

ELEVENTH

REPORT
FROM

THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE

EXAMINATION
OF

The Audited Financial Statements of The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (SporTT) for the Financial Years 2019 and 2020 and follow-up on the Implementation of the recommendations in the Committee's Second Report from the 11th Parliament.

Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee (P.A.(E).C) established under Section 119(5) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is mandated to consider and report to the House of Representatives accordingly on:

“(a) the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by or on behalf of the state; and

(b) the Auditor General’s Report on any such accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements.”

Current membership

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Mr. Wade Mark | Chairman |
| Mr. Rushton Paray, MP | Vice-Chairman |
| Ms. Amrita Deonarine | Member |
| Mrs. Renuka Sagramsingh-Sooklal | Member |
| Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds, MP | Member |
| Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing | Member |
| Mr. Keith Scotland, MP | Member |
| Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie, MP | Member |

Committee Staff

The current staff members serving the Committee are:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ms. Keiba Jacob | Secretary |
| Ms. Hema Bhagaloo | Assistant Secretary |
| Mr. Darien Buckmire | Graduate Research Assistant |
| Ms. Rachel Nunes | Graduate Research Assistant |
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Publication

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Date Laid in HOR:

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Members of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.....</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Executive Summary.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Introduction.....</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Establishment</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Mandate</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Ministerial Response.....</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>State Enterprises Performance Standards</i> | <i>9</i> |
| <i>Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Establishment of Quorum</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Change in Membership</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Determination of Date and Time of Regular meetings</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Methodology.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Determination of the Committee’s Work Programme Third Session.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>The Inquiry Process.....</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Company Profile</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>History.....</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>Core Activities</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>Board of Directors.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Management Team.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Line Ministry - Ministry of Sport and Community Development.....</i> | <i>15</i> |
| <i>Issues and Recommendations</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>Conclusion.....</i> | <i>28</i> |
| <i>Appendix 1: Meeting Minutes</i> | <i>30</i> |
| <i>Appendix 2: Verbatim Notes.....</i> | <i>47</i> |

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE



**Mr. Wade Mark
Chairman**



**Mr. Rushton Paray
Vice-Chairman**



**Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds
Member**



**Mrs. Renuka Sagramsingh-Sooklal
Member**



**Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing
Member**



**Mr. Keith Scotland
Member**



**Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie
Member**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee (PA(E)C) is the Parliamentary Financial Oversight Committee tasked with the responsibility of examining the audited accounts of all State Enterprises that are owned or controlled by the state. The Committee conducted **an examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (SporTT) for the Financial Years 2019 and 2020 and follow-up on the Implementation of the Recommendations in the Committee's Second Report from the 11th Parliament** and produced this report. This report details the issues, endorsements and recommendations made by the Committee to improve SporTT's performance.

The Report focuses on the following issues:

1. Sport Promotion at Primary and Secondary Schools.
2. The need for International Certification of the National Aquatic Centre, National Racquet Centre and National Cycling Velodrome as Development Centres
3. Maximising the use of SporTT's facilities
4. SporTT's Inability to Retain Revenue for Re-Investment
5. Impact of Insufficient and Untimely Release of Funds on SporTT's Key Projects
6. Vacancies in SporTT's Facilities Management and Projects Departments
7. Recreational Programming at Community Facilities

In light of the Committee's findings, the following recommendations were made:

- *SporTT should submit a status update to the Parliament by January 15, 2024:*
 - *on its collaboration with the MOE to ensure sustained integration to achieve increased levels of physical activity regarding the reintroduction of sporting activities into primary and secondary school curricula; and*
 - *how the company's would align its re-introduction of sport to the National Youth Policy 2020-2025 that the Ministry of Youth Development and National Service (MYDNS) was implementing.*
- *SporTT should submit a status report to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the company's plans to divert the energies of young people in Trinidad and Tobago into*

sporting disciplines that can mould model citizens as well as richly reward their untapped physical potential.

- *SporTT should submit a status update on the achievement of the requirements set out by the international sporting federations to have the NAC and NRC granted certification as development centres to the Parliament by January 15, 2024;*
- *SporTT should submit a status update on the engagement of the professional consultancy services to review and revise the existing rate structures for all facilities under the MSCD and SporTT's remit to the Parliament by January 15, 2024; and*
- *SporTT should submit a status report on the requirements that still need to be fulfilled to meet its objective of making Trinidad and Tobago a sport tourism destination setting out the specific outcomes it is aiming to achieve, the targets it is working towards and how it will measure progress.*
- *SporTT should ensure that the bookings of the facilities under its purview are not monopolised by specific NGBs nor sporting clubs attached to them. The company should provide an update to Parliament on the implementation of this recommendation by January 15, 2024;*
- *SporTT should, by January 15, 2024, provide an update to Parliament with details on its partnership with the MOE on the scheduling of its facilities to allow secured usage for primary and secondary school centric sporting programmes/ activities as a means of ensuring a sustained re-introduction of sport in school curricula.*
- *SporTT should, by January 15, 2024, provide an update to Parliament with details of the MSCD's Waiver Policy for Facilities on its website, social media platforms and facilities and what actions it is taking to address the level of awareness of this policy to ensure that interested persons and groups have the motivation, confidence and opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity.*
- *SporTT should submit to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 a status update on the following initiatives:*
 - *Outreach to universities to host winter training camps at our facilities.*
 - *Support to NGBs for the planning and hosting of major sporting events.*
 - *Development of rate structures for special events to be accommodates at facilities.*

- Advocation of retainment of revenue to re-invest in facilities to assist with additional maintenance cost due to degradation.
- Engagement with private agencies to facilitate use through contractual agreements. E.g. rental fees for cell towers and billboards.
- SporTT should generate a well-researched evidence-based policy document to be submitted to Cabinet that illustrates the revenue generating capabilities of the facilities under its purview as well as the urgent need of revised rates as proof of how much potential revenue was currently being lost and submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024;
- SporTT should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the implementation of e-payments for the online bookings interface that was being done in conjunction with the TTIFC;
- SporTT should submit to Parliament by January 15, 2024 a status update on the following initiatives:
 - Develop Corporate Business Case to grow customer base within the private and public sector.
 - Develop and Execute a Strategic Marketing Plan that will include visibility profiling of facilities and amenities.
 - Increase sponsorships (venue and advertising).
 - Development of proposals that target the regional and multi-lateral funding agencies that support sport development and sport tourism initiatives.
 - Establish a business development unit.
- SporTT should report to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the approach used to address the lack of funding needed to ensure the development of sport and physical activity. This report should include qualitative and quantitative data on intended participation outcomes from sport and physical activities. .
- SporTT should have a meeting with the MSCD and MOF to urgently review the challenges its stakeholders face when funding are not available and how counterproductive insufficient support has been on their operations particularly the NGBs, and submit an update by January 15, 2024, to Parliament on the actions taken to address the negative impact on stakeholders.

- SporTT should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the filling of the twenty- three (23) key vacant positions in its Facilities Management and Projects Departments and the options being explored to remain competitive in the market and given that the maintenance of the country’s sporting infrastructure should be an essential component of SporTT’s operations.
- *The MSCD should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on:*
 - *the reopening of the Central Regional Indoor Sport Arena;*
 - *publicise the recreational programming that is available at its ISA’s to increase community utilisation; and*
 - *broadcasting the absence of geographic barriers.*
- *The MSCD should submit a status update to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the implementation of:*
 - *Sports Camps*
 - *Community Sport Festivals*
 - *The Pink Reign Campaign; and*
 - *The SHAPE Programme.*

INTRODUCTION

Establishment

The PA(E)C of the Twelfth Republican Parliament was established by resolutions of the House of Representatives and the Senate at the sittings held on Monday November 9, 2020 and Tuesday November 17, 2020 respectively.

Mandate

The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago mandates that the Committee shall consider and report to the House on the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by, or on behalf of the State.

In addition to the Committee's powers entrenched in the Constitution, the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives and Senate also empower the Committee (but not limited) to:

- a. send for persons, papers and records;
- b. have meetings whether or not the House is sitting;
- c. meet in various locations;
- d. report from time to time; and
- e. communicate with any other Committee on matters of common interest.

Ministerial Response

The Standing Orders¹ provide for the Minister responsible for the Ministry or Body under review to submit within sixty (60) days a paper to the House responding to any recommendations or comments contained in the Report which are addressed to it.

State Enterprises Performance Standards

The (PA(E)C used the State Enterprises Performance Monitoring Manual as a benchmark to examine the performance of State Enterprises. The manual outlines the framework for compliance with official policy and the monitoring mechanisms to be used in assessing such compliance. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago monitors the performance of State Enterprises to ensure that these enterprises

¹ Standing Order 110 (6) in the House of Representatives and 100(6) of the Senate.

successfully execute their mandates and maximize value for money for the national stakeholders and shareholders²

Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

In accordance with section 119(6) of the Constitution, the Chairman must be a Member of the Opposition in the Senate. At the first meeting held virtually on Wednesday November 18, 2020, Mr. Wade Mark was elected Chairman and Mr. Rushton Paray was elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

Establishment of Quorum

The Committee is required by the Standing Orders³ to have a quorum in order to exercise the powers granted to it by the House. A quorum of three (3) Members, inclusive of the Chair or Vice-Chairman), with representatives from both Houses was agreed to by the Committee at its First Meeting held on November 17, 2020.

Change in Membership

- By resolution of the House of Representatives at a sitting held on June 13, 2022, Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie, MP was appointed a Member of the Committee in lieu of Dr. Nyan Gadsby Dolly.
- Senator Amrita Deonarine ceased being a Member of the Committee when her appointment as a Senator was revoked on September 11, 2023.
- By resolution of the Senate at a sitting held on October 24, 2023, Senator Hazel Thompson-Ahye was appointed a Member of the Committee in lieu of Senator Amrita Deonarine.

Determination of Date and Time of Regular meetings

The Committee is required by the Standing Orders⁴ to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House. At its Second Meeting, the Committee agreed to meet on the First and Third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

² State Enterprise Performance Monitoring Manual – Ministry of Finance Website accessed on March 30, 2022 <https://www.finance.gov.tt/2017/05/19/state-enterprise-performance-monitoring-manual-2011/>

³ Standing Order 87(2) of the Senate and 97(2) of the House of Representatives

⁴ Standing Order 101(b) of the Senate and 111(b) of the House of Representatives

METHODOLOGY

Determination of the Committee's Work Programme Third Session

At the Committee's Twelfth meeting held on Wednesday February 01, 2023, the Committee identified the following entities for examination during the Third Session of the 12th Parliament:

- National Commission for Self Help Limited;
- National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited;
- Community Environmental & Protection Enhancement Programme Company Limited;
- Estate Management & Business Development Company Ltd;
- Sports Company of Trinidad & Tobago Limited;
- National Infrastructure Development Company Limited;
- Tourism Trinidad Limited;
- Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited
- National Flour Mills Limited;
- National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago;
- Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited; and
- Vehicle Management Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited.

The Inquiry Process

The Inquiry Process outlines steps taken by the Committee to conduct the inquiry into the operations of SporTT. The following steps outline the Inquiry Process agreed to by the PA(E)C:

- I. The Committee conducted a review of the responses provided to the Second Report of the PA(E)C from the Eleventh Parliament. Based on the responses provided, the Committee wrote to the relevant entities for a status of the implementation of the recommendations.
- II. The Committee also conducted a review of SporTT's Audited Financial Statements for the Financial Years ended September 30, 2020. Based on an analysis of the financial statements, issues were identified and questions for written response were generated.
- III. Questions for written response were forwarded to SporTT, on January 20, 2023. SporTT's responses were received on February 6, 2023.
- IV. Preparation of an Issues Paper, which identified and summarised matters of concern in the responses provided by the SporTT. Based on the responses received and the issues identified, the Committee agreed to have a public hearing.
- V. A public hearing was held on April 19, 2023. Representatives from SporTT, the MSCD and MOF-ID were invited.
- VI. Questions were sent for additional information to the SporTT after the public hearing on April 25, 2023. The SporTT's responses were received on June 10, 2023.
- VII. Report the Committee's findings and recommendations to Parliament upon conclusion of the inquiry. The Report will be transmitted to the MSCD as the Minister with oversight of the SporTT for written response within sixty (60) days in accordance with Standing Order 110(6) of the House of Representatives and 100(6) of the Senate.
- VIII. Carry out follow-up to monitor progress in the implementation of recommendations.

COMPANY PROFILE⁵

History

The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago (SporTT) was established in 2004 as a limited liability, special-interest company geared towards the management, administration and programming of sport as well as the construction and operational maintenance of sporting facilities throughout Trinidad and Tobago. SporTT is the premier organisation for the development of sport, athletes and sporting organisations in Trinidad and Tobago. SporTT is the key implementation agency for the Ministry of Sport and its varied and comprehensive policies for the promotion, sustainable growth and development of sport in Trinidad and Tobago.⁶

Core Activities⁷

The company's core activities are divided into four main areas:

Construction and Facility Maintenance

The construction and upgrade of recreation grounds for community level sport and physical activity as well as the operation and maintenance of high-quality sport facilities for national and elite athletes.

Sport for All

The promotion of the concept of sport for all, by making programs accessible and affordable to all those who want to participate and at the same time encouraging participation at school, community level and national levels.

National Oversight and Support

The provision of oversight, financial and technical support to the Management of 15 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) with an aim to building organisational capacity and a critical mass of athletes to ensure the highest level of performance at national and international competition.

Support for Elite Athletes

⁵ The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago website accessed on August 22, 2023 <https://www.ncshl.co.tt/about/about.php>

⁶ The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago website accessed on August 22, 2023 [Who We Are – SPORTT \(SporTT-tt.com\)](#)

⁷ The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago website accessed on August 22, 2023 [What We Do – SPORTT \(SporTT-tt.com\)](#)

The enhancement of the medal potential of Trinidad and Tobago athletes through a transparent framework for athlete selection and a performance development and monitoring system for optimisation of physical, technical, tactical, psychological and social attributes of elite athletes.

Board of Directors⁸

- Mr. Douglas Camacho Chairman
- Ms. Dionne Ligoure Director
- Mr. Vyash Nandlal Director
- Mr. Jeffrey Guillen Director
- Mr. Hayden Mitchell Director
- Ms. Marilyn Gordon Director
- Mr. Leon Ramdeen Director
- Ms. Dianne Antoine Director
- Mr. Marcus Daniel Director
- Mr. Phillip Whiteman Director
- Mr. Jomo Pitt Director

Management Team⁹

- Mr. Jason Williams Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. Kairon Serrette Head, Partnerships & Alliances
- Mr. Tobias Ottley Head, Elite Performance & Wellbeing
- Ms. Annesha Colley Head, Projects Execution
- Mr. Justin Latapy-George Head, Sport Development
- Mr. Kip Roberts Head, Health, Safety, Environment & Security
- Mr. Lorenzo Ash Head, ICT
- Ms. Ruan Peyson Head, Employee Experience & Central Services
- Ms. Ansuya Babwah Head, Accounts
- Ms. Taigmani Richardson Head, Internal Audit

⁸ The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago website accessed on August 22, 2023 [Board of Directors – SPORTT \(SporTT-tt.com\)](#)

⁹ The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago website accessed on August 22, 2023 [Managers – SPORTT \(SporTT-tt.com\)](#)

- Ms. Heather Joseph Head, Procurement
- Mr. Francisco Reyes Tineo Head, Projects Design & Administration
- Mr. David Ince Head, Facilities Management

Line Ministry - Ministry of Sport and Community Development

Minister of Sport and Community Development

- Hon. Shamfa Cudjoe, MP

Permanent Secretary

- Ms. Angela Edwards

Deputy Permanent Secretary

- Mrs. Beverly Reid- Samuel

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Committee's examination of SporTT's audited financial statement for the financial years 2019 and 2020 **and follow-up on the Implementation of the Recommendations in the Committee's Second Report from the 11th Parliament**, the following issues were identified and the corresponding recommendations and observations made:

8. Sport Promotion at Primary and Secondary Schools.

Sport is a major area for the expression of human talent and an excellent avenue for the development of our youth, the Government through the Physical Education and Sport Division (PESD) facilitates the development of sport and physical recreation in Trinidad and Tobago¹⁰. The MSCD approach to working in partnership with MOE to encourage sport and physical activity in schools is an on-going process. Officials from SporTT informed the Committee that the direct responsibility of sport promotion in primary and secondary schools falls under the Ministry of Education (MOE). SporTT's Chairman indicated that within the last thirty years, the whole ethos of sport as a critical component in the education of school-aged children has waned. This was a result of the combined reluctance of teachers to volunteer their time after school as well as parents prioritizing extra academic lessons after regular day classes were dismissed. With sport no longer being prioritised at the primary and secondary school levels, SporTT was actively engaging the Chief Education Officer at MOE to create a collaborative approach towards re-introducing sport back into schools in a more meaningful way. It was hoped that the reintroduction of sport at the primary and secondary school levels would be used as tool to divert the energies of young people in Trinidad and Tobago into sporting disciplines that can mould model citizens as well as richly reward their untapped physical potential.

Recommendations:

- ***SporTT should submit a status update to the Parliament by January 15, 2024:***
 - ***on its collaboration with the MOE to ensure sustained integration to achieve increased levels of physical activity regarding the reintroduction of sporting activities into primary and secondary school curricula; and***

¹⁰ Ministry of Sport and Community Development website accessed on 21/08/2023: <https://mscd.gov.tt/sport/>

- *how the company's would align its re-introduction of sport to the National Youth Policy 2020-2025 that the Ministry of Youth Development and National Service (MYDNS) was implementing.*
- *SporTT should submit a status report to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the company's plans to divert the energies of young people in Trinidad and Tobago into sporting disciplines that can mould model citizens as well as richly reward their untapped physical potential.*

9. The need for International Certification of the National Aquatic Centre, National Racquet Centre and National Cycling Velodrome as Development Centres

Trinidad and Tobago boasts three (3) world class National Facilities namely, the National Aquatic Centre (NAC), National Racquet Centre (NRC) and National Cycling Velodrome (NCV). To maximize each facility's income and revenue generating capabilities, acquiring accreditation status for the three (3) national facilities must be achieved. From a strategic standpoint, the company continues on the path to have the aforementioned facilities certified as development centres for their respective sports. SporTT, in conjunction with the Trinidad & Tobago Cycling Federation (TTCF), the Aquatic Sports Association of Trinidad & Tobago (ASATT) and the Tennis Association of Trinidad & Tobago (TATT) have been collaborating on achieving the requirements set out by the relevant international federations to be granted certification as development centres. Once achieved, this will position Trinidad & Tobago as a regional and international training hub for cycling, aquatics and tennis with the objective of also growing participation locally in the named sports. The acquired certifications would also aid in SporTT's thrust towards making this country a sport tourism destination. Certification for the cycling facility was initially estimated to be achieved by December 2022. Based on the stage of the negotiations the tentative scheduled for certification with both Tennis and Aquatics by August 2024. The following update on the accreditation status of each facility as at March 2023 was:

| <u>Goals</u> | <u>Key Performance Indicator</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|---|--|-------------------|
| International Certification of NAC, NCV, and NRC as Development Centres | Achieve international certification for the NAC by becoming a World Aquatics Development Centre by August 2024 | On Going |
| | Achieve international certification for NCV by acquiring Union Cycliste Internationale/ World Cycling Centre status by August 2024 | Achieved |
| | Achieve international certification for NRC by becoming an International Tennis Federation Development Centre by August 2022. | Postponed to 2024 |

In preparation for being awarded international accreditation, SporTT has been actively collaborating with MSCD, on the introduction of rental rates for the NAC, NRC and NCV, which were updated in June 2022 to include the Moruga Multipurpose Sport & Youth Facility. SporTT devised two (2) rental rate systems:

- one for international users; and
- one for local users.

A collaborative exercise was now being discussed for the engagement of professional consultancy services to review and revise the existing rate structures for all facilities under the MSCD and SporTT's remit. It was noted that the proposed rates for the NAC, NRC and NCV were being used as the interim rates pending Cabinet approval.

Recommendations:

- ***SporTT should submit a status update on the achievement of the requirements set out by the international sporting federations to have the NAC and NRC granted certification as development centres to the Parliament by January 15, 2024;***
- ***SporTT should submit a status update on the engagement of the professional consultancy services to review and revise the existing rate structures for all facilities under the MSCD and SporTT's remit to the Parliament by January 15, 2024; and***

- *SporTT should submit a status report on the requirements that still need to be fulfilled to meet its objective of making Trinidad and Tobago a sport tourism destination setting out the specific outcomes it is aiming to achieve, the targets it is working towards and how it will measure progress.*

10. Maximising the use of SporTT's facilities

To maximize the use of the facilities under SporTT's purview, the company launched its online bookings infrastructure on its website in June 2020. SporTT currently has fifteen (15) National Governing Bodies (NGBs) under its purview who are the primary users of SporTT's facilities. SporTT stated that the NGBs were the entities that identified, promoted and recruited prospective talented individuals into one or more of the 15 sporting disciplines on offer. SporTT, through its facilities, offers secured and well-equipped spaces for up-and-coming athletes to hone their skills, practice and engage in competition. As such, SporTT indicated that the company works closely with the NGBs to ensure that their controlled access to the facilities is granted. The approach adopted by SporTT has primarily been to work through the NGBs and the clubs registered under their purview to structure the bookings for their activities. This was done through SporTT's Bookings Unit. Organisations requiring waivers of charges would be required to submit written requests to the MSCD in accordance with the Ministry's Memorandum – Waiver Policy for Facilities. The written waiver from the MSCD must be handed over to the Booking Clerk and Payment Officer/Cashier for the waiver of fees to be granted. The entire process was estimated to take two (2) weeks from receipt of the request to the granting of the waiver. SporTT's Chairman added that, to ensure the longevity and appreciation of its facilities, all users are charged a usage fee. SporTT's Chairman further added that for the NGBs that booked the facilities for national youth development and sporting activities, SporTT request funds to support each NGB as part of the company's annual subvention. To further increase facility utilisation as a means of preventing their degradation due to underutilisation and inadequate maintenance, SporTT intended to implement the following strategies:

- Outreach to universities to host winter training camps at our facilities.
- Support to NGBs for the planning and hosting of major sporting events.
- Development of rate structures for special events to be accommodates at facilities.
- Avocation of retainment of revenue to re-invest in facilities to assist with additional maintenance cost due to degradation.

- Engagement with private agencies to facilitate use through contractual agreements. E.g. rental fees for cell towers and billboards.

Recommendations:

- *SporTT should ensure that the bookings of the facilities under its purview are not monopolised by specific NGBs nor sporting clubs attached to them. The company should provide an update to Parliament on the implementation of this recommendation by January 15, 2024;*
- *SporTT should, by January 15, 2024, provide an update to Parliament with details on its partnership with the MOE on the scheduling of its facilities to allow secured usage for primary and secondary school centric sporting programmes/ activities as a means of ensuring a sustained re-introduction of sport in school curricula.*
- *SporTT should, by January 15, 2024, provide an update to Parliament with details of the MSCD's Waiver Policy for Facilities on its website, social media platforms and facilities and what actions it is taking to address the level of awareness of this policy to ensure that interested persons and groups have the motivation, confidence and opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity.*
- *SporTT should submit to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 a status update on the following initiatives:*
 - Outreach to universities to host winter training camps at our facilities.
 - Support to NGBs for the planning and hosting of major sporting events.
 - Development of rate structures for special events to be accommodated at facilities.
 - Advocation of retainment of revenue to re-invest in facilities to assist with additional maintenance cost due to degradation.
 - Engagement with private agencies to facilitate use through contractual agreements. E.g. rental fees for cell towers and billboards.

11. SporTT's Inability to Retain Revenue for Re-Investment

There is no legislature that allows SPORTT to keep monies it generates. SporTT was incorporated by the Company's Act in 2004 as a limited liability company without receiver or revenue capabilities to

manage sport administration on behalf of the State with the Minister of Finance as Corporate Sole. Currently, SporTT's recurrent expenditure is funded by subventions disbursed from the Consolidated Fund. Likewise, proceeds or revenue generated by SporTT are remitted to the Treasury into the Consolidated Fund as stipulated by the Exchequer and Audit Act due to SporTT not being designated a receiver of revenue by the Treasury. SporTT stated that this inability to directly utilise the revenue it generates has affected SporTT's operations and growth potential. The company was currently unable to absorb unexpected facility expenditure. Consequently, this has disincentivized the need to expand facility utilisation as this increases maintenance and upgrade costs. This resulted in significant facility issues and works being halted until an allocation was made available. The inability to utilise revenue earned also affected SporTT's abilities to timely support its NGBs. In its attempts to advocate for retainer of revenue abilities, SporTT was in the process of engaging the Trinidad & Tobago International Financial Centre¹¹ (TTIFC) to assist with the implementation of e-payments for the bookings interface. The TTIFC was keen on assisting SporTT with the necessary linkages with MOF in advocacy efforts to show evidence of SporTT's ability to collect and retain revenue. Given that all SporTT activities are subject to allocations to designated votes and subsequent releases, SporTT lacks the autonomy to prioritise expenditure. In this regard, SporTT indicated that there must be intentional and sustained efforts to increase revenue through utilisation to prove its sustainability and simultaneously advocate to retain revenue. This will be done through the following initiatives highlighted in the company's new Strategic Plan for 2024 -2028:

1. Develop Corporate Business Case to grow customer base within the private and public sector.
2. Develop and Execute a Strategic Marketing Plan that will include visibility profiling of facilities and amenities.
3. Increase sponsorships (venue and advertising).
4. Development of proposals that target the regional and multi-lateral funding agencies that support sport development and sport tourism initiatives.
 - a. Establish a business development unit.

Recommendations:

- **SporTT should generate a well-researched evidence-based policy document to be submitted to Cabinet that illustrates the revenue generating capabilities of the**

¹¹ The TTIFC is the state agency charged with the development of the Financial Services Sector. It is the lead Agency under the Ministry of Finance for Government's digitalisation initiatives in the Financial Services Sector and to act as a Resourceful Ally for all stakeholders as the country pursues its goal of becoming a Cashless Society and a FinTech-enabled Financial Services Hub by 2023.

facilities under its purview as well as the urgent need of revised rates as proof of how much potential revenue was currently being lost and submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024;

- SporTT should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the implementation of e-payments for the online bookings interface that was being done in conjunction with the TTIFC;
- SporTT should submit to Parliament by January 15, 2024 a status update on the following initiatives:
 - Develop Corporate Business Case to grow customer base within the private and public sector.
 - Develop and Execute a Strategic Marketing Plan that will include visibility profiling of facilities and amenities.
 - Increase sponsorships (venue and advertising).
 - Development of proposals that target the regional and multi-lateral funding agencies that support sport development and sport tourism initiatives.
 - Establish a business development unit.

12. Impact of Insufficient and Untimely Release of Funds on SporTT's Key Projects

Insufficient and untimely releases of funds from the MOF and MSCD resulted in the delay/postponement of key projects. The initiation of projects was dependent on the availability of funding and, as such, was always at risk due to the delayed releases. With delayed funding, the company was unable to finance the company's commitments to NGBs, service providers and the company's own staff. SPORTT stated that if the unavailability of funding becomes an immitigable challenge, the following issues may arise.

- ***Impact on NGBs***
 - i. NGBs not attending competitions resulting in some instances penalties and blacklisting. Also, the lost oppotuning for earning world ranking points as well as qualifying points for world / regional competitions.
 - ii. NGBs were often placed in a quagmire which was by no means ideal for competitors that need to be physically and mentally prepared to achieve success.

- iii. Significant cost increases, particularly for line-item expenses such as airfares and accommodations.
 - iv. Inability to support the NGBs in a predictable manner. Disbursal of funds on the same day that teams are scheduled to travel does not facilitate robust strategic planning.
- **Impact on service providers:**
 - v. Aged Debt to suppliers and delayed payments affect the relationship with the suppliers in terms of commitment for payments. It also affects future services if needed and there is a history of delayed payments.
 - vi. Increased pool of outstanding works awaiting funding increases complexity managing workflow, scheduling and paperwork. Delayed releases, postpones work approval to commence since work is usually approved based on release of funds for down payments or anticipation that work can be paid for upon completion. As a result, some works can become critical or emergencies due to these delays awaiting funding.
 - vii. Contractor confidence was reduced, if work was completed but payment was withheld or delayed due to unavailable funds. This makes it difficult to solicit interested service providers and reasonable prices (i.e., costs inflated to compensate for interest losses in anticipation of payment unreliability).
 - **Impact on staff:**
 - viii. SporTT has not been able to invest in employee training and development programs.
 - ix. Budgetary constraints have impacted the company's ability to provide office furniture and equipment for staff in keeping with Health Safety and Environment best practice.
 - x. Lack of financial resources has made it difficult to invest in resources necessary to ensure compliance such as an Integrated Human Resource Information System.

Recommendations:

- **SporTT should report to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the approach used to address the lack of funding needed to ensure the development of sport and physical activity. This report should include qualitative and quantitative data on intended participation outcomes from sport and physical activities. .**
- **SporTT should have a meeting with the MSCD and MOF to urgently review the challenges its stakeholders face when funding are not available and how**

counterproductive insufficient support has been on their operations particularly the NGBs, and submit an update by January 15, 2024, to Parliament on the actions taken to address the negative impact on stakeholders.

13. Vacancies in SporTT's Facilities Management and Projects Departments

Due to the high demand for specific skill sets required by its Facilities Management and Projects Departments, SporTT ability to attract and retain suitable talent remains a challenge that have impacted the company's ability to fill critical positions within those two (2) Departments. Also, the company's compensation packages have not been reviewed in over a decade with hindered the company's ability to offer attractive contractual agreements to fill those vacancies. The table below shows the key vacant positions within the Facilities Management and Projects Departments as of March 2023.

| Unit | Department | Position Title | # Approved Positions | # Positions Filled | # Vacancies |
|--------------------------------|--|--|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| SPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE | Administration (Sporting Infrastructure) | General Manager, Sporting Infrastructure | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Facilities Management | Manager, Maintenance Services | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | | Assistant, Facility Operations | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| | | Craftsman | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | Engineering Services | Head, Engineering Services | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | | Planner, Maintenance | 1 | 0 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | | Craftsman | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | | Engineer | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| | Project Design & Administration | Document Control Officer | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Project Execution | Quantity Surveyor | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | | Site Technician | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | | Document Control Officer | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | TOTAL | | 28 | 5 | 23 |

Recommendation:

- **SporTT should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the filling of the twenty- three (23) key vacant positions in its Facilities Management and Projects Departments and the options being explored to remain competitive in the market and given that the maintenance of the country’s sporting infrastructure should be an essential component of SporTT’s operations.**

14. Recreational Programming at Community Facilities

Through its line Ministry and NGBs, the SporTT has a commitment to support community-based sporting programmes that communities need throughout the country focused on youth development interventions, such as coaching of fundamental skills or intermediate training to improve functional skills, and an understanding of the sport. In response to the Committee’s questions on recreational programmes offered at community facilities, the MSCD’s Physical Education and Sport Division (PESD) provided the following:

Definitions

- **Recreational activities** are defined as those activities that people choose to do to refresh their bodies and minds and make their leisure time more interesting and enjoyable.
- **Recreational programming** is defined as any recreational activities outside of elite/high performance training and competition; and
- **Community facilities** would be identified as the six Indoor Sporting Arenas (ISAs) under the MSCD.

Recreational Programmes Offered

At present, five (5) out of the six (6) ISAs can adopt and sustain recreational programming, with the only exception being the Central Regional Indoor Sport Arena, which at the time of the public hearing was closed to the public. All facilities, however, can provide the space, sport specific surfaces and equipment to host and sustain recreational programming. Persons can access any facility that provides recreational programmes that without fear of geographic restrictions. The five community facilities and the recreational programming offered are:

- **St. Paul Street Multi-Purpose Facility:**
 - Basketball, Football, Volleyball, Netball, Cricket, Kendo
- **Southern Regional Indoor Sporting Arena:**
 - Basketball, Badminton, Football, Beach Volleyball, Football, Volleyball
- **South-West Regional Indoor Sporting Arena:**
 - Basketball, Netball, Football, Tennis, Badminton, Table Tennis
- **Maloney Indoor Sporting Arena:**
 - Basketball, Volleyball, Table Tennis, Hockey, Gym, Futsal
- **Mayaro Sport Facility:**
 - Basketball, Gym, Futsal

The PESD added that when a community facility has been closed, persons can access recreational programming at any of the many community recreational facilities under the ambit of their Regional Corporation. To increase community facility utilisation, the PESD indicated that it implemented several community outreach programmes. These take different forms and serve different purposes

such as competitions, engagement, coaching, and training and development. The following programmes have and will be implemented:

- Sports Camps;
- Community Sport Festivals;
- The Pink Reign Campaign; and
- The Sport, Health, Athletic Performance & Empowerment (SHAPE) Programme.

Recommendations

- ***The MSCD should submit a status update to Parliament by January 15, 2024 on:***
 - *the reopening of the Central Regional Indoor Sport Arena;*
 - *publicise the recreational programming that is available at its ISA's to increase community utilisation; and*
 - *broadcasting the absence of geographic barriers.*
- ***The MSCD should submit a status update to the Parliament by January 15, 2024 on the implementation of:***
 - *Sports Camps*
 - *Community Sport Festivals*
 - *The Pink Reign Campaign; and*
 - *The SHAPE Programme.*

CONCLUSION

In light of the above, the Committee notes that SporTT is committed towards the continued development of sport and the sport industry in Trinidad and Tobago. The Committee considers sport to be a social institution that has the capabilities of being a catalyst for character development from participation in sport and a form of emotional release from the physical activity.

The Committee is optimistic that the company will continue to position itself as the leading agency that ensures there are no barriers to sport engagement by making programs accessible and affordable to all those who want to participate and at the same time encouraging participation at school, community level and national levels.

The Committee therefore awaits the responses of the Minister of Sport and Community Development to the recommendations proposed above, 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...”

The Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee respectfully submits this Report for the consideration of the Parliament.

Sgd.
Mr. Wade Mark
Chairman

Sgd.
Mr. Rushton Paray, MP
Vice-Chairman

Sgd.
Mrs. Renuka Sagrarsingh-Sooklal
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds, MP
Member

Sgd.
Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Keith Scotland, MP
Member

Sgd.
Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie, MP
Member

APPENDIX 1: MEETING MINUTES

**THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE –
THIRD SESSION, TWELFTH PARLIAMENT
MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023 AT 10:16 A.M.**

Present were:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Mr. Wade Mark | - | Chairman |
| Mr. Keith Scotland | - | Member |
| Mrs. Renuka Sagrarsingh-Sooklal | - | Member |
| Ms. Keiba Jacob Mottley | - | Secretary |
| Ms. Hema Bhagaloo | - | Assistant Secretary |
| Mr. Darien Buckmire | - | Researcher |

Excused were:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------|
| Mr. Rushton Paray | - | Vice-Chairman |
| Ms. Amrita Deonarine | - | Member |
| Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds | - | Member |
| Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing | - | Member |
| Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie | - | Member |

CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 At 10:16 a.m., the Chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

THE EXAMINATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING

- 2.1 The Committee examined the Minutes of the Fourteenth (14th) Meeting held on Wednesday March 15, 2023.
- 2.2 There being no omissions or corrections, the Minutes were confirmed on a motion moved by Mr. Keith Scotland and seconded by Mrs. Renuka Sagrarsingh-Sooklal.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING

- 3.1 With reference to item 3.2, page 2: the Chairman informed Members that questions for additional information were received from the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government and the Community-Based Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) on March 23 and April 5, 2023 respectively.
- 3.2 With reference to item 7.2, page 4: the Chairman informed Members that questions for additional information were sent to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, the Estate Management and Business Development Company Limited and the Ministry of Finance – Investments Division on March 23, 2023 with a deadline of May 11, 2023 for submission.

CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE'S DRAFT REPORTS

- 4.1 The Chairman informed Members that the Draft Committee's Report into the examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the National Commission for Self Help Limited (NCSHL) for the Financial Year 2016 and follow up on the Implementation of the Recommendations in the Committee's Fourteenth Report from the 11th Parliament was circulated and uploaded to Rotunda for Members consideration on April 04, 2023 and re-circulated for Members comments on April 17, 2023. A discussion ensued. The Committee that the Report will be presented at the next of the Senate and House of Representatives.

PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION RE: SPORTS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (SPORTT)

- 5.1 The Chairman reminded Members that the purpose of the public hearing was to conduct an examination of the Audited Accounts, Balance Sheet and other Financial Statements of the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (SPORTT) for the financial years 2019 and 2020 as well as follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations in the Committee's Second Report from the 11th Parliament.

5.2 Members discussed their areas of concern and the general approach for the public hearing.

SUSPENSION

6.1 There being no further business for discussion in camera, the Chairman suspended the meeting at 10:23 a.m. to reconvene in public.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS, BALANCE SHEET AND OTHER FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE SPORTS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED (SPORTT) FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 2019 AND 2020 AND FOLLOW-UP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE COMMITTEE'S SECOND REPORT FROM THE 11TH PARLIAMENT.

7.1 The Chairman called the public meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

7.2 The following officials joined the meeting:

The Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (SPORTT)

- Mr. Douglas Camacho - Chairman
- Mr. Kairon Serrette - CEO (Ag.) /Head, Partnerships and Alliances
- Mr. Leon Ramdeen - Director
- Ms. Arlene George - General Counsel and Corporate Secretary
- Mr. Justin Latapy-George - Head, Sport Development
- Ms. Taigmani Richardson - Head, Audit
- Ms. Ansuya Babwah - Head, Accounts
- Ms. Annesha Colley - Head, Projects (Execution)
- Ms. Ruan Peyson - Head, Employee Experience and Central Services
- Mr. David Ince - Head, Facilities

Ministry of Sport and Community Development (MSCD)

- Ms. Angela Edwards - Permanent Secretary

- Mr. Gabre Jesu McTair - Director, Physical Education & Sport
- Mr. Wilfred Fullerton - Technical Director, PMU
- Mrs. Jacqueline Weekes-Penco - Planning Coordinator
- Ms. Ann Belmontes - Research Officer II

Ministry of Finance – Investments Division (MoF-ID)

- Mr. Ryan Maharaj - Senior Business Analyst
- Ms. Sharon Mohammed - Director Agro-based, Manufacturing and Services Sector

7.3 Key Issues Discussed:

1. The status of SporTT’ 2021 and 2022 audited financial statements;
2. The mandate of the SporTT’;
3. The status of the SporTT’s partnership with the fifteen (15) National Governing Bodies to develop and administer community based sporting programmes;
4. The use of sport and cultural activities as critical components in the early development of children;
5. The role of SporTT in promoting sports tourism, fostering greater economic diversification, generating employment opportunities for young persons and ensuring the continued availability and accessibility of sporting facilities for primary and secondary aged children.
6. The role and oversight responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MOE).
7. The activities in place to increase primary and secondary school children’s utilisation of the nation’s sporting facilities;
8. The international accreditation status of the National Racquet Centre, National Cycling Velodrome and the National Aquatic Centre;
9. The SporTT’s intention to use sponsorship and naming rights deals at its accredited facilities as possible revenue generating tools;
10. The SporTT’s nominal fee structure;
11. The system in place to gain access at sporting facilities;
12. The economic value attached to the maintenance of the sporting facilities;
13. The mechanisms to be implemented to attract persons who are reluctant to pay to use the sporting facilities;
14. The action items from SporTT’s 2018-2023 Strategic Plan that will be implemented in the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan;
15. The SporTT’s inability to retain revenue generated from the use of its sporting facilities;
16. The process in place to request funds generated from its sporting facility;
17. The use of sport as a driving force to direct youthful energies away from illicit activities;
18. The status of the SporTT’s marketing and public awareness programmes;
19. The increase in the expenditure for security service regarding the sporting facilities opening 24 /7;
20. The mechanisms in place to capture data on the utilisation rate of its sporting facilities;
21. The SporTT’s human resource capacity;
22. The status of the revision of the facilities rates;

23. The procurement process used to award construction and maintenance contracts for SporTT's facilities; and
24. The status of the development of a National Sport's Policy.

Please see the Verbatim Notes for the detailed oral submission by the witnesses.

8.1 The Chairman thanked the officials for attending the meeting and they were excused.

8.2 The Committee agreed that additional questions would be sent to SporTT.

[Please see Appendix 1]

SUSPENSION

9.1 At 12:35 p.m., the Chairman suspended the public meeting to resume in-camera for a post-mortem discussion with Members only.

9.2 There being no other business, the Chairman thanked Members for their attendance. The Committee agreed that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on **May 17, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.** at which time the Committee will conduct a follow up Inquiry into the Committee's Examination of the Committee's Omnibus Report from the 11th Parliament and an examination of NIDCO's Audited financial statements for the years 2016 and 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

10.1 The adjournment was taken at 12:40 p.m.

We certify that these Minutes are true and correct.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

April 19, 2023

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

***ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ARISING FROM MEETING OF THE PUBLIC
ACCOUNTS [ENTERPRISES] COMMITTEE***

Request for Additional Information

Questions from public hearing

1. Provide a list of the following:
 - a. The facilities under the SporTT;
 - b. The process an entity/ individual can use to gain access to sporting facilities;
 - c. The total cost to maintain each of the facilities;
 - d. The utilisation fee attached to each of the facilities; and
 - e. The contact info for each of the facilities.
2. Provide the following:
 - a. The number of employees employed each year for the period 2018 to 2023;
 - b. The number of employees required on the establishment based on the new strategic direction of the company;
 - c. The employment deficit that existed for each year for the period 2018 to;
3. What was the budgeted and actual total cost of the construction of each community swimming?

Questions from written submissions

Issue:1 Casual Workers and Casual Employee Retirement Benefit

Based on Response to Question 1: on Page 2

1. What findings were highlighted during the mid-term review of the 2018 to 2023 strategic plan in 2020?
2. How was the conduct of the mid-term review affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020?
3. The 2018 to 2023 strategic plan at Appendix 5 indicated that it was updated on February 12, 2021.
 - a. What updates were made to the strategic plan; and

- b. Were any updates as a direct result of the mid-year review?

Based on Response to Question 2: on Page 2

1. What specific components from each key document listed was used in the development of the 2018-2023 strategic plan?

Based on Response to Question 3: on Page 2

1. During the pandemic the SporTT was unable to successfully deliver on its strategic initiatives of expanding services and development of sport, optimising facilities and their utilisation or developing and increasing revenue streams.
 - a. What was the state of the SporTT's operations during the Pandemic?
 - b. What actual plans and proposals were met during the period 2018 to 2020?
 - c. What specific projects and proposals were pushed back because of the Pandemic?
 - d. Has the SporTT's operations rebounded since the removal of all Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions?
 - e. How far back has the SporTT's achievement of its strategic initiatives been pushed back into the future?
 - f. What new sporting facilities and upgrades to existing facilities could not be facilitated because of delays caused by the closure of the construction industry and global challenges in the supply chain industry?
 - i. Have any of these construction and upgrade works been completed to date?
 - g. What were the SporTT's plans to optimise its facilities and improve facility utilisation?
 - h. What were the SporTT's plans to develop and increase the revenue streams?

Based on Response to Question 5: on Page 3

1. SporTT's Overall Strategy for SporTT's Internal KPIs indicated International Accreditation as one of the contributory factors towards the company attaining its Vision: To be the Leader in the sporting's industry's innovation & sustainable development initiatives in the region creating a flourishing and self-sufficient sporting ecosystem. Gaining International Accreditation involved Establishing Centres of Excellence (CoE) for training and development through international certification for facilities (vis-à-vis the National Aquatic

Centre, National Cycling Velodrome and National Racquet Centre) and continued refurbishing /upgrading facilities to serve in a supplementary capacity.

- a. What is the current operational status of the National Aquatic Centre (NAC) and the National Cycling Velodrome (NCV) facilities in Couva given the Media Release issued by SporTT on March 20, 2023 stating that the facilities would be closed until further notice due to lack of water supply?
- b. What is the cause of the lack of water supply?

Based on Response to Question 6: on Page 3

1. With the pandemic having occurred at the mid-term of the present strategic plan SporTT shifted its focus to Accreditation and Engagement, Visibility and Marketing and Independence & Organisation. From the proposed plans outlined in Appendix 2 - SporTT's Overall Strategy for SporTT's Internal KPIs:
 - a. What actions were taken regarding the attainment of each strategic initiative?

Issue:5 SporTT Registry

Based on Response to Question 3: on Page 8

1. How many community facilities could currently sustain recreational programming?
2. What recreational programming is offered at each community facility?
3. Where are persons supposed to access recreational programming when the community facility has been closed?
4. Is there any geographic restriction on where a person can go for recreational programming?
5. Are there any fees attached to using community facilities?
 - a. If yes, how were the fee determined? Provide any supporting document.
 - b. State the factors that determined which community facilities have a usage fee and which don't?
6. What community outreach programmes have and will be implemented to increase community facility utilization?

Based on Response to Question 4: on Pages 8 and 9

1. What capacity were the 15 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) lacking that required SporTT budget \$20M to assist the fifteen NGB's under its responsibility in establishing realistic approaches to their development programmes?
2. What were some of the findings uncovered during SporTT's assessment of the NGB's development plans for athletes and by extension sport in Trinidad and Tobago?
3. Given the closure of the NAC and NCV, what alternative facilities have been made available to the users recognized by the NGB who require high performance facilities for their training regiments?
4. What programmes have been developed in collaboration with the NGBs to boost national and community sporting facility utilization?
5. What is the status of the international accreditation of the NAC, NCV and NRC as certified development centres in the areas of aquatics, cycling and tennis with the objective of also growing participation locally in the named sports?

Issue: 6: Strategic Approach to Sport Development

Based on Response to Question 1: on Page 10

1. The table provided only gave data relative to the year 2017. Therefore, how many NGB competitions (regionally and internationally) did the SporTT support in 2018 and 2019 including the number of participants that attended?

Issue: 7: Project and Facility Management

Based on Response to Question 2: Pages 11

65% of the structure of the Facilities Management and Projects Departments have been filled.

1. What challenges has SporTT faced with respect to filling the positions in its Facilities Management and Projects Departments?
2. What percentage of the structure of the Facilities Management and Projects Departments have been filled to date?
3. What key positions in the Facilities Management and Projects Departments remain vacant?

Assessment of Contractors and Consultants has been established and implemented via Appendix 2 – Contractor Evaluation Form. Implementation of same is estimated 80%.

1. Have there been any challenges experienced whilst completing assessments of contractors and consultants? If yes, provide details?
2. What is the current implementation percentage of the assessments?

Issue: 9: The shortage of staff in the Human Resource and Accounts Departments

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 14

Since the last response the company through the BOD and the Human Resources sub-committee have re-assessed the requirement of each department during 2020 and in 2021 the organisational structure was assessed and a revised structure approved. A revised Organisation Structure was developed and approved by the Board of Directors.

1. Did the BOD and the Human Resources sub-committee conducted the 2020 and 2021 assessments on each department solely in-house?
 - a. If no, who were the consultants engaged and the cost of their engagement?
2. Were the assessments limited to the Human Resource and Accounts Departments or were they done companywide?
3. What revisions were made to the organisational structure?
4. When was the revised Organisation Structure approved by the Board of Directors?

Based on Response to Question 2: Page 14

The Accounts Department is 98% staffed and the Employee Experience and Central Services Department is presently recruiting, as it is currently staffed at 29%.

1. What challenges are being faced by the company regarding the recruitment and staffing of its Employee Experience and Central Services Department?
2. What key positions in the Employee Experience and Central Services Department remain vacant?
3. What has been the impact of the vacant position on the organisation?

Issue: 10: Management of Facilities

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 15

1. What does the Facilities Management Master Plan (FMMP) Project presently undertaken by Acuitas entail?
 - a. How will this FMMP be implemented?
 - b. How much money will be budgeted for use under the FMMP?
2. Have works commenced on schedule at the Hasley Crawford Stadium so that the facility could host the Commonwealth Youth Games in August 2023?
 - a. What is the budgeted cost of the upgrades?
 - b. What upgrades will be undertaken?
3. What is the status of Acuitas' assessment of the Jean Pierre Complex?
 - a. Does the facility have a continued future?
4. What land ownership issues are being faced at the Moka Regional Grounds?
5. Which state agency will be responsible for executing the necessary works at the Paramin Regional Grounds?

Strategic Plan

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 17

1. What is the status of the development of the new strategic plan for the period 2024 to 2028?
2. Which consultant has SporTT engaged to aid in the development of its new strategic plan for the period 2024 to 2028?

Based on Response to Question 5: Page 17

5. Who was the consultant SporTT hired to assist Departmental Heads with the development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in October 2021?
 - a. What was the cost of this engagement?

Based on Response to Question 7: Page 18

1. What specific challenges has the SporTT faced with respect to the insufficient and delayed releases from MOF and MSCD?
2. What specific challenges has the SporTT faced with respect to its inability to retain revenue for re-investment?

Based on Response to Question 9: Page 19

1. How does the SporTT intend to execute the following mitigation strategies:
 - a. Ensuring transparency and accountability in reports to the MOF and MSCD; and
 - b. Persistent advocating on the benefits of SPORTT acquiring status as a revenue retaining agency.
2. What findings have been gathered thus far since the launch of the National Sport Participation Survey in 2021 and the Sport Injury Databank this year?
 - a. Has the launch of these two surveys aided the SporTT's lack of research, development, and data collection abilities?
3. What strategies have been implemented to increase facility utilisation to prevent their degradation due to underutilisation and inadequate maintenance?
4. What considerations were made regarding the insufficient allocation of funds that caused the reprioritisation of projects and facility upgrades?
 - a. Provide notably instances of when this practice has occurred?
 - b. Which projects and facility upgrades have been on the backburner for multiple years due to insufficient allocation of funds?
5. How does the SporTT intend to ensure that the capacity building workshops for NGBs are successful given the inadequacy of the development programmes developed by the NGBs after previous workshops were held?
6. How would capacity building workshops improve the compliance levels of the NGBs?

Based on Response to Question 11: Page 21

1. How long has the full digitization of bookings been on hold?
2. What were the factors which have caused the SporTT's inability to retain revenue?
 - a. What is being done to address this issue?
3. What interventions have been made by the MSCD to assist the SporTT in its quest to facilitate cashless transactions and e-payments to allow for the company to launch its fully functioning

bookings interface in collaboration with iGovTT which has been on hold due to the SporTT's inability to retain revenue?

4. Talent identification Events were postponed to FY 2022/2023 due to insufficient funds.
 - a. With SporTT being unable to hold Talent Identification events to find sporting prospects due to insufficient funds, how will this affect Trinidad and Tobago's ability field competition ready athletes in the various sporting disciplines?
 - b. With talent identification not taking place, how will it be known which sporting talents should receive the nurturing and sponsorship required to showcase their abilities on the world stage?
 - c. Is the SporTT's challenge of insufficient funds due to late releases from the MSCD and MOF or is it a result of late requests for funds made by the SporTT?
 - d. How many Talent identification Events were scheduled to be held this fiscal year?
 - i. How many have been held this fiscal year thus far?
 - ii. What was the amount allocated this fiscal year to host the Talent identification Events?
5. With the Head ICT position being filled, what is the implementation rate of the installation of IP CCTV system and security monitoring at all SporTT's stadia?
6. What are the challenges SporTT faces with respect to UDeCOTT's lack of cooperation on the projects at Skinner Park?
7. Insufficient funds assigned to FY2021/2022 resulted in the following projects not being achieved.
 - a. (1) Project under Regional Ground Vote between 01st Oct 2021 to 30th Sept 2022.
 - b. (2) Projects under Recreation Ground Vote between 01st Oct 2021 to 30th Sept 2022.
 - c. (1) Project under Dwight Yorke Stadium Vote between 01st Oct 2021 to 30th Sept 2022.
 - d. (1) Project under Caroni Facilities Vote between 01st Oct 2021 to 30th Sept 2022.
 - e. (3) Projects under Recreation Ground Vote between 01st Oct 2021 to 30th Sept 2022.
 - i. Which regional and recreational ground projects could not be finished because of insufficient funds?
 - ii. What is the status of the completion of the mentioned projects?

Project Management

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 22

1. Are there any staffing uses in the Sporting Infrastructure Unit?
 - a. If yes, explain?
2. Is the Sporting Infrastructure Unit and the two departments under it adequately staffed?

Based on Response to Question 2: Page 22

1. How much money is currently owed to contractors?
2. What range of services are payments outstanding for?
3. How long have some payments been outstanding?
4. Have there been any consequences to contractors not being paid on time?
 - a. If yes, explain?

Based on Response to Question 5: Page 23

1. What are some of the lessons learnt by SporTT as the company tries to create value for money from its project management services?
 - a. What revisions or updates to the SporTT's project management services were made because of the lessons the company learnt?
 - b. Provide examples of cases where the solution to an issue at one project was factored into future projects.

Based on Response to Question 10: Page 24

1. How long are the defect liability periods SporTT agrees to in its construction/repair contracts?

Risk Management

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 24

1. What laws and regulations has SporTT had compliance issues with and why?
2. What inadequacies are there with SporTT's corporate governance structure?

Procurement Practises

Based on Response to Question 1: Page 26

1. Has SporTT forwarded any of its developed policies and procedures to the Office of the Procurement Regulator for feedback?
 - a. If yes, what adjustments were recommended?

Court Settlement and Expenses See Appendix 12 for responses.

1. What was the reason for SporTT's involvement in each court matter?

Loss on Disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment See Appendix 12 for responses

1. What was the book value and selling price of the iPhone S6 plus sold to Director Marcus Daniel in 2019 and the Apple Mac Book Air sold to Director Phillip Whiteman in 2020?
2. Were the assets stolen from the Hasley Crawford Stadium stolen from out of storage or just left unattended?

Official Entertainment See Appendix 12 for responses.

1. When was it uncovered that \$31,185.00 for security services at the Brain Lara Recreation Ground inappropriately classified to the official entertainment account?
2. Are security services provided for at all recreation grounds nationwide?
 - a. If not, why was such a service required at the Brain Lara Recreation Ground in 2019?

Questions from 2020 Management Letter

1. Reconciliation of the fixed asset register to general ledger

- a. Did SPORTT address the staffing issues in 2021 as it indicated it would in the company's response to the management letter it received from its external auditors?
 - i. If no, what staffing issues currently exist within SPORTT's financial reporting department?
- b. What control mechanisms have been implemented to ensure the fixed asset register is properly updated as at each years' end?

2. Lack of review of the accrued vacation and gratuity schedule and supporting documents

- a. Did SPORTT conduct monthly reviews of the accrued vacation and gratuity schedule together with the appropriate supporting documentation as recommended by its external auditors?
 - i. If no, why?
- b. Did SPORTT forward the relevant information to its external auditors as evidence to properly reflect the employee file discrepancies for the three highlighted employees?

3. Completeness and accuracy of trade payables, accruals and expenses

- a. What would have caused the following control deficiencies:
 - i. invoices relating to the 2020 period totaling \$269,550 from Superior Landscaping not being recorded by Management as at year end;
 - ii. invoices amounting to approximately \$41M was not being recorded by Management as at year-end
 - iii. invoices amounting to approximately \$1.3M being were recorded after year end that should have been recorded within the 2020 period;
 - iv. approximately \$4.3M in IDF project costs not being recorded by Management as at year end; and
 - v. accruals for the month of September 2020 were missing for two vendors: AIT Accessible IT Services Limited and Ariya Nanan?
- b. What control mechanisms have been implemented to ensure that:
 - i. a detailed review and reconciliation of the trade payables sub-ledger to the general ledger is done by the appropriate personnel or team; and
 - ii. a detailed review of the accruals schedule is done and thoroughly reviewed on a monthly basis?

4. Reconciliation of retained earnings

- a. Given the difference of approximately \$74K coming forward from previous years which Management was unable to resolve but attribute to the conduct of a chart of accounts redone in 2012 by an external consultant,
 - i. What resources have been dedicated to resolve this difference within SPORTT's accounting system urgently given the apparent risk that this difference can potentially affect multiple financial statement line items?

- ii. Who was the external consultant and what was the fair explanation given?
- iii. What reasons could explain why SPORTT's previous auditors PKF Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors expressed no concern with the \$74K difference in Retained Earnings?

5. Please provide Management Letters for financial years 2021 and 2022.

APPENDIX 2: VERBATIM NOTES

VERBATIM NOTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE HELD (IN PUBLIC) IN THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, GROUND FLOOR, CABILDO PARLIAMENTARY COMPLEX, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, ST. VINCENT STREET, PORT OF SPAIN, ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023, AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mr. Wade Mark | Chairman |
| Mrs. Renuka Sagramsingh-Sooklal | Member |
| Mr. Keith Scotland | Member |
| Ms. Keiba Jacob Mottley | Secretary |
| Ms. Hema Bhagaloo | Assistant Secretary |
| Mr. Darren Buckmire | Researcher |

ABSENT

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr. Rushton Paray | Vice-Chairman |
| Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds | Member [<i>Excused</i>] |
| Ms. Amrita Deonarine | Member [<i>Excused</i>] |
| Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie | Member [<i>Excused</i>] |
| Mrs. Laurel Lezama-Lee Sing | Member |

SPORTS COMPANY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED (SporTT)

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Mr. Douglas Camacho | Chairman |
| Mr. Kairon Serrette | CEO (Ag.)/Head, Partnership and Alliances |
| Mr. Leon Ramdeen | Director |
| Ms. Arlene George | General Counsel and Corporate Secretary |
| Mr. Justin Latapy-George | Head, Sport Development |
| Ms. Taigmani Richardson | Head, Audit |
| Ms. Ansuya Babwah | Head, Accounts |
| Ms. Annesha Colley | Head, Projects (Administration) |
| Ms. Ruan Peyson | Head, Employee Experience and Central Services |

Mr. David Ince Head, Facilities

MINISTRY OF SPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Angela Edwards Permanent Secretary

Mr. Wilfred Fullerton Technical Director, PMU

Mr. Gabre Jesu McTair Director, Physical Education & Sport

Mrs. Jacqueline Weekes-Penco Planning Co-ordinator

Ms. Ann Belmontes Research Officer II

MINISTRY OF FINANCE – INVESTMENTS DIVISION

Mr. Ryan Maharaj Senior Business Analyst

Ms. Sharon Mohammed Director, Agro-based, Manufacturing and Services Sector (Ag.)

Mr. Chairman: Good morning to all and let me on behalf of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee warmly welcome all of our officials to this meeting of Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee. I would like to welcome officials of the Ministry of Finance Investments Division, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development and of course, the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago (SporTI). My name is Wade Mark and I am the Chairman of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.

Now, our Committee has a mandate to consider and report to the House of Representatives on the following: the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all state enterprises that are owned or controlled by or on behalf of the State. The Auditor General's report on any such accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements and whether policy is being carried out in conformity with the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy and whether expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it.

Now, the purpose of our meeting today is to examine the audited accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the financial years 2019 and 2020. As well as follow up on the implementation of the recommendations in the Committee's Second Report from the Eleventh Parliament.

Now, our Committee is desirous of hearing from you the challenges being faced not only by the Sports Company of T&T in its attempt to determine some of, you know, solutions that you would want to address given the challenges but we would also like to look at the role of our Committee and how we can help this very important company to improve on its delivery of services in an efficient, effective and economic manner.

Now, our meeting is being broadcast live on Parliament's Channel 11, on Radio 105.5 FM and of course on the Parliament's YouTube channel *Parlvien*. Viewers and listeners can send their comments related to today's enquiry to our email, that is parl101@tpparliament.org, [facebook.com/tpparliament](https://www.facebook.com/tpparliament) or [twitter@tpparliament](https://twitter.com/tpparliament).

Now, I would like to take this opportunity to invite members of our Committee to introduce themselves to our officials at this time. So I will ask my colleagues to introduce themselves.

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: I would also like to take this opportunity to invite officials from the Ministry of Finance to introduce themselves.

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Can I invite now the Ministry of Sport and Community Development to introduce your team?

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Do you have any other persons from the Ministry of Sport and Community Development?

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Anyone else from the Ministry of Sport and Community Development? If not, may I now invite the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago to introduce their team at this time, the officials from their team, that is?

Mr. Camacho: Good morning all. Douglas Camacho, Chairman of SporTT and I will hand over to the Acting CEO Mr. Kairon Serrette. Apologies from the substantive CEO. I am not sure what I am supposed to say in the public domain but he had a medical procedure and was unable to be here and is on some extended leave.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Camacho. Mr. Serrette.

Mr. Serrette: Good morning everyone. Kairon Serrette, Acting CEO and substantive Head, Partnership and Alliances at the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago. I will allow my team members to introduce themselves starting with Ms. Taigmani Richardson.

[Introductions made]

Mr. Chairman: Anyone else? Okay. Well, once again, may I on behalf of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee, welcome all of you? And before we get into our enquiry, it is incumbent upon us to ask as we normally do, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Sport and Community Development to make some brief opening remarks not exceeding three minutes and to be followed

by Mr. Camacho who is the Chairman of SporTT. So Madam PS, the floor is yours.

Ms. Edwards: Thank you, Chairman and good morning again everyone. The Ministry of Sport and Community Development is the line Ministry with responsibility for the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry looks forward to the enquiry and its efforts to identify where there might be areas we would need to strengthen or areas we need to improve in our delivery of the sport mandate.

The Ministry has a very good partnership and a strong collaboration with the SporTT and we expect that will continue going into the future as we prepare for the upcoming Commonwealth Youth Games and all the other sporting initiatives that are due to happen this year. So we are here to support and to provide whatever information is asked of us in the best way possible. Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Camacho, please.

Mr. Camacho: Thank you, Chairman. We at SporTT are really the executing arm on behalf of the State with a very clear mandate for some selected facilities in the case of the physical infrastructure of sport in Trinidad and Tobago as well as responsibility for 15 of the national governing bodies in sport. So we do not have responsibility for all 60 or whatever the total number is but for really what was considered, I guess, the top 15. That was the intent when it was created many, many years ago.

With regard to today's proceeding, we have done a very comprehensive reply to the previous meeting but we stand ready to bring any clarity. I suppose, Chairman, I am not sure the process again but I presume we take it as read but we stand ready to bring any clarity that may be required of members, and as well to answer any additional questions which members may have about either what is in the reports or anything that they consider germane and pertain to today's proceedings as you, yourself, Chair, would have articulated in your agenda for today. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, well, once again thank you and welcome to all officials to our enquiry this morning.

Now, I would like to begin by complimenting the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago for at least having your audited financial accounts relatively up to date. We are dealing with 2019, 2020 financial audited accounts and we know that 2021 is outstanding. I know that 2022 is to be concluded and submitted. So before we commence formally, some of my areas of interest that I would like to clarify, could we get from the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago when would the 2021 audited financial accounts be submitted to the relevant Ministry and through the Ministry to the Ministry of Finance and then through that body to our Parliament. Do you have any idea?

Mr. Camacho: Chairman, that was sent in already. They would have received 2021 and in fact, our

report would have been published in the press. We usually are the first, with all due respect to my colleagues in the other state enterprises, to have ours submitted and we submit it within six months of the fiscal year, fully audited and provided to the line Ministry and I guess for onward transmission but the PS could speak to that to the Ministry of Finance and they could speak to the fact of whether they have it or not. We are right up to date, Chairman, there is nothing outstanding.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. Madam Permanent Secretary, can you tell us where that report has gone?

Ms. Edwards: We have received the financial statements for 2021. It should have been forwarded to the Ministry of Finance so I am not sure what would have happened, Chairman, but we would have received it and forwarded it to the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Chairman: All right, well then, maybe the Ministry of Finance can advise whether they have received that report and what is delaying its submission to the Parliament so that we can have them properly before us.

Ms. Mohammed: Thank you for the question, Chairman. We wish to advise that the 2021 financial statement was accepted in an annual meeting in March 2022 and under cover of a memorandum dated March 24, 2022, it was submitted to Parliament. For the 2022 financial statements, those were accepted at an annual meeting in February 2023 and subsequently it was submitted to Parliament on the 13th of February, 2023, via memorandum.

Mr. Chairman: So you are saying to us that the two reports—

Ms. Mohammed:—were submitted.

Mr. Chairman:—for 2021.

Ms. Mohammed: 2022 and 2023—sorry, 2021.

Mr. Chairman: Right, 2021 was submitted on what date to the Parliament?

Ms. Mohammed: 24th of March, 2022.

Mr. Chairman: And the other one?

Ms. Mohammed: The 2022 financial statement was sent to Parliament on the 13th of February, 2023.

Mr. Chairman: All right, well, we will have to do some checking here. I am sorry about that but we will check because from the information we got, those reports are not in our possession. So I am happy that you have advised that we have them, and I want to again compliment all things being equal and we will do a search on those submissions and we shall report before the end of this meeting whether those reports have actually arrived. Okay? All right, so thank you again once more.

Mr. Camacho, I would like to begin by going to an earlier statement that you made and you did indicate that the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago has a clear mandate and I have before

me what is your mandate and you can at least guide me as to whether I am wrong based on what I have before me. You are dealing with the management, administration and programming of sport as well as the construction and operational maintenance of sporting facilities throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Can I take that to represent the mandate of the company?

Mr. Camacho: Thanks, Chairman. Yes, that and I guess under the management, we will capture the elements I spoke about where we have responsibility and oversight for the 15 NGBs—

Mr. Chairman: Right.

Mr. Camacho:—which is where the programmes of sport itself actually reside and are effected. We do it in partnership with the NGBs as well as in partnership with communities. So outside of just the NGBs themselves, the partnership extends with us, a tripartite I guess we could call it, between SporTT officers, the NGBs and their resources and the communities where we carry sporting programmes to. So it ties into the NGBs but it is specifically targeting as well, as we call it, cradle to grave, grassroots to elite.

Mr. Chairman: Right. Now, we recognize that and I think that we will all agree that in this tsunami of crime that is inflicting and affecting every single one of us and our respective families, the role of sport is extremely important because young people are involved in a lot of the deviant behaviour that we are experiencing and a lot of young people are perishing as a result of the disorder that has arisen and that has manifested through crime and violence.

So I wanted to ask you what is the role of SporTT in the following areas: promoting sport tourism, bringing about greater economic diversification as a result, and generating opportunities, employment opportunities for our young people, and most importantly, how are we using the various facilities available to SporTT to get our tens of thousands of young people, either at the primary and secondary level, have those young people access these facilities so that for instance the energy that they have at their disposal can be properly channelled into those areas that would fall under your control, whether it is the National Aquatic Centre, whether it is the cycling velodrome, whether it is the tennis court, the national tennis court that we have available, whether it has to do with all these community swimming pools throughout the country. We have a facility in Diego Martin, in Bagatelle.

We would like you to share with us and through us, how is the Sports Company meeting its mandate and using those facilities to promote, as I said, sport tourism, economic diversification, employment opportunities and making accessible to the tens of thousands of our school children at the primary and secondary school level, those resources and facilities accessible to them. So if you could give us an appreciation, an overview before we drill down into specifics.

Mr. Camacho: Thank you, Chairman. Well, you touched on many things, so I made some notes. So the first is sports as a vehicle, the phrase I have often used and permit me, in a previous hat as Chairman of the Olympic committee that I have been using for the last 20 years, I see sport as a critical vehicle for the development of the human being. And by definition, if we could divert more human capital towards it, qualified and competent human capital, more resources, financial, et cetera, I think what we will see is not just crime—and I think you are very right. I think sport—I was a little disappointed that big symposium over the last couple of days and sport in my mind and culture—and I will make a plug here for culture, were not specifically identified and I do not know what they would call it, a workshop, a little session, specifically using that as two tools because not just in Trinidad, that was a Caribbean one but it is true to say that in the Caribbean, what has defined us most in international life is our sporting people and our cultural people. More so than our business people and all the other people that drive the economy in a more meaningful way. So from my perspective, I think that is the first point I want to make to you, first observation of sport as a vehicle. “Ah just use meh own words there.” Right.

With regard to—and I will break up the bits into tourism, young people, “ah call them young people” primary, secondary school, the masses as I called it “sport for all” when I was referring to it earlier, and elite. Starting with the youth, it is interesting that in our structure in Trinidad and Tobago, the responsibility some time ago for direct intervention in primary and secondary schools where sport is concerned was moved from the many juggles of the various Ministries and the iterations over the last—well, I am only in sport admin for 52 years but over that 52 years, it has now ended up in the last maybe 20 or 30 years, with the Ministry of Education. That has been a challenge where, to my mind, the spirit of volunteerism that pervaded when I was an athlete in my youth, seems to not be as prevalent. Teachers do not volunteer their time as readily as back in the day after hours. Right?

So that the whole ethos of sport as a critical component of your educating a human being seems to have waned. Combination to my mind of what I have just described, the reticence of teachers to volunteer their time selflessly, parents who make it a binary choice for a child, you know, “sports or yuh studies” and sadly in our environment very often, that means they go to school supposedly for the study part of the education and then when they leave school, they have to go to classes for the same thing all over again, taking up time from sport and as you realize, “ah” fairly passionate about the sport angle so I feel quite disappointed but that is a phenomena that I have been seeing for the last couple of decades.

In the recent past, we have actively pursued the Ministry of Education with what we call at

SporTT a bipartisan approach to seeing how we could bring back sport into schools in a more meaningful way. I think it is no secret that the two Ministers responsible for sport and education would have even recently paid a visit in a bilateral thing with the Jamaican Government to see how we could partner, to share our successes, for instance, in our Intercol football and those things and our cricket where our programmes tend to be better and other sports where our programmes are better, and with Jamaica in their athletic programme which from a success point seems to be better but built on a whole different foundation.

So I think it is an area that we recognize is critical because without that, you do not have the feed of stock for the other things that we are going to speak about.

I will touch on tourism now next in that certainly, when I was asked to be Chairman a couple of years ago, of the Sports Company, one of the things that we identified is, we the taxpayers, have spent a fortune on creating world-class facilities and we have not found the way yet to truly maximize the income and revenue stream and it is interesting that by pure happenstance, Kairon who is acting as CEO and is here today, is the person that we charged with the responsibility. As you heard him give you his primary designation of, you know, development and so on where we have very diligently set out to get particularly our major facilities. You highlighted a few, the aquatic centre, you mentioned the cycle velodrome. You did not mention the racket centre but I will throw it in there because it is another one that we are very close to getting a designation. We have a bronze provisional certification as it is no secret. The velodrome has received UCI accreditation as an internationally-recognized cycle centre for the UCI which is the international body. The swimming one, it is in works but not yet completed.

So that is how we intend to try to monetize the value and earn as well in the process foreign exchange, create jobs, you know, bring sport to be an integral part of the economic activity of the country but not just seen as a recreational part which I think in many, many people's minds, they think of sport still as a recreational thing and do not see the value on the economic and the other fronts.

With regard to the issue of maximizing the use of the facilities under our purview, we have an online system that allows for bookings, we encourage people to book and let me be very clear that again, one of the early things that we had identified is that there is no free lunch and I say that to say that even national governing bodies who want use, we have a charge for it. What we have done is we say to them, for national sporting activities and particularly youth-type sporting activities, developmental activities, we charge the NGB but then in our subvention grant that we make every year, we ask for funds to support the NGB. So that in essence, Chairman, it is a non-cash transaction

so they do not have to put out the cash and they have access but we recognize that there is an economic value attached to the use. Because my experience as well is that when people think things are free, they treat with it as if it is free and if “they mash it up”, somebody is going to put it back there for them for free. But there is no such thing.

So we have sought to change the whole mind set and ethos of certainly SporTT first and the wider public and the NGBs over the last four or five years towards having a different way of looking at these things and a greater appreciation of what it is we, the taxpayers, have put there for our use.

With your leave, Chairman, I would ask Kairon who really drives the development side of our activities, if he would like to just say a few words that may supplement it because you realize as Chairman, I am non-executive and therefore have nowhere near the depths of knowledge I am sure he has.

Mr. Chairman: Before Mr. Kairon Serrette speaks, I would like him to follow up and clarify your earlier point, that relationship between the Ministry of Education and the Sports Company. We would like to find out what is being done to get our primary and secondary school students involved in the full utilization of the facilities that we have constructed. And we know that you talked about a charge. What could be done or what is being done to facilitate some subsidization by the very Ministries so that our youths can have more accessibility to those facilities. So when Mr. Serrette is responding, if he could kind of give us some perspective on that.

11.00 a.m.

Because the reason why I am raising that—I may be wrong and you can guide me on it, these facilities are not being utilized in the kind of way they ought to be utilized. And many of our young people who would like to have access, they cannot have access because it is a charge, it is a fee as Mr. Camacho said. And some of them just do not have the income to meet those fees. So what are we doing to ensure that some mechanism is established to allow persons to use those facilities, without destroying their infrastructure, as Mr. Camacho said? So Mr. Serrette, in responding, if you could just give us a perspective, we will appreciate it. And I will ask Mr. Scotland to follow up after.

Mr. Serrette: Thank you, Chairman. So I guess I would start with the last one first, with regard to the primary and secondary schools, how it is we attempt to engage them. Sports Company as an entity, we have reached out to the Chief Education Officer, and so on, for the different districts to have that same sort of discussion with that same goal in mind. We have had different levels of success because everything is a process, there are challenges especially around things like water. So you had to go back to what are some of the key things we need to look at, in terms of allaying the fears, things

like you know, learning how to swim and so on. And you know if we take for instance the activities by the Ministry of Sport in terms of the things like apron pools and so on, to create what I would say clients or users of the facility because that is the next thing. If you look at the specialist facilities that we have, we also have to go through a process of creating the users. The cycling velodrome, I do not know if you have been before, but it is—the bank, you know, it is not something you can just jump on a BMX bike and go on right? You have to learn, we have to do that deliberate process.

So in terms of—or understanding that role of creating the users, what Sports Company has done, is also empowered the NGBs with regard to that and their development outreach programme saying listen, we have identified the schools as of catchment. What are you doing as part of your development programme, what are you doing in terms of reaching out to the schools? Sports Company, through the Ministry if need be, will assist right, in terms of creating that connection, but you know we need to operate through you. So we have done at least our bit in terms of empowering the NGBs who are our key stakeholders in reaching the, you know, the population in terms of the different sports. Outside of that we have had different interventions as I mentioned, if we look at the tennis facility, we have been working closely with the Tennis Association in terms of devising the programmes and then determining exactly how we want to roll it out with that in mind.

We have identified as you said, the primary and secondary schools as a key catchment. I think I could also speak to the recent activities of the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, some representatives from Sports Company, and Ministry of Education, recently went to Jamaica. And that conversation in terms of how do we bring everything together because it has been, you know—we know we want to achieve the same things but in terms of determining exactly what is the best way for us to implement and roll this out, I think we are in a good place. Coming out of the study tour, and trips to Jamaica, in terms of developing a plan where that is concerned. So I am confident that we should be seeing more activities as relates to sport in schools and then the spill over effect with regard to use of the facilities—the specialist facilities and just facilities in general, both community and the nationals.

Mr. Chairman: All right, I will ask Mr. Scotland to come in at this time.

Mr. Scotland: Thank you, Chairman, and good morning again everyone. Chairman, through you, as part of the mandate of this Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee, under our section 101, subsection (2), as part of our mandate, it is to in the performance of our duties, to consider whether policy is carried out efficiently, effectively, and economically. I have heard the Sports Company, outline—well, first I heard the Chairman rue the non-invite to the two-day symposium. I would say

that it was open to all, you and your input would have been appreciated either online or in person. But I noted at question one, your response as it relates to the strategic plan which you are next at appendix five, what updates were made to the strategic plan, your last strategic plan?

Mr. Camacho: Well, between then and now, the strategic plan of the intervening period is just about to come to an end. And I want to say maybe two or three—starting last year about two months ago, we concluded the—all the preliminary work on the strategic plan for the period 2024 to 20—four, five, six, seven, eight—to '28, a five-year strat plan. So that is a very—that would be very current. So we are at the last year of the previous five-year strategic plan which—

Mr. Scotland: Which is 2018 to 2023.

Mr. Camacho: Correct, correct.

Mr. Scotland: Right, right.

Mr. Camacho: So we now have a new strategic plan which we are rolling out and which will go through the usual channels. I think it was already sent to the Ministry of—our line Ministry, the Ministry of Sport. I presume it goes—does it go to the Ministry of Finance?

Mr. Serrette: It went to Finance.

Mr. Camacho: It went to Finance as well I am advised, so that—cannot say Chairman, whether that one went to the Parliament but I suppose the Ministry of Finance—if that is something that they need to lay in Parliament—I do not know—may have done so. While our strategic plan member, is—it is current, there is a current one, which is before us and it takes on board a lot of what I have been speaking about here, that pivoting to a new focus of trying to make sport self-sufficient. You know, the Chairman had asked, how can we help? As a simple thing—a simple thing for us is SporTT does not have the ability to retain revenue. You might say that sounds illogical but SporTT is I guess, under the company's ordinance but it is a state enterprise, and under the—and I might have the name wrong—but it could be the exchequer Act, or something.

It is not designated as an entity that could retain its own revenue. So if we went out for instance, and rented the stadium to a concert artist, for \$500,000 or whatever the Cabinet figure is, because it is a whole schedule of what the fees are. The funds do not come to Sport Company, it goes to the consolidated fund and of course we then have to apply through the usual process of annual budgets, et cetera. So it is, member, that is the sort of thing that we have put back into the strategic plan to try and drive that. Now, it sounds like a simple thing, but if it is something that could be granted to the Sports Company, just think of the economic value of—Chairman mentioned the velodrome of going to, I do not know, American Airlines. You know, since we are in the basketball

season internationally, and saying to American Airlines, would you like a sponsorship, a five-year sponsorship at a significant sum because of the value, and we name—give you a naming right. And that revenue comes in on a consistent basis to the velodrome to help the maintenance of the velodrome. It would take the burden off of us the taxpayer to have to do that directly but we cannot do that, we do not have the means to do that. If we did it, the funds going to the consult fund with no necessary nexus between where it comes from and where it needs to go to.

So it is a simple thing, member, but it is an area that collectively—the Parliament or whoever needs to decide, I do not know with whom that authority resides, but with whomsoever it resides, if they could make Sports Company a collector of revenue where we could collect it and hold it on our own behalf, much appreciated.

Mr. Scotland: You mean a custodian of your own revenue?

Mr. Camacho: But that is the word.

Mr. Scotland: Let me ask you another question which is even more current. You did speak about the issue of crime and how sport can help to alleviate, and help to divert energies in a more positive way. You will agree with me that sport is an outlet that can do that. If we do not agree on the premise then we cannot continue, you will agree with me?

Mr. Camacho: Absolutely, 100per cent onside with that statement.

Mr. Scotland: That being said, have you included specifically in your strategic plan from 2024 to 2029 that plan, an area dedicated to the Sports Company being a driving force in order to bring energies of the young people in particular, to divert it away from criminal activity towards sports. Have you included a specific plan or a specific rubric in your strategic plan for 2024 and 2028?

Mr. Camacho: Member, thanks, I am glad you asked me that question, the answer—short answer is yes, but I did not wait for Sports Company. Speaking on behalf of SporTT now, we did not wait for the plan 24 to 28. We actually specifically got the approval of our line Ministry to broaden the definition of our mandate, to include our involvement in community activity, and have planned in 2023—this fiscal year. We are actually rolling out a programme, particularly targeting—and the word we keep that is being brought to the SporTT, high risk areas is how they refer to it as, across a number of sports and engaged in partnership with the NGBs, to run those programmes.

Kairon, I am not sure which one of our members would be best, you or whether Justin to speak to the programme plan. Right, I am advised Justin, so Chairman, with your leave, and member, I would ask Justin Latapy-George to just give a little high level because, I mean, it could take whole day if you really get us too wound up about sport. Justin what the plans are for this year with regard

to the programme we are running out, that community set up programmes.

Mr. Latapy-George: Good morning, Chair, member. So the straight answer to the question at hand is that we have looked at this 2023—'22/'23 fiscal period to start what we consider development programmes. Development programmes are recognized as those that target kids and by kids I mean that under 12 age group, and works its way all through the sub 18, sub 23. That particular group are those that you target for one they call total participation, which is really encouraging you to understand sport, the intricacies of sport, learning the basic standard techniques, and all that drives it, all the way through putting those that have shown the propensity to be national athletes, to be high school athletes, what have you, to take them along that pathway that sees them getting those skills and developing and harnessing those skills, that would allow them to contribute to national sport and sport in general.

Mr. Scotland: Well, Chairman, through you again, as part of that process because there seems to be a dichotomy in one area. So, you are in charge of certain facilities, you have said that there are certain—there is a new focus and a foci on sport as being a driving force to divert energies. But in some of those communities, the NGOs, the youth club, the persons who are organizing events in the area, may not be able to have the finances, Chairman, in order to rent those facilities. Now, I understand what you are saying, you are saying look, if it is free, they feel that they can do with it what they want because it is free.

However, some persons and some organizations may just not have the wherewithal to be able to rent let us say, I do not know if you are responsible for the Aquatic Centre—I am most certain I think that you are, responsible for the Aquatic Centre. How you do you intend as a responsible organization, to partner with legitimate bodies who have such plans to bring, what we call positive activity to the community but may not have the resources.

Mr. Camacho: The programme that we are speaking about here is being funded by we, the taxpayer, but through SporTT, so that as we reach out to these communities in this programme that we are speaking about, we are not asking them to pay. So the programme would be a SporTT programme, in partnership with the NGBs and the community groups, et cetera, and the Ministry of Sport, because the Ministry of Sport is Sport and Community Development. So this is why I said it was—remember if you—remember in my opening comment there was that we had broadened the definition of our responsibility to encompass what in the narrow context of, if you are read it literally would have suggested was beyond the remit of SporTT and would reside solely with the Ministry of Sport and Community Development.

11.15 a.m.:

But working in conjunction with them, we are rolling out this. We rolled it out last year in '22 as well. This programme I am speaking about, to your direct question, member, the individuals and the groups are not asked to fund it, because we are funding it. And it is within our budget. So, we make representation to the Ministry, we provide the budget, the Ministry sends it to finance, finance releases it. The Ministry releases it to us. We finance it. We pay the little stipend for the coaches, et cetera, because volunteerism; the first question when you ask for a volunteer nowadays, the volunteer asks you, "How much yuh paying meh"? "And ah say well, ah misunderstand de dictionary meaning, but anyhow." So, we recognize that it is a different world we are living in. So, we actually have all of that factored in, member, inclusive of, I guess, Chairman, it kind of goes to providing economic value to some people, employment to some people, as they actually are engaged in the programme full-time to roll out these programmes. Member.

Mr. Scotland: Chairman, through you, and this goes to the Ministry of Sport and Community Development. So, you have, let us say an NGO, or Chairman you have a youth group, a police youth group, let us say from Arouca, from Carenage. They want to hold a family day at one of your facilities. How do they go about, for the members of the listening public, let us do a quick three-point plan. How can they go about accessing this, so they are able to have these events?

Let me give a live example. At St. Paul Street, there is a football tournament that we have on top the hill, at Clifton Towers. But we are looking to expand it. If we go to Beverly Hills, we do not have a facility there, but we want, maybe, to use a facility on the ground level. How do these entities go about accessing this? From what you have told me there, that is an involved process; the Ministry of Community Development then the Ministry of Finance. By the time we get the approval, Chair, the event passes. Tell us. Give us a quick pass. You know, we are going to Disney. We want a quick pass, we do not want to line up in the lines. How do we circumvent that, in order to expedite that link? Because the communities, we need an injection now, you know, not tomorrow, now.

Mr. Camacho: Yesterday.

Mr. Scotland: Yes. So, tell us, how is it done?

Ms. Edwards: Thank you member, and Chairman for that question. Chairman, with your leave I will ask my Director Sport, Mr. McTair, to respond to that question.

Mr. McTair: Good morning to all and thank you for the opportunity to answer. So, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, apart from the facilities that the Sports Company would have, would have the responsibility for indoor sport arena and community swimming pools.

At this particular point in time, the access by community members, by sport groups, youth groups, as the case might be, to our facilities, is free to them, in terms of being able to access them. Of course, there is a minimal fee that needs to be paid, as it relates to usage of our indoors and our community swimming pools. I think the usage of our indoor facilities is something like \$15 an hour, and the use of our community swimming pools for, let us say the learn to swim or the recreational swim programmes, is a matter of what, \$3 and some cents for the particular session. However, if I may say, if, let us say, a particular group wants to host an event at one of our indoor facilities and they wish to have a reduced cost or to host it for free, based on how much the particular invoice will cost, they can apply for a waiver of those fees.

Mr. Scotland: No, but Chairman, through you, how do they access it?

Mr. McTair: No, no. That is it.

Mr. Scotland: Tell me that.

Mr. McTair: I am going to get to that.

Mr. Scotland: Tell me that.

Mr. McTair: So the entity will go to the facility, book the facility, get an invoice. They will come to the Ministry.

Mr. Scotland: Which Ministry?

Mr. McTair: The Ministry of Sport and Community Development, with a letter requesting.

Mr. Scotland: Where do they go? Give me some details.

Mr. McTair: You want proper, proper details.

Mr. Scotland: Yes. In other words, what we are doing here, we want a tutorial for those who, for the listening public.

Mr. McTair: I did not know you want to get so granular.

Mr. Scotland: No, no, but you can do it in a quick way You go here, you go here, you go here, you do that and you get it approved.

Mr. McTair: All right. So, first and foremost the entity goes to the facility, receives an invoice, indicates that they would like to get a waiver of fees. They will apply through the Physical Education and Sport Division of the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, providing a letter and that invoice; a letter, of course, requesting the waiver and that letter is directed to the Permanent Secretary. The Physical Education and Sport Division will, according to the waiver policy that we have, provide a recommendation to the Permanent Secretary, who will evaluate and pass it on to the Minister of Sport and Community Development for approval.

Once it is that approval is provided, then the entity is engaged to let them know what the value of that waiver would be and also the facility is also notified as to the waiver. And that actually is in place for both facilities under the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, as well as facilities under the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Chairman: Just let me follow-up on my colleague. How long this process takes?

Mr. Scotland: Chairman, you are reading my mind.

Mr. McTair: The process can take about two weeks, depending, of course, on the entity; one, how quickly the entity actually does provide the information and how detailed their particular submission is, once it has followed all the criteria that we need to follow.

Mr. Chairman: Once they follow all that, how long it actually takes?

Mr. McTair: It could take about two weeks.

Mr. Chairman: Two weeks?

Mr. McTair: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. How many people are aware of what you have just said? In other words, those sporting organizations, those groups, and so on, that my colleague referred to, is it something advertised? How do you build awareness? Because I do not think, based on what my colleague has said and based on our own experiences, I do not think that many groupings within communities, legitimate groupings, are fully conscious of what you may have just shared with us. What kind of awareness and education programme you have out there to market and advertise these things, so that citizens in groupings, legitimate groupings, would be able to access those facilities?

Mr. McTair: We have not necessarily advertised the waiver programme.

Mr. Chairman: Okay.

Mr. McTair: We have, through the Physical Education and Sport Division, held workshops with sporting groups guiding them as to what our programmes are, how they can access our facilities, and so.

Of course, we always have to take into account that while we wish to make sure that everybody can access our facilities and access them probably for free, based on the economic situation, that there is the need to also generate some level of revenue. So, that matter would probably mean that we do not necessarily let it be known fully that—

Mr. Chairman: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

Mr. McTair:—the facilities can be accessed for free.

Mr. Chairman: Director, wait.

Mr. McTair: Because there is—

Mr. Chairman: I think Mr. Scotland is making a very important point and I think we all recognize it. Some people say we are in a civil war.

Mr. McTair: “Mm-hmm.”

Mr. Chairman: Some people say we are in, almost like a permanent state of self-imposed emergency. These are times that require, I mean to say, innovative thinking. We have to think outside of the box. Is the Sports Company, along with the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, conscious of the environment? Have they formulated a proposal, maybe for 12 months, or 20 months, or two years, given the situation, to take it to the Government? So that, for instance, you can have, for instance, resources being allocated by the State, through the Government, in order to facilitate what we are talking about. Because as he said, we cannot wait for tomorrow. These things are happening now, as of yesterday. So, I am just asking whether any attempts are being made by the Ministry and the Sports Company to come up with proposals to take to the relevant, let us say to the Cabinet, to have such a facility made available, so that there would be accessibility? Is that kind of thinking operating at this time? Because you just said you have to hide, because you do not want to make it known, because if you make it known—

Mr. McTair: No, it is not. It is a matter of—

Mr. Chairman: When I say hide—

Mr. McTair: It is known, but to say we would advertise—

Mr. Chairman: I understand.

Mr. McTair:—a waiver is something that also—

Mr. Chairman: I understand.

Mr. McTair:—now conflicts with the ability to generate revenue.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, yes.

Mr. McTair: So, the fees to utilize our facilities are, as I would have mentioned, fairly minimal at this point in time. However, if there are particular events that need to be held, that would have naturally carried up the fees to a certain extent, we have something in place for that. And it is up to, if it is the entity, in discussion with the administrators at our facilities, would desire to get a waiver, they are advised of the process to do so.

Mr. Chairman: All right. Mr. Director, let me ask my colleague if he can jump in here.

Mr. Scotland: Okay, Ministry of Sport, let me firstly compliment you all. You have said that your business plan for 2024/2028 is in train and that is good. I know your audited records seem to be

almost, 2021 that is in real time, that is almost like 2023. So, we understand that you have the macro going. But I want to say this, that Chairman, on Monday and Tuesday of this week we saw Prime Ministers from the region leave whatever they are doing in their country and come to Trinidad and Tobago to recognize that violence and crime is becoming a public health issue. So, that is where we are.

The significance, Chairman, through you, of them leaving their countries, leaving the management, and coming to Trinidad means that we have recognized that, not just in Trinidad and Tobago, but in the Caribbean, we are facing something that is challenging.

I would like, through you, Chair, to suggest to the Sports Company, in order to drive the process to make sport a viable option, even if it is just for energy, for people to what we call to break a sweat, in the communities, to come together, to give us, Chairman, through you, within a week, so we can publish the facilities that you have and the ability for the public and community-based, faith-based, NGOs to access it.

I am not saying if you are having a concert, I do not know, Chairman, if maybe Buju Banton is coming some time, that that is to be done for free. The answer to that is no, because that is income-generating. But for a community to come together, that is priceless; so that they are no borderlines. Would you be able, Chairman, to change your latitude and give us that: “This is Tobago we have X, X, O”. “This is the process to access. These are the fees.” If there is a nominal fee—because we are not into handouts—they must pay the nominal fee.

If there is a contract, well, you keep the place clean, you leave a deposit in case we have to clean up after you. That is the norm, and you cover your fees. Would you be able to give us within, and I think two weeks, Chair, is a little too long, within a week, the facilities throughout the country and the ability, and the process to access these facilities with contact numbers for persons?

So, the first thing, Chair, I do not know if we have a secretariat, the list of the facilities under the control of sport or the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, which would be available for the public to use, or both.

Two, the ability to access; how do we access it. Give us a template. Yes, give us a roadmap and attach the cost. Because we do not want to start on the premise that it is for free. Because part of the uplift in communities is responsibility, and we must not always be seeking handouts. Chairman, can I, through you, ask for that as a matter of urgency?

Mr. Camacho: Well, I would take a first crack and then I would hand over to the Ministry for their bit. Certainly from a SportTT perspective, we could give you that now, or maybe before we leave, if

you want, the actual list that falls under our remit. Right.

Mr. Chairman: All right.

Mr. Camacho: We could give you what, according to the state enterprise, whatever, performance manual that we have to follow, what are the Cabinet-determined rates, which is the, let me call it the rack create, if I could use such a term. I guess people understand what I am saying, of what that means.

In the context of member's question about if people come to us, we do that all the time. They come to us and ask, particularly the community-based type activities where we realize the value goes beyond the sport per se, but it is more, we act usually with alacrity. We do not have the constraints that a Ministry would naturally have. Because if we have been given/delegated the authority, we make the decision.

But in saying that, let me be very clear, member, that elite activities like the velodrome, things like pools and particularly pools from a life and safety perspective and things that somebody comes and says, "Ah want tuh take your pool", that you give it to them and then people drown and they say, "who tell yuh tuh give dem it, when they cannot swim". Let me be very clear, that certain facilities, particularly the high-performance facilities, are not necessarily the facilities we encourage that type of activities. Certainly, the playing fields, the indoor courts, the things where we are not exposed to those types of risks and where the State's billion-dollar expenditure of our taxpayers money over the last, I do not know, plenty years, will get damaged to the point that Kairon had made earlier. You do not want to put somebody in the velodrome because they have a bike. Then they fall down because the velodrome so steep and they just cannot handle it. So, subject to that member, absolutely. And we do it already. So we could make it available and we certainly could make it available to this parliamentary committee on our side. PS.

Mr. Chairman: Before the Ministry speaks, I think what is being requested is that, Mr. Camacho, I am taking the caveat that you have outlined. The point about it is that we just want to get like a list. So, once we have that, as you indicated, those high-performing facilities that would require training, no ordinary person can just access your high facilities like these pools, aquatic center. You have to be trained. These pools are very deep. It is not a two-foot thing you can go in. "You jump there, yuh dead if yuh cyah swim." So, we understand what you are saying. But I think, what we are talking about are facilities that the community can access without the risks associated.

Mr. Camacho: Absolutely, but we will give you the whole list anyway because we have it and it is easy to hand you that.

Mr. Scotland: I have a philosophical difference, you know. Those high-quality facilities,

Government has expended millions sometimes billions of dollars. Sometimes when you drive past them, they look like ghost towns. We understand the due diligence that you must do and I expect if someone comes you will say, “Well, these are the criteria or the preconditions to qualify”. But it is my respectful submission Chairman, through you and member, that these are some of the facilities that we need people to go into and use them. Do not let, as the old people say, “cobweb take them”, subject of course, to the due diligence of all the practical considerations and safety considerations but to bring communities out, let people feel a part of these facilities.

And I think, it may be something that will require a more in-depth conversation but we are willing to have it, and I am willing philosophically to have it, because I feel, respectfully, that those are some of the facilities that will lift people’s self-esteem; people who come and would make them feel a part of Trinidad and give the Government value for the money that we put out for these facilities.

Mr. Chairman: Now, I understand what my colleague is saying, but as he rightly pointed out, let us get the material. Because I know for a fact that you have to go into our communities to identify talent. You have to identify talent. So that when you identify the talent, and with these high-performing facilities, you take these young people in for a programme of training. So that those young people, at the end of the day, can come top athletes, whether it is in swimming, or tennis, or cycling. So, it is a process. So, I understand what my colleague is saying.

I also appreciate what you are saying too, Mr. Camacho. And therefore, we submit what you have to submit, and as he said, we would drill down into the details later on. We are not bargaining here. We are not negotiating. We are just dealing with broad principles and we have requirements and needs now in our communities. And, therefore, you have a level one, level two, level three, level four. So, Madam Permanent Secretary, the floor is yours.

Mr. Camacho: Chairman if I may, because you did direct it back at me.

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Camacho: Totally agree with you. And I like how you phrase that last bit about 1, 2, 3, because that is exactly how we have it; what we call the different facilities are graded in that way. Clearly with the caveats, I have said, they are available. They are probably utilized much more than we think. They are likely—we went up to the tennis center over the last, I do not know how long. You would see morning to night. If you go to the swimming pool, they are utilized heavily. If you go to the cycle velodrome, you would see the youngsters in there training all the time, but again training under supervision. And those are very elite facilities. But all the others, the Hasely Crawford, you cannot book it. The Woodbrook Youth Centre, booked from in the morning till 11. In fact, the question

and I have as Chairman is, “Why you can open the facility 24/7 at Woodbrook Youth Center as an example”? Of course, you then have the security and all the other attributes that you cannot utilize a surface, any surface 24/7 without damaging it. You have to have the downtime repair, clean, et cetera, et cetera.

So, Chairman, I agree it is not a bargaining thing. But I think we are on the same page. Our view is get as many people out as possible into sport. And I say it in a broad way, into sport in general. Teach them sport, not necessarily specific sports, but any sport. So, I think we are on the same page and I hand over to my colleague from the Ministry.

Mr. Chairman: Before I ask the Ministry to get in, the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Camacho, is there a report that you produce on an annual basis that would provide Trinidad and Tobago with an appreciation of the numbers of citizens who have been able to access your various facilities?

And most importantly, you see the school population, the primary schools, the secondary schools, this relationship you have with the Ministry of Education, is there a reflection of the utilization of these various facilities throughout the country, that you can provide in your report, indicating in the year 2019, in the year 2020, up to 2022, we had 100,000 citizens utilizing these various facilities broken down as follows: at the community level, how many thousand; at the problem school level. So, do you have such data available for public consumption, Mr. Camacho?

Mr. Camacho: I would ask Kairon to handle that, only because the answer is a two-part answer.

Mr. Serrette: Thanks, Chairman. Thank you, Chair. In terms of the utilization data, we do not have it as granular as that to determine that, let us say if we take the Woodbrook Youth Facility as an example, that over the month of March, that a thousand people would have utilized it. We do recognize that it is important data that we need to capture and we are beginning to put things in place, because data collection in itself requires resources. It requires a certain amount of sensitization, but we aware that it is important.

What we do right now, in terms of utilization data, is it generally would just take into consideration by hour and client. So, let us just say for instance, Mr. Camacho made reference to the Hasely Crawford Stadium. And we know the track and field teams, that they would use it Monday, Wednesday, Friday, or whatever it is. We would capture the hours of use like that and then we report in terms of hours of use.

It is a current exercise within the Sports Company, in terms of being a little more specific for that same reason, that we are in a position to report to say okay, at the aquatic center we would have welcomed 1,000 people over the period of the first quarter. That is something that we would like to

get to and we are working on it.

Mr. Chairman: I would come back, but I have to invite my colleague, Mrs. Renuka Sagrarsingh-Sooklal. I just want to put you on notice. I would like to get from the Sports Company and maybe the Ministry the total number of employees on your establishment; the total number that is required, given your new strategic direction. In terms of the period 2018 to 2023, in terms of your organizational structure or what they call it, organogram, could you let us know, first of all, what is your complement requirement for you to run an efficient and effective company called SporTT? What is the deficit or the gap that exists or existed between 2018 up to 2022? And as you project into 2023 to 2028, what is your complement required that you are projecting? I think that those are important matters that we need to pay attention to. But as I said, I will ask my colleague, Renuka Sagrarsingh-Sooklal, to take the floor and we will come back again.

Mrs. Sagrarsingh-Sooklal: Thank you very much, Chairman, for the opportunity. I really did not interject, because, of course, Chair, other members, yourself and, of course, member Scotland, would have asked critical questions that were, in my mind, relative to accessibility. Because at the end of the day that, to me, is paramount in the work that SporTT has to do; making your facilities, whether it is the high-tech or high-end facilities, from the community-based ones that you have a mandate over. The issue is about accessibility and, of course, we ask a lot of questions concerning and we have asked the company to provide to us a list of those facilities. So, Chair, thank you all most sincerely for already leading the charge in making said request.

Now, I do agree with member Scotland, relative to the comment of not encouraging handouts and not encouraging a social welfare society, for want of a better word. But, I have heard a lot of comments about certain fees and the use of facilities being minimal fees. But I just want to respectfully remind everyone that minimal, the word minimal is very relative and it is relative to someone's circumstance, as we all know.

For example, when I was in high school, \$20 was the amount—not in high school actually, university. I got an allowance of \$20 a day from my parents, \$15 of which was for passage alone. Five dollars, you really cannot do much with that. Let us bear in mind that while, yes, we do not want to encourage citizens to rely upon just the State to give me and give me and give me, at the same time there are people whose reality, their social reality, is that \$15 an hour, they cannot afford.

And I believe that it is imperative as an organization and as an entity, and that is what I want to springboard out of a comment that member Scotland made about innovation and being innovative as an entity, as a company, to be able to determine, okay, how am I, what am I going to be able to do

in order to make my facilities and my mandate more accessible to even that child or that young person that \$15 an hour is very difficult for them to be able to pay, recognizing that the term nominal fees is very relative. And that is why I brought my personal experience into the mix. And it is not something that I am ashamed of at all. So, I just wanted to make that critical point. And I believe that is something that the company has to focus on and paramount is, of course, I know even in your submissions and, of course, Chairman, you would have made mention to the—and it is in your submissions, SporTT submissions, indicated that one of the weaknesses faced is the inability to retain revenue for reinvestment.

And perhaps, if you are able to develop that revenue stream, you can become self-sufficient and then be able to access and be able to provide, develop strategies, as I would have suggested, relative to accessibility and making these facilities accessible to those people who, even the \$15 an hour is too difficult for them to be able to pay.

11.45 a.m.

Now, I know, Chairman, in your submissions you would have mentioned that—and this is something I would have to research as well, you mentioned that your inability to retain and your inability to reinvest may be predicated on legislation in the Exchequer and Audit Act. I have not had the opportunity to cross check the law, and of course, I am not going to speak out of turn on the law being a lawyer myself.

But if it is that there is a legislative blockade that is preventing SporTT from being able to—be able to reinvest and to be able to retain revenue, then it is an advocacy that you all have to actively engage in for that legislative change to come about, and I speak now from the point of my ministerial portfolio. If I may, respectfully, Chair, through you. Legislation is marked or amendment to the law is brought by policy changes, and a line Ministry alone ought not to take the responsibility if laws are not being amended. The entity has a responsibility to advocate to their Ministry, and advocate using data, advocate using sound policy, why it is we may require an amendment in the law. And that is the chain of legislation.

So you have an entity, you do the advocacy, you create the policy. If you believe that there is a legislative blockade in your inability to retain, in your inability to reinvest. You do the advocacy, you create the policy. The structure now, is that you go to your line Ministry with that, and your line Ministry of course forwards it, once they can accept that policy, and it is accepted of course, by the Cabinet. Then, it comes to the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs where the necessary amendments and legislation would then be reviewed for consideration, for us to be able

to then do the legislative work to provide you with the teeth that you need, the strength and power that you need, to be able to deliver on your mandate.

So my question now, Chair, with that being said, has there been any seriousness investigation from a policy perspective, relative to what has been, you know, basically causing that problem as it relates to reinvestment and retaining revenue?

Mr. Camacho: Thank you. Well, first of all, the advocacy you speak about started many, many years ago, and along the way we actually had a very temporary respite, in that, it was thought being a fact that we were under a company ordinance and not under an Act of Parliament like some of the other state enterprises, that we could collect revenue, and we were so advised. And shortly after we started to collect the revenue we received a communique from—this is why I say maybe the exchequer Act, right, from that division of the State, telling us that we are not designated a revenue collecting agency, and we must cease and desist from the activities we were doing.

We have continued then to advocate in the manner that you have spoken about, and I know that the Ministry could speak for themselves, but they are now championing the cause for us through the process that as you have described it. But I think I would be considered slightly naive if I thought that that was a process that even well-articulated where we prepare to write the draft of the Act if they wish or the approval if we were so requested, that could happen easily because first of all, it has to get on to your legislative agenda. How important is this with the million other things that are equally competing for time, the resources of the State to be able to do what is required to then get back to us.

“Ah have ah suspicion” this is not going to be considered a very critical element to jump the queue. But I say that not to say that we are not going to pursue it because you hear how passionate I am about it. You saw it in my report there. You will see it in the 2024/28 strat plan as a critical to do again. So member, that is music to my ears. You are talking to a choir member here where that is concerned, but I do not know if the Ministry wishes to speak for themselves.

Ms. Edwards: Chair, member, thank you Chairman Camacho. So the Ministry is aware of the efforts being made by SporTT to designate them as a retainer of their revenue. The conversation has begun, and member as you rightly said, it needs to be supported by a proper well-researched evidence policy in order to convince the Cabinet, when we do go to Cabinet, that SporTT should be so designated.

So between the Ministry and SporTT, we have advanced the conversation a little bit further because the issue of rates ties directly into, to prove your case—prove our case, the SporTT’s case, of how much revenue is being lost. So simultaneously, we are looking at the revision of rates, which would be part of the Note that would eventually be submitted to Cabinet. SporTT is currently working

on terms of reference for a consultant. Because when you are looking at rates you need to do proper research. If you look at the local scenario, the Caribbean, Latin America, you know, similar scenarios to have that sort of evidence and benchmark to bench our rates against. So that is currently being done and we hope before the end of this fiscal to have that sort of policy document to drive this discussion beyond the Ministry, take it to the Cabinet, and then onward for legislative review.

Mrs. Sagrainsingh-Sooklal: Thank you very much, PS Edwards. And you said it, it is about—because to convince of course, the Government, it cannot be that you are just pulling figures out of a hat or from the sky, it has to be evidence-based. And I am very pleased to know that at least at the Ministry, and of course the advocacy began with SporTT, it continues with the Ministry.

But of course, Chairman, I want believe, I mean, as a legislator as well, yes, there are many topics in queue on our legislative agenda, but you see something is as important as you make it. And the advocacy must continue irrespective of. In your entity, in your Ministry sports matters are critical, and that conversation has to continue. And of course, I am very pleased Chairman, that at least you are at the stage, you are at the stage where there is now a consultant, you are putting pen to paper, you are solidifying a policy position which can then be onward transmitted. So I am grateful to know that that has happened.

Chair, with respect to—well, we did ask our questions relative to accessibility, our questions relative to getting the list of, you know, company —facilities, sorry, that SporTT of course has a general oversight of. And for now Chair, that is the extent of my questions. I will just go through what I have here and in turn.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, thank you. I want to state that from my material sport—the Sports Company of T&T would have been incorporated almost around 2004. So you have been advocating or not you directly, or others. Well, of course you being the Chairman, for a provision or the ability to retain your revenue that you would generate. And the PS is now telling us that they will have to get some consultancy on board and we do not know how long this will take. But it is something that we—

Mr. Camacho: Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Camacho: This fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Camacho: This fiscal year. Well, I should say from my perspective, Chairman—

Mr. Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Camacho:—I want this thing done and dusted by the end of this fiscal year, so from 20—

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. Well, I am very—

Mr. Camacho: I mean, I do not know if it is possible.

Mr. Chairman: Well, I am happy to hear that you would like that.

Mr. Camacho: Very optimistic.

Mr. Chairman: But I am sure you have been advocating that for some time now.

Mr. Camacho: Since I have become Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: So let us hope that—no, but I think that you are addressing an issue given the nature of your operation, that I find to be quite reasonable, right.

Mr. Camacho: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Because you have to generate—and given the nature of this operation called SporTT, I think that is something that will find you know, favour with my own self because I understand what is being promoted at this time.

So what I want to come back to is the core activities of this organization called SporTT. I see construction and facility maintenance. You mentioned sport for all. National oversight and support, and you talk about the elite athletes, right? Now, when it comes to the issue of construction and facility maintenance, Mr. Chairman Douglas Camacho, how is that done? And I will tell you what I am talking about. You are supposed to be involved in the construction, now—so the design, the development, the, let us say, construction, the maintenance of these facilities under the Sports Company of T&T. That is supposed to be your mandate. Tell me if I am wrong, and you will have to clarify for me. One is developing the—or one is coming to some tentative conclusions that the Sports Company is not doing this.

For instance, swimming pools, who is constructing? Do you outsource? I should rephrase it. Do you outsource the construction of let us say swimming pools to UDeCOTT? For example, and so that is the first thing. Do you deal with these things directly or do you outsource these things, and to whom do you outsource these things to? And what are the mechanisms that you establish for supervision, for oversight, so at the end of the day the quality that you expect at the end of the process will be satisfied?

So these are some of my preliminary issues as it relates to the construction and facility maintenance. If you could clarify for us as a Committee, and I will appreciate it very much.

Mr. Camacho: Certainly. Well, on the first instance in terms of the construction and I will hand it over to two of my colleagues for the two different elements. Let me deal with the construction first. We do not have a full-fledged engineering department and the full works. So it is not that we are

going to do the actual activities ourselves. So we have a process. We are required—we might have to go do an RFP and all the other things that invite tenders, people coming, so different projects, different people.

In fairness, what we try to do is if it is a community-type, one, and I am just using this illustratively but we did one down in Moruga. We try to encourage the business people associated with that type of construction work to bid. Sometimes they do not come forward because they think this is a big, you know, state thing, and we try to encourage them by making them aware that this is for anybody to bid. Anybody could come in because very often you would get a keener price from them for two reasons. One, they are not the big providers that have all the overhead. And two, because they are immersed in the community, they want to deliver. So we have found some savings with regard to that.

Process wise, we follow again, proper procurement practices. That has been the mantra. I could speak for the time that I am Chairman, Chairman. I cannot speak for what occurred in the past, right. Way, way back. So that deals with the construction side, and I would ask Anesha to speak to that when I am finished the second bit.

With regard to the maintenance of facilities, what we recognize is that we as a people tend to be exceptional at building new things, and I cannot say that I will give us the same passing grade for the maintenance of what we have built after the fact. And whether it is government buildings and government people in sporting facilities otherwise, we seem to not put the same sort of emphasis and focus to provide the kind of resource to really do it properly.

What we have done on our side is, and I will ask David to speak to it, but we actually got professionals to tell us what would a proper preventative maintenance programme look like, and what would that cost. And I would be very direct here, and I am sure it is not only SporTT that will have this challenge but the country has it.

Mr. Chairman: “Mm-hmm.”

Mr. Camacho: If we felt that it took \$10 million a year to maintain a facility and the Parliament through the budgets, et cetera, decide make do with six, Chairman, we look at \$10million and we say, what is critical? What can six buy us? How many activities within the Schedule can the six million buy us because we cannot spend what we do not have, right? But we have made our case very clearly, this is what the optimum position would look like. With your leave now I would Annesha first to—

Mr. Chairman: Before, who is next?

Mr. Camacho: Annesha will speak on the project side, and then David will speak on the facilities.

Mr. Chairman: All right, before they speak—

Mr. Camacho: “Mm-hmm.” And we do outsource to answer your question, absolutely.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. What is the relationship between UDeCOTT and the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago? Is UDeCOTT involved in the construction of swimming pools without your knowledge? Or are you outsourcing the construction of swimming pools to UDeCOTT for its construction? Because I am getting the impression, and you can guide me on this, that UDeCOTT is constructing swimming pools in the country, and the question that I need to have clarified, as the company with the mandate to construct these things, I just wanted to ask you if you could clarify for our Committee whether there is any truth in this statement that UDeCOTT is also competing with you in the construction of swimming pools? Or whether you have engaged UDeCOTT to construct swimming pools on your behalf? Could you clarify for us?

Mr. Camacho: Again, Annesha will explain exactly how the process works. But yes, we do engage other people, in this case UDeCOTT, you used as an example to build the swimming pools. We engage UDeCOTT to build the Diego Martin Complex you alluded to earlier, to build the one in Moruga. So we do engage them but we then keep—we have the responsibility of oversight, which at times, let us just say there could be a healthy tension between ourselves and UDeCOTT. We have a good working relationship but there could be healthy tension, because they would come forward with something and we would say, “Well, if the Cabinet approved it, if there is proof of everything we could sign off”. If not, we will hold them to account. And so, that is why I used the words a “healthy tension.” But that is our role and that is our responsibilities and we are going to do it fearlessly, and where the chips fall, the chips fall.

But it is a fact that we do outsource those kinds of activities but I will pass it over because Annesha is the one that deals with them, on UDeCOTT especially and those things—

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Camacho:—day by day, and then David will handle the actual programmes and stuff that we have put in place with regard to maintenance, and our vision of how it should be done.

Ms. Colley: Hi, good day, Chairman, Annesha Colley, Sports Company again, Head of Projects Execution. So to clarify the arrangement between UDeCOTT and Sports Company and by extension the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, the arrangement is actually one that is presented to the Cabinet, and we get instruction via a Cabinet Minute. The Cabinet Minute would present UDeCOTT as the entity that would project manage the services relative to the construction of the swimming pools. Sports Company will be assigned to provide monitor and oversight, and the Cabinet

Minute would also speak to the Ministry of Sport and Community Development entering into an agreement with UDeCOTT to provide these project management services.

So there is a three-way arrangement, a three-way entity—sorry, a three-way arrangement between all entities that come together to ensure that these pools are constructed.

Mr. Chairman: May I just clarify as you go a long?

Ms. Colley: Sure.

Mr. Chairman: I do not know if you could help this Committee to indicate or to guide us, was it always like that? Or was it where—you see, I am getting a bit—there are some areas that are blurred and hazy.

Ms. Colley: I understand.

Mr. Chairman: Because I am looking at a company called SporTT right, incorporated under the Companies Act, right? And I understand the mandate of that committee is to construct, right? So, if they are to construct they are also to determine given their mandate the requirements. Of course, there is an overall policymaking body, but in terms of saying listen, we are going to construct in X area or Y area, and I am going to make request for proposals to invite because I am the company, I am mandated. Now, you are telling me that you have a three-way process.

So one, coming project manager is this one. And then, oversight is you.

Ms. Colley: Correct.

Mr. Chairman: And then final word. So what I am asking, I think, through you, and maybe Mr. Camacho can guide me on it: Was it always like this? In other words, how long this came into existence, or whether it was always like this? That is what I am trying to—

Mr. Camacho: Well, I will speak to the time that I have been Chairman. There was a hiatus. There was not much activity in the early—the first year or two of my chairmanship, but then in the last couple of years we have seen some activity.

Mr. Chairman: Right.

Mr. Camacho: And that is way it has been. Certainly, as you described the higher policy. So for policy, decision comes from the Cabinet that says we are building a swimming pool in Maloney. That would be a policy decision handed down. They would say to SporTT, “We are looking to build this swimming pool in Maloney and whether it is UDeCOTT is to be contracted”. In the way that Annesha explained it, right, but we want you to take the oversight the way I described it for this project. So they project manage it, we oversee it, the Cabinet Note details very clearly what the quantum is, what they are supposed to be doing, et cetera, and we have to sign off on it before the funds are released

by the Ministry of Finance to us to pay UDeCOTT. So it comes through us to pay UDeCOTT.

Now, UDeCOTT, unlike others seems to have access to funds that they could forward fund which is a positive because in many cases people do not. And if you cannot get the money in front it tends to, my words now, shrink the pool of potential candidates available to you. Obviously, if people have the capital and they could carry the project, fine. If they cannot, then it is always a challenge for money like everybody else, cash flows, et cetera, et cetera.

So that is kind of how it works and it has certainly been so in my recent past. Now, maybe Annesha goes back before—she definitely goes back before my time, she could say whether in the past it was always so, or whether Sports Company did it differently in the past. I really cannot speak to that Chairman. I do not know.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. Yes, Ma'am, you could continue.

Ms. Colley: Chairman, I would have joined in 2017, and from joining that arrangement as it relates to construction of the community swimming pools would have in fact been around from since that time. However, I think what maybe needed to be clarified is the facility we have under the ANSA Bond which would have facilitated the national sporting facilities, that would have been directly constructed under SporTT, and UDeCOTT would not have been involved in that process.

So for example, the National Aquatic Centre, that would have been directly constructed/managed under Sports Company and that would have been—sorry, that would have been prior to my joining in 2017.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. All right. I understand the point that you are making. Mr. Camacho, I think that there are some areas that we will have to come back to. But I think this company called SporTT, there should be greater autonomy in the operation of the Sports Company of T&T. And I find it a bit interesting that from what you have just said, I am getting the distinct impression that the Sports Company is merely a conduit, by a channel for activities that is taken at another level. So sometimes, you are getting the impression that your company does not have the muscle to determine—the reason I am saying this is exactly—I want you to clarify for this Committee, when it comes to swimming pools that you are instructed to build and just to oversee, are those swimming pools, the design, to ensure standards are satisfied, what is your role as the Sports Company? Do you have any say? Or you are just only told “to oversight”, but all the decisions on the design, the standards, whether it is national or international standards, who decides those things? The Sports Company or that is decided for the Sports Company? I am just try to clarify.

Mr. Camacho: Good questions. No. I think one would have to answer that by saying in conjunction

with. So it depends what it is. You are using the pools as the example. So what we have identified is the pools should be of a minimum size so that it could meet competition-type requirements. And those, basically in the case of swimming, it is either a 25 or a 50-metre pool. So back in the day where it was done, people will put in what I guess, my words now, what the land could have accommodated. So it might have been 30 metres or whatever, much like remember the JP Smalls Cycle Velodrome, that was, whatever, 500 metres. The one in Arima, which is why you do not have specific distance races in Arima, is because it was built as a cycle track without that standard you speak to. So that when they have a race, they call it a 20-lap. They cannot say a 10-kilo because they do not know the precise measure in that regard. It is not a 250, a 333, which are the international standards. So in the case of the pools, we have advised, and again, ours is an advisory role in that regard. We do participate in arriving at those kinds of decisions in terms of standards, et cetera, and recommend, right?

In terms of where it goes and all of that, as you rightly described it, I think the way you described it is a kind of policy decision of the State that says, “Okay, we would like the communities all over Trinidad and Tobago to have access, so let us position them all over Trinidad and Tobago”. So you have one in Siparia, one in Couva, one in—wherever, and they try to spread it around, right? That is a policy decision. We do not say to them, “no, do not put it there”. That is not our remit.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah.

Mr. Camacho: We are the implementing arm is the word I used.

Mr. Chairman: Yeah, implementing.

Mr. Camacho: In that regard. We are the implementing arm—

Mr. Chairman: “Mm-hmm.”

Mr. Camacho:—for those kinds of Cabinet or state decisions which is really through our line Ministry, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development.

Mr. Chairman: So how do we get costs? How do we get costs? Because you are supervising, you are overseeing things. We want to know as a Committee, what is the final cost of the construction of pools that you have overseen for the last couple of years? In other words, how many pools you have overseen since you have been there as Chairman, or for the period let us say that we are covering, let us say 2019 to 2020? How many pools have been constructed? How many pools are to be constructed? What is the cost of these pools?

For instance, the Bagatelle Sporting Complex, again, again, were you the initiator, or were you the supervisor, or the person just overseeing? And what was the cost of that particular exercise? And are these things subject to cost overruns? In other words, when you are asked to oversee these things

did they come in at one cost? For instance, \$6 million? And at the end of the process seeing that you have to sign off, right, what was the final cost? Was it \$10 million? Did it remain at \$6 million? So could you provide all of these things in writing?

Mr. Camacho: Sure. That you could get for sure. But let me just say that that is where I mentioned the healthy tension. I smiled only because that is where the healthy tension comes in because if the Cabinet Minute says just to take as an example, a swimming pool, and we have approved \$3million. I know things are never so quite rounded, \$3 million, and that this is what is meant to be delivered. And somebody decides along the way, you know, we should add, I do not know, a squash court onto it or a pavilion, and that came to us in SporTT, we would say, “Cabinet Note does not say that”. So unless you go for—and I do not know what is the political term—but unless you go back to the Cabinet for a waiver, or a variation, or whatever, we are not paying that because our remit was very clear on the Cabinet Note. This is what it was meant to be.

12.15 p.m.

And we do get that is where the healthy tension comes in. So we push back and say no, justify it or bring in Cabinet approval for that variation—if it is a variation. So, we could certainly let you know what the costs were for the ones under which we had oversight and responsibility, which is the pools you mentioned and you know, the Bagatelle one, and so on. So, we certainly have that data. That is not a problem.

Mr. Chairman: Right, so you could provide that to us in writing.

Mr. Camacho: Sure.

Mr. Chairman: Now, the other thing I wanted to ask, Mr. Camacho: What is your complement of staff right now?

Mr. Camacho: Can I ask Ruan to answer? I mean, I do not want to guess because—

Mr. Chairman: Yes, yes, of course.

Mr. Camacho:—today as in 2023. Ruan.

Mr. Chairman: As we speak.

Mr. Camacho: As we speak.

Mr. Chairman: What is the current complement?

Mr. Camacho: Yeah.

Mr. Chairman: And what is the required complement in order for SporTTT to operate an efficient outfit?

Ms. Peyson: Hi, good morning, Chair. Ruan Peyson, Head, Employee Experience and Central Services from Sports Company. Presently, as at the end of March, we have 112 contract employees with us at Sports Company. Based on our approved org chart, we require 195 persons to function.

Mr. Chairman: Okay. So, what attempts are being made to bring your staffing up to the required standard or level that you have just mentioned, the 195?

Ms. Peyson: We would have written to the Ministry of Sport and Community Development with a list of critical jobs which we needed to recruit for and based on the approval received, we have been engaging in recruitment exercises since 2020, which would have brought us to this figure at this time and we continue with that process.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have any written statement or any analysis that would have been done showing how the deficit or, the gap in the staffing arrangement is affecting the operations of this company called Sports Company of T&T? Or put it another way: How has this deficit been impacting negatively on your operations?

Ms. Peyson: So, it has impacted in our ability to deliver in terms of some of the services that we seek to provide. And it also has restricted our—we have also acquired new facilities as at the end of September 2020, which we are also trying to address with the present staff requirements that we have.

Mr. Chairman: Now, would you say that—let us look at your accounting unit. I saw in your submission, your 98 per cent capacity, you have a 98 per cent capacity, two per cent deficit. But I noticed in your submission and a management letter that we got from this, the new auditors I should say, that there are some challenges that you are facing. Can you tell us—for example, there was a question about accrued vacation and gratuity scheduled, where apparently there was one statement recorded in your submission and when it was being properly audited, another statement was provided—yes, yes, another statement was provided. So, I was wondering to what extent your staffing problem might have contributed to this gap? Names were mentioned, I do not want to call them, the names of the people. I do not think it is fair to them to call their names, but we have information about persons who were supposed to take five days, and they end up taking 29. Right. What caused that, in terms of a situation? And as you on that, do you have an internal auditor, and if you do not have one, why?

Ms. Peyson: So, I am not aware of the situation that you are speaking of and yes, we do have an internal auditor and she is present—

Mr. Chairman: You all have an internal auditor?

Ms. Peyson: Yes we do.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, well—

Mr. Scotland: They seem to be—

Mr. Chairman: Okay, well, I am glad about that.

Mr. Scotland: Chairman, they seem to be doing well—

Mr. Chairman: No, no I am not—

Mr. Scotland: They need to drill down?

Mr. Chairman: Yeah. Now—

Mr. Camacho: Chairman, if I could, what year that is alluding to, with the five and 29? I do not need the names just what year, so that we could—

Mr. Chairman: We are talking about the year that we are examining.

Mr. Camacho: 2019.

Mr. Chairman: Right, so we are looking at 2019 and 2020 accounts. That is what we are looking at. Right. So, there is some—we have some challenges. Right. And I think that we would need to have some clarification from the persons who are in the accounting area of your operation. Right. So, we will probably have to forward questions to your good self to address some of the issues that I wanted to have clarified at this time.

Mr. Scotland: Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Scotland: I have one issue I want to ask.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, you go ahead.

Mr. Scotland: Chairman, through you, I want to address the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, and then the Ministry of Sport and Community Development. How do you see your role in going forward because you are now developing your 2024 to 2028 strategic plan? How do you see your role in going forward in driving that engine of sport, or driving sport as an engine of change in Trinidad and Tobago? How do you see your role, the role of the Sports Company in going forward in using sport as an engine of change in Trinidad and Tobago? I would ask Sports Company and the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, and nothing long but I just want—

Mr. Camacho: I will give you a crisp answer. We see SporTT playing an integral role. In fact, we see SporTT as taking the lead in that regard and helping with our line Ministry, to create where necessary, national policy, et cetera, if required. We are following at the moment the approved programme of the country, the Government's sports programme. But where we see it necessary that we want to influence policy change, if required to effect it, we see ourselves taking the lead as I

mentioned in my earlier submission, in creating sport beyond, as I refer to it, where people think of it as recreation, to be something more than that—business, an income-generating thing, an employment activity, taking deviant behaviour and creating channels to channel that pent up energy of young people in a positive direction. We see it as an opportunity for people to get things that would not otherwise be available to them, what they could not avail themselves of, scholarships, et cetera. We are very active, we have partnerships going with the universities in Trinidad and Tobago, signed partnerships and how we propose to do that. We have additionally one signed with the University of Portsmouth in the UK, who very much drive that programme in the UK to develop those things. So member, we see ourselves playing a pivotal and critical role in that regard. As I say, we keep scope creep. SportTT has definitely had scope creep in what we have taken onto ourselves and on what we have put ourselves forward as best positioned to drive the Government's overall programme for the sport develop in Trinidad and Tobago. So we have a bit of a scope creep beyond our direct remit, as the Chairman had identified again from 2005. I know you wanted the Ministry to speak too.

Mr. Scotland: Yes.

Ms. Edwards: Thank you for the question, member. Chairman, with your permission I will ask the Director, Sport Division, Mr. McTair to respond.

Mr. McTair: Thank you very much, PS. The Ministry of Sport and Community Development continues to develop sport through our national policy on sport, 2017 to 2027. We are at that sort of midway of that policy cycle at this particular point in time. And at this current juncture, what we seek to do is to continue working on pushing or advocating for the development of sport and for sport for development, which are the two main pillars of the national policy on sport. That will follow or that will manifest itself in a number of ways.

Number one, we are definitely looking at creating better partnerships and ensuring that the development of sport is able to touch the national fabric of Trinidad and Tobago through the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, through the universities, the main universities being UWI and UTT, working with the Ministry of Health as well, through partnerships in their TT Moves programme. Also, with the engagement of the Government of Jamaica, as Mr. Serrette would have earlier mentioned, we—through that multi sports stakeholder committee that would have attended those two visits, we are developing a pathway for sport development in Trinidad and Tobago, we are starting with track and field in the first instance and we are looking at spreading that to other sports.

So, we already—at this particular point in time we have two main overall programmes that we use for sport development being, the SHAPE in Communities Programme and the Pink Reign

Campaign which is more geared towards specifically developing women in sport and through such, we continue the process of manifesting the statutes of the sport policy.

Mr. Scotland: And having said that, Chairman, through you and this is my final question.

Mr. Chairman: Sure.

Mr. Scotland: You are the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, you are the Ministry of Sport and Community Development and you are addressing the young people of Trinidad and Tobago. Yes? In Port of Spain South we have a rich history of sportsmen from Clint Marcelle, Russell Latapy, Akeal Hosein, if you do not look sharp, we would claim Dwight Yorke, all right?

Members: [*Laughter*]

Mr. Scotland: What would you say to the young people of Trinidad and Tobago, because time is not our friend now, but what would you say to them as it relates to making sport a part of changing their pathway, changing their trajectory? Chairman, that is my last question.

Mr. McTair: What we would say to young people who want to become involved in sport. We, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development and I could say by extension the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, we have been working with our national governing bodies, we have been working with clubs, in communities, towards giving them the necessary capacity to be able to engage young people. As the Ministry and the Sports Company directly, yes, we can provide certain programmes, for example, the April Pools Programme that is still ongoing, because it is going through the month of April. We actually were able to engage a number of youth groups, the St. Jude's School for Girls, the Police Youth Clubs in particular areas as it relates to the Learn-to-Swim programmes that have taken place at Laventille swimming pool, Morvant and Maloney. We have been—we are now busing person from La Horquetta to go to the Aquatic Centre to learn about life saving, rescue skills, et cetera.

So yes, there are certain things that we can do, however, we understand as well that the true development of sport and the path to development of sport, whether it be from cradle to grave, or just for the sake of understanding a person's body through sport, and how that also impacts on their psychosocial development, it is a matter of having the national governing bodies and our sports clubs in communities become much better able—much better capable of doing so, whether it be financially and through technical capacity building.

So, we ask that young people, one, engage with the sports groups in your area. I think in the vast number of communities where there are sports installations, whether they may be recreational grounds under the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, hardcourt basketball

courts under same Ministry or, the indoor facilities under the Ministry of Sport and Community Development, the pools, et cetera, we do have programmes on offer; engage the facilities, engage the sporting programmes that you see taking place in those communities and the Ministry is there to provide that level of assistance to these groups and to make sure that one, there is accessibility but two, there is also the capacity for them to be able to ensure that young the people that engage in these programmes are able to develop themselves, both in sport and through life by simply just starting to participate. I think the first thing is really find where sport is taking place, engage it. All right.

Mr. Scotland: Engage. Thank you.

Mr. Camacho: Chairman, if I could just add one last comment and only because the member mentioned one or two, you know, notable sports icons and one that he tried to claim through the back door. But that aside, it is notable that a number—that we have—and I will use the young people language now, what they call them, influencers—

Mr. Scotland: Yes.

Mr. Camacho:—I think is the term now. And you talk about the programme that is ongoing in the pools, Carter himself, Dylan Carter, who is I guess our high profile athlete—

Mr. Scotland: Very, very close to Port of Spain South.

Mr. Camacho:—right he is very involved—

Mr. Scotland: And Diego Martin.

Mr. Camacho:—yes he is very—[*Laughter*] and he is very involved in the programmes—

Mr. Scotland: Very involved.

Mr. Camacho:—so they are giving back. You have Jereem, you have “Latters,” you have—a number of them have agreed and have already started participating because the interesting thing is, you know, I go there and I say “fellas—” and I give them all the right reasons why—

Mr. Scotland: “Mm-hmm.”

Mr. Camacho:—and they listen to me and they say, “Wha he know, boy, he eh ketchin his nennen like us, you know, he probably drive up here to start with, he eh know when he leave and gone is walk I had to walk three miles to get home”, or whatever. But when the people who they look up to speak to it, it is coming from a different place—

Mr. Scotland: It is.

Mr. Camacho:—and we have identified that some time now and we have engaged these people. Right? And I mean, sometimes I go with them on the difference, you know, as I say, Carter in the pools. I remember the little sailor boy, Lewis, going down and starting a programme in La Brea—

now he is from Diego Martin too, so you could claim him again too, Keith. [*Laughter*] And look at the programme, it has kicked off, and it has sustained itself, that though he is abroad coaching internationally now, he keeps in touch and that little programme in La Brea is—it is sustainable, it is not a flash in the pan, it did not happen and finish.

So I think that is another critical—I mention human resource when I was saying about capacity building, that kind of resource needs to be harnessed and encouraged to be these influencers. And I tell you, that will be a multiplier, a geometric increase, not a linear increase—if we could get those people really come in and encourage the youths, get off the streets. There is an alternative lifestyle, you do not have to be with a gun, learn to shoot a football instead of a gun. I mean, I get passionate as you realize.

Mr. Chairman: Yes. All right, thank you so very much, Mr. Camacho. We are about to draw the curtains on our proceedings. And in doing so, may I again, on behalf of our Committee, extend our thanks to officials from the Ministry of Finance Investments Division, the Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago, and of course, the Ministry of Sport and Community Development.

Now, there are some areas that we would have to write to the Sports Company on, and whilst we compliment the Sport Company for being on—at least you have completed according to the submission made earlier, all your financials and you have submitted according to the submission made by the Investments Division to the Parliament, I just want to indicate that there are many questions that we will be submitting to the Sports Company to provide us with some clarification on, and that is for the period 2019 to 2020. Those are the accounts that are before us. So, I just put you on notice to expect those questions that will be coming your way very soon.

We want to, again, record our appreciation and thanks for your presence, and for the engagement that we have had over the last few hours.

At this time, we will now want to suspend the proceedings to allow your good selves to take your leave and we want to wish you a safe return journey to your respective workplaces. So, we would like to thank again, Permanent Secretary, we would like to thank Mr. Douglas Camacho and his team and of course, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry—the Director I should say, in the—Ms. Sharon Mohammed and her colleague for being here. So, at this time we will want to suspend to allow you to take your leave and thank you once again for coming.

Mr. Camacho: Thank you very much, Chairman.

12.36 p.m.: *Meeting adjourned.*