improvement. We do engage the EMA. Through our line Ministry, we engage other Ministries to assist us in particular, Ministry of Local Government but there is always room for improvement, okay.

We cannot do this on our own, it is obvious, so we have recognized that and if you look at the input that we have had in the Beverage Containers Bill, for example, you know, we have had all the stakeholders giving us input. In fact, we had hosted if I recall back in 2019 or 2020, I think it was 2020,

we had hosted at the HYATT some of the stakeholders for instance supermarket association and some others, in really getting their input into how this thing beverage containers Act should look and what they want to get from it. So I think we are, we do have systems in place to coordinate our efforts but like everything else there is considerable room for improvement and working towards that. As I said earlier, it is like flying the plane and fixing the engines and improving the engines while we move forward. Hope that answers your question.

12.20 p.m.

Mr. Mark: Yeah. All right. Let me just move on. Now, SWMCOL is not operating at full capacity. All approved positions have not been filled. SWMCOL is challenged, as you have rightly said, over and over, with funding support for human and capital programmes and you are aware of the challenges faced.

Mr. Chairman: I think that question was asked, member Mark.

Mr. Mark: Oh, that was already asked? All right. May I move on to the question as it relates to a resignation in our submission at the top management level? You had a former CEO resigning. Could you share with this Committee, what was the reason for this former CEO's resignation?

Mr. Milford: To answer your question, I am not in a position to answer that question right now. I can do the research to find out reasons for the departure, but I will get back to the Committee with the reasons for that departure, that CEO departing the position.

Mr. Mark: Now, in addition, you had submitted to us, I think it was in Appendix 2, in response to question 16. You indicated that the following are in progress:

1. Modified procurement handbook, which was to be submitted to the Regulator for approval.
2. Modified special guidelines where applicable, and that is supposed to be submitted to the Regulator for approval.

I wanted to ask, Mr. Chairman or the CEO, given that the Bill was passed, that is the Public Procurement Bill, which is now an Act, some five years ago, and is awaiting proclamation: What is the reason for SWMCOL only now developing its procurement handbook? And could you provide this Committee with a timeline for completion and approval of those documents?

Mr. Milford: CEO?

Mr. Thompson: Thanks for the question, member Mark. What SWMCOL has done is, with respect to all of the legal requirements that SWMCOL can have advanced, at this stage, we have advanced those. Without the proclamation of the legislation, a couple items remain. So we cannot truly change our procurement handbook as, for instance, with respect to our Tenders Committee until the legislation is

proclaimed, which then changes how the Tenders Committee would operate. So to do that now kind of puts us in a position where, yes, we would be in compliance with the new law, but we would be out of compliance with the old law. So we cannot make that step. So we have done all of the steps identified that we can do with the current legislation, and when the legislation is proclaimed, we can make these final changes and have them implemented.

Mr. Mark: Okay. What about sharing with this Committee as it relates to your IT infrastructure, the development of your IT information technology infrastructure? Would you want to provide us with some details of our upgrades and what is being done as it relates to your IT infrastructure?

Mr. Thompson: Thank you again, member Mark. So what we have done, and our answers to the questions would have noted that we are in the process of doing IT upgrades. I am happy to report that our Human Resource Information System has come live as of April 1st, and we expect that project to be completed at the end of June, and the other elements of the IT upgrade, we also expect to be completed by the end of June. And what is in particular focus, is the digitization of records related to inventory. And with respect to our Purchase Orders, as you know, we have a number of sites. This upgrade allows us to remove the paper work involved, we believe, to increase efficiency. But we also believe that it gives our finance team actionable data in a timely manner such that our reports then and, ultimately, our audits and so on would be done in a timelier manner. So all of these things, we expect to see come to fruition by the end of June. Work has been advanced, over the last couple years, and we are in the final stages of implementation.

Mr. Mark: Could you share with this Committee, CEO, what are the expected benefits to be derived from the upgrades that you mentioned, that is the IT infrastructure upgrades?

Mr. Thompson: Certainly, member Mark. So with respect to the human resource system, we are moving away from an antiquated paper-based system to a system that is now live. We anticipate an increase in productivity as supervisors no longer have to come to the HR team physically, and then have documents pulled and then sent back with the possibility of loss. We see an opportunity for increased productivity in that area.

Additionally, as we come into our performance management system appraisal, at the end of April, we also anticipate that the appraisals would be done online and that information would be fed directly into the system, again, moving away from a paper-based system again, we think, adding productivity to us in terms of our systems.

I would have mentioned, a little bit before, in terms of the financial systems, we are implementing a module on our Microsoft 365 Dynamics-based system so that we can have a live count of what is in

stores at all time at the head office. So that we again think this affords us the opportunity when we get requests from our line Ministry and from the Investments Division of the Minister of Finance, to be able to turn around the information they request in a shorter timeframe, and provide them with actionable data in as quick as possible a time. So not only with those stakeholders, but also our internal stakeholders, we expect that less Purchase Orders are going to be lost by someone's desk or misplaced, because everything is now going to be online. And where someone in the Beetham may have requested a spare part of some sort, the procurement team, here at head office, is able to see that request and make their notations and give feedback, and all the stakeholders in the system are able to see in real time what is the status of their order, and what needs to be done next in order to move the ball forward. This is, for us, going to be a great improvement in productivity, and we are in the final stages of testing. We have already done three or four sessions of training with the requisite teams in terms of its implementation, and we expect that that would be live by the end of June.

Mr. Mark: May I ask my final question to the Chairman of SWMCOL? Mr. Chairman, as we rush towards 2030, and our commitments as nation to the SDGs and, particularly, those that have been outlined by the CEO, can you share with us what we, as a Committee, can do to assist you in realizing your part in our achieving our SDGs, particularly goals 12 to 15 as outlined earlier by your CEO?

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, member Mark. It is vitally important that the Committee supports us in terms of how the process that we are going through right now in developing our procedures that we want to put in place over the next few years to address recycling in our country, to address the formation of our engineered landfills. A big part of the whole process is that when we make requests for adjustments or changes in the legislative agenda, we want to make sure that we get buy-in from all members that whatever we are doing, we have the full support of the Committee. What I mean by that is that sometimes, you know, things are—we have good intentions, but we do not always get the right support to deliver the end product. And what I mean by that is, in particular, for instance, the Beverage Containers Bill, we want to ensure that when that Bill comes that everyone understands how important this piece of legislation is to our country.

As I said earlier, member Mark, it is unfortunate that we do not have—we have people within Caricom, our neighbouring Caricom partners that already have legislation in place, that has a process of recycling in place and we do not have anything in place as yet. We want to see the commitment from the Committee that we get even a start towards this whole process. We will never have it—and I know the Chairman had mentioned that, you know, we have to have our Bills perfect and everything perfectly aligned. But, quite frankly, I do not see—I am putting a Bill that is perfect. You know, we have got to

start somewhere and I think, in particular, the Beverage Containers Bill is a place to start.

In terms of the enforcement of our legislation, our laws in this country, we would like to see that support coming out also. I promise that we will get back to the Committee on what adjustments to the legislation we see as important. Really and truly, it is that level of commitment from the Committee, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, that will support what it is we, as a company, are trying to achieve. That, in a nutshell, is what I would like to see, cooperation from the Committee and the assistance from this Committee to really get us to a place where we could begin to treat our environment differently.

Mr. Mark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, member Mark. I am going to let the last question be member Lee Sing's question. So, I am going to put my questions now and then we will end with member Lee Sing before we close.

I want to come back to where we had started, when I had identified a number of things for which there was no progress to date, little or no achievement. So, what I am going to ask the company is, can you please provide me with the reasons for no progress and the timeline for implementation? First, you had indicated the establishment of a data gathering and monitoring system for capturing and measuring the Food Loss Index and the Food Waste Index. Why has there been no progress in this and timeline for implementation please? I think you are on mute.

Mr. Thompson: Sorry. Chairman, thank you for your question.

Mr. Chairman: Question 64, page 15, of the submissions.

Mr. Thompson: Yes. Chairman, as I would have mentioned before, we are trying to—we are tasked with doing a number of things as the Committee would have found, in terms of our discussion. We are doing a number of things across a number of patches. But we would have also mentioned that we are developing position papers. I think the Chairman would have mentioned in his opening remarks with respect to e-waste and with respect to organics. This speaks to organics, talking about the food loss, that kind of waste. So we are in process now developing the tools so that we can accurately monitor this.

In that regard, a waste characterization study that we have planned would help. I would note that we have planned this for a couple years and we have not received the funding. But we continue to look for other ways to fund where central government does not have the wherewithal, and we continue to look at other partners to help us. And, in the meantime, as I would have indicated, we will continue to progress the things that we can progress. So, I cannot come back to you with data unless I have done the characterization so I can tell you exactly how much food waste we are collecting, at this point in time. That data does not exist at this point in time, so I cannot then create an index related to the performance,

over time, if I am not measuring it. But we have, you know, and our board has been very supportive in that regard. We are looking very closely at all our monitoring and evaluation, not just from the almost theoretical, in terms of what we are doing internally, but our Board has really pushed back on us, you know, how are we impacting the citizenry? Because we are operating in a place as stewards, and we need to be able to report back to those that support us with funding, how exactly we are creating that impact. So that focus that the Board has given us, that challenge, you will see very clearly in our new strategic plan coming out, and we will be and, as I have said, we are actioning the technical tools to enable this, and as soon as we have the other constituent parts, there will be progress, and with all of the items, the answer is of similar vein.

Mr. Chairman: So that will also include partnering with the Institute of Marine Affairs and Coastal Protection, the sharing of information on coastal and plastic debris density?

Mr. Thompson: So, again, this is about data monitoring, it is about evaluation. We have a very good working relationship with the Institute of Marine Affairs. We just conducted a beach clean-up with them in Chacachacare, I believe, 520 pounds of garbage or so, if my numbers are correct. So we are partnering with them in the operational activities, but what you are speaking to is, again, what I have spoken about, this reimagining of how we treat with waste. It is not just about going and pick up 500 pounds over here and a 200 pounds over there. Does the man in the street have the ability to see exactly what the amount of waste is being generated? Where is that waste being sent? How is it impacting? We need to provide the structures, some of which we are doing with our IT infrastructure, some of which we are doing with our position papers. And, again, we continue to work with our partnerships to ensure that when all of these things come together, we can be able to, again, show the impact that SWMCOL is having with respect to the environment in conjunction with all of the stakeholders with whom we operate.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. I remember once flying over, coming back from Tobago or one of the islands, and coming over the North Coast and seeing a river of plastic debris coming out of the Bocas. So maybe visual images of that and what you see on beaches could be part of the tool for educating the public.

The other thing was, you talked about issuing EOIs to identify opportunities for establishing private/public/partnerships locally, regionally and internationally to secure the sustainability and viability of all resource recovery lines. Where are we with that?

Mr. Thompson: So, if—

Mr. Milford: You go ahead. Go ahead Chief.

Mr. Thompson: Again, Chairman, thanks for the question. I mean, what we have—and we mark ourselves very hard here at SWMCOL. So when the question is asked, and we say no progress to date,

what we are saying is, there is nothing tangible that we can show for the efforts thus far. However, we have sent out EOIs with respect to tyres on more than one occasion. We have advanced EOIs with respect to plastics on more than one occasion, but do I have something tangible to report to the Committee? The answer is no. And so, our Chairman would have spoken to that in some form prior, by identifying that we continue to speak to people all of the time. But the arrangements that we come into again, as stewards, must make sense not just for SWMCOL, but for Trinidad and Tobago. So we cannot just enter into an arrangement where the net effect is that SWMCOL is going to be asking the Ministry of Finance for more funds. That is a nonstarter. Right?

So our Board is pressing us—and Chairman Milford will correct me if I am wrong—but they are pressing us when we bring a proposal to the Board, not only must it satisfy the environmental goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, it must also satisfy our financial stewardship that we are required to perform on behalf of the funds that we have been given. I mean, if our explanation, if our marking of ourselves in that way is incorrect, I stand to be corrected, but that is the state of it. We do not have actionable progress to report and so, we say, there is no progress.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Thank you. Now, at question 65, you indicated that the following items regarding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals had no achievements to date.

Explore the feasibility of establishing waste to energy facilities in conjunction with the Ministry with responsibility for renewable energy and with the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission.

Mr. Thompson: Again, Chairman, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries would have taken lead on this, and they would have sent out proposals. I believe proposals did come in from a number of entities, some of whom made presentations to SWMCOL as well. We did have a representative on the Evaluation Committee, as my understanding goes. But, unfortunately, this exercise was not completed, so the evaluation was not done within the required time, the tenders were no longer valid, and we were advised by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries that they will need to restart the exercise. So, again, the way we mark it that is no progress. I am not going to come here and say we start something and then it did not work out. It is still no progress, you know. And in terms of our reporting back to the country, if somebody ask me if something has been done, the answer is no.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Thank you. And then my last one:

Partnering with the Ministry of Health and the municipal corporations to develop a waste management system for the proper disposal of biomedical waste and similar hazardous waste.

Mr. Thompson: So, in terms of biomedical waste, as I would have mentioned, that remains the

responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Their main way of disposal of that waste is through incineration. Right? We do not have—I cannot say that we have done anything significant in that area. The Ministry of Health continues to have a system that treats with the biomedical waste, I think, in a fairly adequate manner.

For this Committee’s support, I would say and, again, to the point that my Chairman keeps mentioning, with regard to private medical institutions, there may be some opportunity to ensure that same level of compliance with the guidelines from the Ministry of Health. But, again, SWMCOL does not have the manpower or the capacity to do that kind of investigation, and it would be for the Ministry of Health to advise whether or not the systems they have in place in that regard are adequate or not.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Thompson. Member Lee Sing.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Thank you very kindly, Chairman. I know we are about to wrap up now. I am just looking at Appendix 9, “Major Capital Projects from 2016 to current”, Appendix No. 9 which was submitted to us. And I just wanted to know please—first of all, congratulations, because I think the bulk of your major capital projects are completed or near completion. I just wanted an update please on the Beetham Welfare Facility Upgrade Programme.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, member. I am pleased to report that shortly after my joining SWMCOL in 2018, we were able to move our workers into the facility. So that facility stands 100 per cent complete. I will also say, though, that some other infrastructure is required around the facility related to electrical, which we are in progress and in action on in terms of expanding the electrical capacity with our partners at T&TEC, as well as providing other more permanent arrangements related to the septic systems and so on. So those things would continue. But I am pleased to say that the facility is functional, it is operational and it is being used for which it was designed and we look forward to, you know, many years of its use.

And if I may member, as well, we are also in the process of and, hopefully, within a short period of time, we have, as you speak to capital projects, we would have worked on putting in a wheel wash at the Beetham. We know it has been a concern for a number of years by many people, the dust coming out of the landfill, and we have a solution for that. We expect within the next couple of months to have that commissioned. It is already in place and installed. We will be proceeding with some paving work. In addition to that, we expect in very short order that the area around the landfill will begin to take a different kind of look and one we think will be more appropriate for people passing by on the way to the capital city.

Mrs. Lezama-Lee Sing: Thanks very much, Mr. CEO. Well, I am very excited and pleased to hear that

as well. And Chairman, I have no more questions. I am just really very grateful for what I have heard here today. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Member Lee Sing. So I think that is bringing us close to the end of the hearing. I would now like to invite closing comments from members of the company and the relevant Ministries.

12.50 p.m.

Mr. Milford: Thank you very much, Chairman. I want to thank the Committee for allowing us to come here this morning, into this afternoon, to let you know where we stand as a company and what it is—some of the things that we are doing. The environment and how we treat with our environment is, at the foremost, a priority for SWMCOL. For too long it is the opinion of the board; we have neglected and in some cases—and in many cases ill-treated our environment and it is our firm commitment that we as an organization will do what we have to do in order to make our country a better place when it comes to how we treat with our environment, not only for us but for our children and those that are coming after us.

I want to thank you again, Chairman, for allowing us to come here this morning, and the Committee members. And I want to wish all of you all a great day and we look forward to you all out there helping us to clean up the environment. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Chair. The Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Maharaj: Mr. Chairman, I want to commend SWMCOL on their operational work they are doing. I wish them all the success. Also, the Ministry of Finance will continue to do its part in ensuring compliance and ensuring that any assistance that the company needs, we are willing to assist in that regard so that they can achieve their stated objectives. Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. The Ministry of Public Utilities.

Ms. Duke: Thank you, Chairman. I would like to thank the Committee for allowing the Ministry to give its input today. As we have heard, SWMCOL cannot treat with this matter of the management of the environment in isolation. So at the Ministry of Public Utilities, we will do all we can to continue to provide strategic guidance, policy direction and to foster collaboration with other agencies and Ministries along with SWMCOL so that they are able to effectively execute on their mandate. And so we thank you for today.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. And I would like to thank you all very much for your contributions today. It would be very useful for this Committee in its future work on the subject and in drawing up a report and recommendations for action to the relevant authorities. Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our

business today and this meeting is now suspended. In closing, may I thank SWMCOL, the media, and the viewing and listening audience. Good day.

12.51 p.m.: *Meeting adjourned.*

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

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1st Session, 12th Parliament

Name	1 st Meeting 18.11.20	2 nd Meeting 30.11.20	3 rd Meeting 08.02.21	4 th Meeting 15.02.21	5 th Meeting 08.03.21	6 th Meeting 22.03.21	7 th Meeting 29.03.21	8 th Meeting 12.04.21
Mr. Anthony Vieira	√	√	√	√	√	Exc.	√	√
Mr. Foster Cummings	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee-Sing	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Ms. Paul Gopee-Scoon	√	√	√	√	√	Exc.	Exc.	Exc.
Mr. Adrian Leonce	√	√	√	√	√	Exc.	Exc.	Exc.
Mr. David Lee	√	√	Exc.	√	√	√	√	√
Mr. Wade Mark	√	√	√	√	√	Exc.	√	√
Mr. Stephen McClashie	√	√	√	Exc.	√	√	√	√