

Ministry of Information

Annual Report

October 2008 - November 2009



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- BOFC - Board of Film Censors
- CNMG - Caribbean New Media Group
- FoI - Freedom of Information
- GCU - Government Communications Unit
- GISD - Government Information Services Division
- GISL - Government Information Services Limited
- GoRTT - Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- GP - Government Printery
- Mol - Ministry of Information
- MTC - Ministerial Tenders Committee
- NALIS - National Library and Information System Authority
- NATT - National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago
- PRESD - Property and Real Estate Services Division (MPA)
- PSES - Public Service Employees Survey

FOREWORD

The overall goal of the Information Ministry was to ensure transparency and accountability in government communication activities as an aspect of good governance. The Ministry did this by coordinating, monitoring, and guiding communication and information management policies and standards throughout the network of governmental agencies, and, by facilitating citizens' and the media's right to access public information.

The Ministry's primary objective in the area of government communications was to ensure that information on government policies, programmes, services and initiatives is provided to the public in a manner that is timely, accurate, relevant and complete.

For the past couple of years the Ministry has been actively engaged in the process of transforming the way in which it provides quality customer service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Through healthy and meaningful transformation of its functions and the transformation of its Divisions and Agencies, the Ministry continued to seek to provide timely and quality service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Using up-to-date technology, upgrading of its facilities, training of its employees, and adherence to best practices, the Ministry has, in no small way, assisted in the process of bringing the government closer to the people.

1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 Vision, Mission and Values

The primary goal of the Ministry of Information (Moi) was to be the leader for government communications, facilitating the creation of a nation of engaged, empowered and enlightened citizens.

To achieve this, Moi sought to deliver quality knowledge products, which ensured that our citizens were prepared for, and engaged in, the developmental process of our nation by being connected and informed.

In support of the above, the Ministry identified and developed values that were used to guide its actions and activities. These values were Integrity, Honesty, Collaboration, Teamwork and Respect.

The Ministry has responsibility for the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago (NATT), Government Printery and Government Communications. It also has oversight responsibility for the National Library Information Systems Authority (NALIS), the Board of Film Censors, Government Information Services Ltd (GISL) and the Caribbean New Media Group (CNMG).

The thrust of the Ministry and its agencies lay primarily under the Vision 2020 pillar of Promoting Effective Government. In this regard, many of its projects were designed to enhance operating frameworks in terms of improved or upgraded communication systems, both technologically and procedurally. Continuous review and revision of policies helped to keep agencies on the cutting edge of communication/information management.

1.2 Strategic Priorities 2009-2010

1.2.1 Focus on Transformation

1.2.1.1 Present Situation

The Ministry of Information was created in December 2007. Many of its functions were previously carried out by the Ministry of Public Administration and Information. Since its inception, the Ministry has been a coordinating and monitoring authority, and a policy centre, with the overarching goal of ensuring transparency and accountability in government activities as a key element of good governance. As such, the Moi has been continuously seeking to improve the quality of information and information services that were provided internally to Ministries and State Agencies and externally to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Moi was tasked with some key roles including, leading government communications; coordinating, monitoring, and guiding policies and standards throughout government agencies; facilitating access to public information for citizens and the media; providing printing services; and providing archival research services.

1.2.1.2 Reasons for Transformation

Within democracies, communications play a crucial role in keeping citizens informed of their rights and responsibilities, and in building support for policies amongst staff, stakeholders and the public. Communications is also important to assist with the successful implementation of programmes and campaigns, in particular those that promote the social and economic development of the country and its image and reputation abroad. In more developed countries, as "information" becomes a more significant part of the economy, so the role and importance of communication between government and the citizens grows also.

Feedback from employees of the Ministry as well as citizens indicated the need for the Ministry to:

- Provide timely, consistent and credible government information and communication
- Ensure that citizens can contribute to the decisions made by government, which will affect them
- Provide more modern and relevant physical environments as well as state of the art technology to access

- government information and collections
- Ensure effective business operations
- Have in place relevant guidelines, policies and procedures to support internal operations and facilitate implementation of appropriate legislation
- Facilitate training that can assist employees to do their jobs better and provide better customer service

The Ministry of Information sought to transform itself to meet these objectives and to ensure that the Divisions and Agencies for which it was responsible, discharged their functions effectively and efficiently. Toward the objective a Strategic Intent document was developed in 2008 and arrangements commenced in the latter half of 2008 with interviews and workshops facilitated by external consultants to develop a strategic plan to set clear goals for the transformation process. Once strategic objectives were clarified a procurement process was commenced for training consultants to prepare a training plan with a view towards enhancing the capacity for transformation in the Ministry.

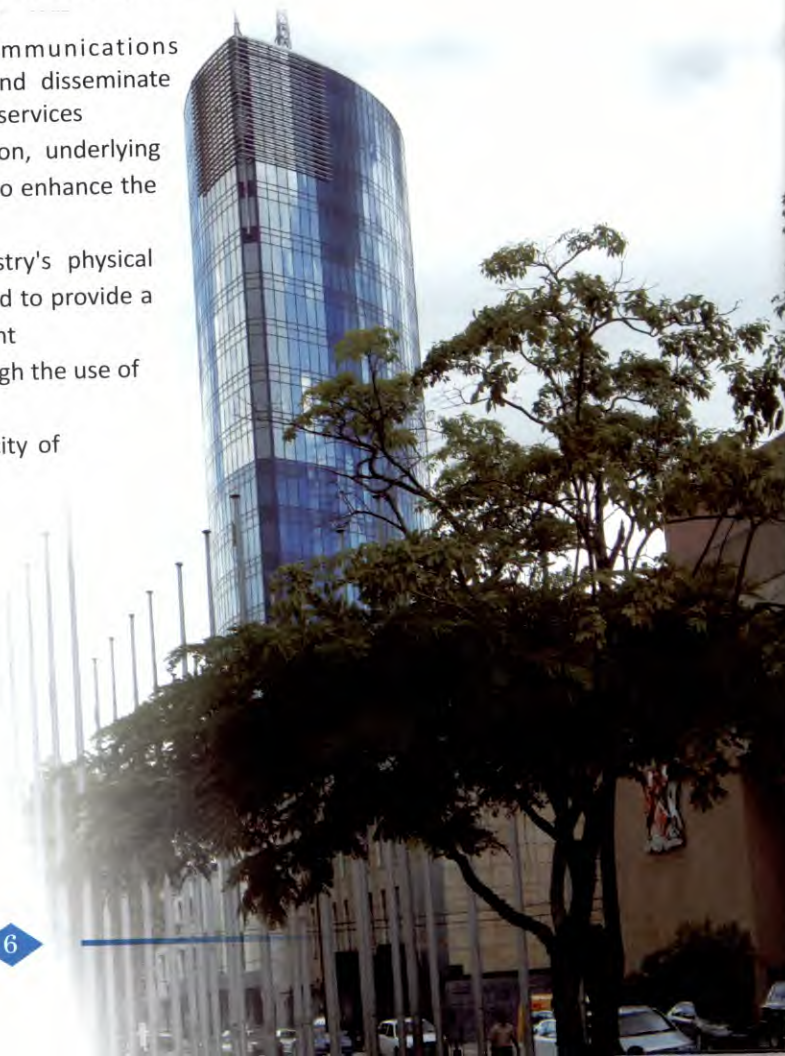
Capacity enhancement would allow for staff to embrace new mechanisms and technologies, to transform the way the Ministry stores, processes, accesses and disseminate information. It was also agreed that the modernization of its institutions was a priority to ensure that the Ministry could meet the needs of the citizens in an open and effective manner.

In the delivery of this mandate, all Division and Agencies of the Ministry were engaged in transformation of the organization.

1.2.1.3 Results of Transformation

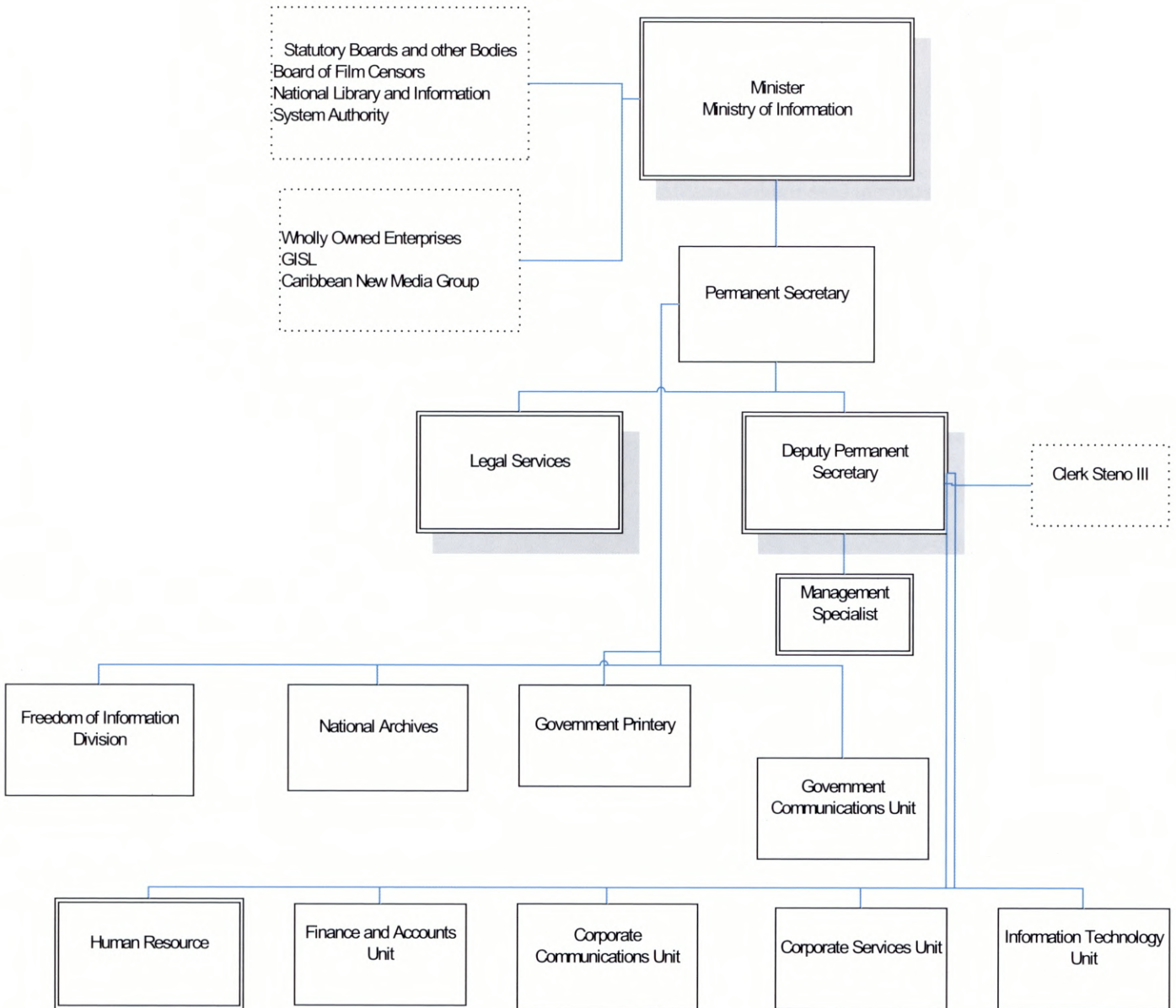
In implementing the Transformation Process, a number of objectives were identified to help the Ministry achieve its mandate of being a major supporting arm of Government's initiatives. These major objectives included:

- The development of an integrated communications approach to enhance the ability to create and disseminate information about government programmes and services
- The modernisation of Mol's policies, legislation, underlying business models and organisational structures to enhance the delivery of services
- The upgrade and maintenance of the Ministry's physical infrastructure to improve access to services, and to provide a safe, healthy and productive working environment
- The expansion of access to Mol's services through the use of information technology
- The strengthening of the capability and capacity of staff and key stakeholders
- The fostering of a culture that supports business objectives



2.0 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Information is outlined below:



2.1 Services/Products Provided and Special Projects

2.1.1 Government Communications Unit

In furthering the communication effort, the Government Communications Unit (GCU) was guided by its mandate to enable an environment for communications best practice across government ministries and agencies, through the development of policies and strategies; and the monitoring and evaluation of communication initiatives. The Unit also continued to develop and implement strategies to ensure a professional approach to government communications. This involved among other things, the development of communication policies and standards.

2.1.1.1 Government Communications Handbook

The Government Communications Handbook was prepared in an effort to ensure a consistent standard in terms of format and presentation of government communications. The objective of this document is to bring together formal rules, procedures and other mandatory guidance relevant to government communications.

The Handbook consists of four elements namely- the Government Communications Policy; a guide for senior public servants on strategic communications; a glossary of communications terms, and procedural guidelines inclusive of the Advertising Policy and Procedural guidelines; and the Crisis Communications Guidelines and Response Plan.

2.1.1.2 Government Communications Strategy

This Strategy was developed to enable government to communicate effectively, keep the public informed, explain new services and policies and build support for those policies and initiatives amongst stakeholders.

The Strategy document has been circulated to all ministries to provide context for and aid with the preparation of communication plans. All ministries/departments have been encouraged to submit communications plans with their budget estimates. Capacity development training and support has been made available to ministries /departments to assist in the achievement of this objective.

2.1.1.3 Government Communications Training

A number of training and networking sessions were held with government communicators to ensure a more professional approach to communications; enhance government communicators' skills, as well as the quality of work they produce. The sessions in this period included:

- Sensitisation on the GRID, the Advertising Policy and Guidelines
- Issues Management
- Audience Segmentation
- Crisis Communication
- Communications Plan Writing



2.1.1.4 Advertising Policy and Procedural Guidelines

An Advertising Policy and Procedural Guidelines were developed to clarify advertising procedures and standards to be observed by all Ministries and Departments and to ensure that all government advertising is well planned and implemented on a timely basis. Research pre and post campaign were identified as vital to ensure that all advertising campaigns meet the demands of the population. This document included guidelines for procuring such services through the Government Information Services Limited (GISL).

2.1.1.5 Government Services Marketing Programme

This programme sought to provide and promote a sustainable platform for the ministries and agencies to communicate their services via new media.

The Matthews' In the Middle Television Series was the first venture under this programme. Its format was a sitcom using a family and their daily activities, which involve interaction with government agencies to educate the public about these services in an entertaining manner.

2.1.1.6 National Identity Guidelines

Currently, there is inconsistency of presentation of the GoRTT's image across Ministries and Agencies as various institutions are applying inappropriate and varied branding systems to their internal and external products, often causing confusion with what can be referred to as the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) brand.

This draft document establishes clear and consistent guidelines for the branding of GoRTT. These Guidelines will ensure that The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is represented in a uniformed, clear and consistent manner.

The next step is to embark upon consultations with the various stakeholders from Ministries to move these Guidelines to move to a final state for submission to Cabinet. It is then proposed that the wider state sector and the public be invited to give feedback on the Guidelines proposed.

2.1.1.7 Crisis Communication

The Crisis Communications Guidelines and Response Plan were developed for the management of communications during national disasters. Such situations include hurricanes, tropical storms, earthquakes, terrorism, bomb threats etc. The primary objectives of these Guidelines and Response Plan are to:

- Ensure that consistent, comprehensible, timely and actionable information about potential and actual disasters is provided to the general public and the media to assist in protecting public safety; and,
- To safeguard the reputation of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sensitization sessions will continue to be undertaken to make government communicators aware of the role they would have to play and of the coordination structure in place for the dissemination of information to the public during a national disaster. The Guidelines outline key messages, checklists, communications templates, guidelines for spokespersons and other guidelines for handling each scenario.

2.1.1.8 Diaspora Connect

An International Relations Information Desk Diaspora Connect has been developed to provide all Overseas Missions on a daily basis with the Trinidad and Tobago News Summary and the Commonwealth News Summary. Sharing of these news summaries sought to ensure that the Missions were well informed and up-to-date on events and issues related to Trinidad and Tobago and to support the work of effectively managing the country's international profile.

The long-term objective of this initiative is to establish a portal, which will allow non-resident Trinidadians and Tobagonians, as well as friends of these islands to register for news feeds. They can then be asked to indicate their communication needs, to ensure that the information disseminated is what the audience wants. The impact of such a project would be that these persons are informed of developments in Trinidad and Tobago and if they are so inclined they can make a meaningful contribution to T&T's development process.

2.1.1.9 Communication of Government's Legislative Agenda

This programme is being developed to promote widespread awareness and understanding of the Government's Legislative Agenda. The Government Communication Unit coordinated with Ministries and the Government Information Services Limited (GISL) to develop campaign briefs to inform the public of the salient elements of upcoming legislation and the potential benefits to users when the legislation is passed. This approach has tremendous potential to enlighten the populace on policy issues.

2.1.1.10 Media Relations

To strengthen its networking and relationship with the media, the Ministry hosted its annual media event. This event was a forum for representatives of the Ministry of Information, as well as communications personnel from government ministries/departments and agencies members to meet and network in an informal setting with representative of all arms of the media.

During the period under review, the Ministry also partnered with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in a workshop for journalists of the region focused on improving and developing communications.

2.1.2 Staff training and engagement

2.1.2.1 Desk Manuals

A desk manual provides information on the purpose, duties and responsibilities of a specific job position, the tasks and activities to be performed by the officer occupying this position, and a step by step description as to how to perform the required tasks and activities in accordance with established policies, systems and procedures and clearly identified standards for performance. Desk manuals therefore serve as a work guide for new or temporary officers substituting for an absent officer. Desk manual training was provided for MoI Head Office staff and Divisional Heads. The training focused on the following areas:

- Why work documentation?
- Job specification vs. desk manual
- Components of a desk manual
- Desk manual format
- Example of a desk manual
- Steps in preparing a desk manual.

At the end of the training, all officers of the Ministry were required to complete a desk manual for his/her position and submit to the trainer and their supervisor for vetting after which the document was formalized.



2.1.2.2 Staff Rally

The findings of the Public Services Employees' Survey (PSES) that was conducted in 2008, indicated that there was an urgent need to share with all staff the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Ministry, as important building blocks for staff engagement, motivation and moving staff to be advocates for the Ministry's objectives.

In response to this, the Ministry's Executive Team agreed to the hosting of a Staff Rally for all employees. This event provided an ideal opportunity for the Ministry to begin to forge a more cohesive, focused, efficient and effective organization.

The rally was called "MoI Inclusive" and took place on June 18, 2009. It capitalized on the acronym for the Ministry of Information, "MoI" (French for ME) which was used to convey the message that the "change starts with me". It was used together with the word INCLUSIVE to emphasize that each employee is included, and that they are important and valued and can contribute to making the Ministry come alive.



Employees engaged each other during the day through a series of activities that included:

- A team building exercise
- a question and answer segment where prizes were won by individuals and a challenge trophy by the division/unit

- which correctly answered the most questions and,
- A mini exhibition for all Divisions and Agencies of the Ministry. This included GISL, NALIS and CNMG.

Motivational speaker, Dr Julian Ferdinand provided a dynamic and resounding presentation, which assisted employees in having a better understanding of the culture, which the Ministry was seeking to develop.

2.1.2.3 C'est Mol Activities

One of the main objectives of Ministry of Information's staff the values and behaviors of the Ministry among all employees were expressed as:

- I belong
- I inform
- I contribute
- I make a difference
- I produce results
- I own



In order to maintain employee engagement with the C'est Mol values the Ministry

- Provided opportunities for staff to feed their views and opinions upwards to the Executive Team through general staff meetings
- Kept employees informed about what is going on in the organization through the implementation of its online Newsletter "In the News"

Additionally to recognize, celebrate and reinforce the commitment of employees to the C'est Mol principles, the Ministry implemented "C'est Mol Day" on the 18th of every month. On this day, staff across the Ministry was encouraged to wear the Ministry's polo shirt which was issued to staff for the rally

2.1.2.4 Internal Newsletter

The "In the News" newsletter is an electronic newsletter that was distributed to all staff on a weekly basis. It provided information on current news, achievements, upcoming activities and events that were taking place across the Ministry its Divisions and Agencies.

The newsletter features articles contributed by the various units and divisions of the Ministry and embodied the sense of teamwork and participation, Which was known across the Ministry as the "C'est Mol" spirit.

2.1.2.5 Mol website

The Ministry of Information's began the development of its website to provide up to date information about the Ministry's products and services, as well as information on significant projects, initiatives and current news.



The website, www.moi.gov.tt will provide another avenue for citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and by extension the world, to access up to date information about the Ministry's products and services, as well as information on significant projects, initiatives and current news.

When completed the website will feature among other things, a Media Centre where press releases could be accessed, contact information for all the media houses in the country and electronic versions of the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette.

2.1.3 Freedom of Information Division

2.1.3.1 Training

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago implemented the Freedom of Information Act, 1999, (FOIA) on 20th February 2001. The purpose of the Act is to grant citizens access to government-held information that is not already present in the public domain. The Act enshrines the concept that information collected and generated by Government, is a resource of the people, for the people and is to be accessible as freely as possible by the people.

For the Act to be effectively administered by public authorities and utilized by the public, it must be communicated to all the stakeholders and tailored to suit their individual needs. To meet this need, a Freedom of Information Division (FOID) reports to the Minister responsible for information and was transferred from Ministry of Public Administration to Ministry of Information at the end of 2008. However the Unit was not formally resourced until 2nd February 2010. The main responsibility of this business area is to educate, train and advise key stakeholders on their rights and responsibilities to access information under the FOIA.

In exercising its function, the Division conducted sensitization sessions with the following organizations and groups in 2009:

1. Service Commission Department
2. Community Development Fund Secretariat
3. Board of Permanent Secretaries
4. Designated and Alternate Officers of the Judiciary

The Division has also recognized that there is an urgent need to conduct in-depth training with Designated Officers, that is, the officers responsible within each public authority for the initial receipt of, and action upon, requests for access to information.

In keeping with its mandate, the FOID proposes to host a series of training workshops for Designated, Alternate and Legal Officers of all public authorities starting in January, 2010. The FOI training workshop was intended to minimize the gaps that currently exist in administering the Act and to enhance the awareness of Officers in meeting the needs of the public in a professional, yet sensitive manner. The specific objectives of the workshop 2009 session were and the 2010 session will be:

1. To explain the meaning and value of the FOIA and, in so doing, foster a spirit of transparency and accountability within the public service
2. To demonstrate why the underlying principles of the Act are necessary for its successful implementation
3. To train Designated and Alternate officers to properly handle requests for information from the time of receipt to the response
4. To explain the process for applying exemptions through the use of the 'Public Interest Test'
5. To guide Designated and Alternate Officers on the full scope of their roles and functions as they pertain to the Act
6. To guide legal officers, as the main support body, in the decision-making and administrative processes, as they pertain to the Act

2.1.3.2 Website

The Freedom of Information Division (FOID) currently has a website that provides the public with basic information on the Freedom of Information Act (www.foia.gov.tt). In reviewing the needs of our stakeholders, the Division acknowledged the urgent need to upgrade the current website with a thrust towards encouraging two-way communication with its two main clients: the public authorities and the citizenry.

The website is being reconstructed in a more user-friendly and interactive format and will now include two separate interactive forums.

One forum will be dedicated to Designated Officers who will be able to post questions and comments on a case-by-case basis as it pertains to the workings of the Act in an effort to elicit sound and informed advice from the Freedom of Information Officers, as well as feedback and support from fellow Designated Officers.

The second forum will be used as a platform for citizens to get involved, whereby with blogs and a face book link within the website, they can connect and express their views and concerns and be able to get responses to frequently asked questions.

The website is also proposed to ensure updated news features and give answers to frequently asked questions so that the public is kept informed. All works on the website are carded to be initiated in 2010.

2.1.4 National Archives

The National Archives provides the following services:

- Research services available to all members of the public on a daily basis in our search room and via the internet
- Staging of thematic exhibitions and displays throughout the year in our search room and at other external venues
- Provision of records management guidelines and advice to Government Ministries and Agencies
- Restoration and preservation services offered to Government Ministries and Agencies.

Some of the major achievements of the National Archives in the period October 2008- September 2009 were as follows:

1. Expanded the outreach initiatives to include:

- Staging of Public Lectures and Exhibitions at:
 - Princes Town
 - San Fernando
 - Point Fortin
- Presenting an Information booth at the Emancipation Village

2. Laid the groundwork for the introduction of an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)

3. Embarked on a joint venture with NALIS to plan and implement a National Newspaper Digitization Programme.



4. Provision of reference services

Repository	
Number of Persons Served	1688
Number of Documents Accessed	4596
Number of Reproductions Supplied (Photocopies, photographs, scans)	6801
Number of Remote Queries (e-mail, post, telephone, fax)	201
Record Centre	
Number of File Requests	74

5. Participation in Outreach Activities

Activity	No. of Attendees
Exhibitions - Internal	97
Exhibitions - External	1030
Tours	85
Public Lectures	265
Display Booths	1400
Presentations on <i>The Role and Function of the NATT</i>	50

6. Conservation Activities

Activity	Quantity Completed
Produced	
Screw Post Binders	38 volumes
Pouching and Encapsulation	248 pieces
Bound	
Velo Binding Machine	49 volumes
Manually	13 volumes
Restorative Work (see note below)	
Restored and Bound works	47 volumes
Cleaned	100 volumes
Cleaned and Treated for Mould	309 volumes
Microfilm	
Quality Checks	51 rolls (35mm)
Cleaned	37 rolls (35mm)

Note:

Restorative work includes the following processes: deacidification, drying, cutting of material, patching, sewing, binding and blocking. Consequently, it can take approximately three (3) months to restore an item depending on the condition of the document.

7. Records Management

Provided consultancy services on the care and preservation of records of value and the preparation of retention and disposition schedules to the following eight (8) Government Ministries and Agencies:

- Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Company (T&TEC)
- Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA)
- Ministry of Public Utilities
- National Information Systems Centre (NISC)
- Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs
- Office of the Prime Minister, Accounting Division
- Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC)
- Ministry of Finance, Treasury Division
- Ministry of Works and Transport, Transport Division

8. Records Centre - Upgrade of the Facilities rented at Chaguaramas

- A new roof was installed by the landlord (NIPDEC)
- The following works were carried out in the Administration area by NATT:
 - Installation of four (4) five pound (5lb) carbon dioxide (CO2) fire extinguishers
 - New carpeting
 - Painting of the offices
 - Liaised with Property and Real Estate Services, Ministry of Public Administration to negotiate lease renewal terms with NIPDEC. This resulted in the production of a document that identified works that were the responsibility of the landlord and those improvements required by National Archives to ensure compliance with the OSHA law and improve the working environment.

9. Human Resource Management

- Training and Development

Conference/Course/Workshop/Seminar	Persons Attending
Making your Website Work for You (Illuminat Trinidad and Tobago Ltd and Ektron Inc.)	2
Ektron Certified Developer Training Program (Illuminat Trinidad and Tobago Ltd and Ektron Inc.)	1
ICT Business and Innovation Symposium	2
Computer Fundamentals Workshop	22
Society of American Archivist (SAA) Web Seminar: Archival Content Management Systems	8
Society of American Archivist (SAA) Annual Conference: Sustainable Archives Austin 2009	1
Chemistry for Conservators	1

- Staffing

Liaised with Personnel Management Consulting Division (PMCD) to identify staffing needs and prepared a draft revised organizational structure.

Cabinet approved the engagement on contract of the following, to address urgent operational needs:

- Four (4) Assistant Conservators
- One (1) Microfilm Technician
- Two (2) Research Clerks
- One (1) Information Technology Specialist
- Two (2) Senior Archives and Records Officer

10. Information Technology

Activity	Remarks
Website Administration	Restructuring of the website is ongoing Updates are done on a weekly basis
Help Desk	428 requests for assistance have been successfully answered. Steps are being taken to merge the NATT help desk with the MOI help desk.
Hardware Management	Routine hardware maintenance has been carried out bi-monthly
Software Management	Microsoft Office 2007 has been fully implemented. Outlook 2007 has been configured with MOI email accounts for all staff. Routine Software maintenance has been carried out weekly
Special Projects	A Query Register Management System database has been developed, tested, implemented and maintained successfully. Training was carried out on the use of the desktops and network resources Present at the NATT.

2.1.5. Government Printery

The Government Printing Office was officially established in 1873 at No. 9 Chacon Street, Port of Spain. Mr. Henry James Clark, the then owner of the *Port of Spain Gazette*, became the first Government Printer.

The primary reason at that time for the establishment of a Government Printery was the printing of the *Gazette*. However, due to economic development, which required the need for a greater flow of information, the services of the Government Printery had to be expanded. Further, because of the ever-increasing demand placed on the organization, it became necessary to keep up with technological advancement. This led to the setting up of a computerized letter assembly area and introducing fully automated, high-speed printing and binding machines. Since then, however, there has not been a proper alignment between workload and technological capability and workflow processes.



Cabinet approved an Action Plan for the rationalisation of the Government Printery in May 2008. A transformation team was established which included union representation. This Committee has examined the Printery's business processes, human resources and printing capability to make recommendations to bring the Printery in line with technological advancements and modern printing practices and techniques.

2.1.5.1 Development of Government Printery Business Model

Achievements to date include:

- Introduction of the Electronic Gazette on Government's Web site making the gazette available to the general public on the internet at www.news.gov.tt
- Revision of the distribution quota for the printed gazette which resulted in a reduction by 90% of the printing of the hard copies
- The training of staff that interfaces directly with the public and stakeholders in Customer Service was successfully completed. Refresher courses will continue to be provided.
- Internal communications were tremendously improved resulting in a closer link between the executive and staff at the lower levels
- Staff sensitization sessions were conducted on the transformation process and follow up work done on several long outstanding HR matters.
- Several Health and Safety issues were and are being addressed with the formulation of Health and Safety Committee
- A survey of Ministries and Departments was conducted to identify the precise volume and nature of printed jobs required to be produced by the Government Printery on their behalf

- Work continued on the drafting of a Transformation Policy and Plan for the new business model, the preferred option being the establishment of a statutory authority.
- A survey of Ministries and Departments was conducted to identify the precise volume and nature of printed jobs they require the Government Printery to produce. The ultimate objective being to establish which documents the Government Printery must continue to print and to establish demand so that steps would be taken toward employing a “just in time” inventory approach.

2.1.5.2 OSHA Compliance

The Government Printery also took steps to ensure that it is well set to become compliant with the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Among the steps taken were:

- The formation of a Committee to deal with OSHA issues at the Government Printery
- A survey by the Fire Prevention Unit of the Fire Services and the submission of a report.
- The Implementation of the findings of the said report is still ongoing.
- The establishment of a muster point.
- The replacement of a Diesel forklift with an electrically operated forklift.
- The issuance of tenders to engage service of providers, to address some of the health and safety matters at the Government Printery.

2.1.6 Government Information Services Division

The Government Information Service, formally the Information Division was developed as an institution to improve the two-way communication between the Government and the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Information Division began as the Public Relations Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister in the 1950s, and was replaced by the Ministry of Information from 1982 to 1986. In the years following, the organisation was aligned with several ministries based on the preference of the Administration of the day. At present, it is now the Government Information Service Division, in the Ministry of Information.

2.1.6.1 Responsibilities prior to the Establishment of Government Information Services Limited

- **Photographic Unit** - Provides photographs of all Government officials and events and distributes to all Ministries, agencies and citizens.
- **Television Unit** - Provides coverage of all events, distributes as requested especially to media, and creates television programming that projects the goals, objectives, policies and achievements of Government.
- **Radio Unit** Provides coverage of all events and produces radio programming that projects the goals, objectives, policies and achievements of Government. The Unit also provides audio services to ministries and government agencies.
- **The Print/Public Relations Unit** is responsible for outgoing press releases on Government activities reaching the media. The unit also monitors the public's response to Government policies and programmes.
- Repository of government's audio, video and photographic heritage material

2.1.6.2 Present status of GISD

Cabinet, by Minute No. 1185 of May 18, 2006, agreed to the establishment of a company, Government Information Services Limited (GISL), as a state owned limited liability company, which will report to, and be under the supervision of the Minister responsible for Public Information.

Cabinet further agreed that the Chief Personnel Officer develop an enhanced Voluntary Separation of Employment Plan (VSEP) for the officers in the technical stream together with (3) daily-paid watchmen who are employed in the GISD. The non-technical public officers it was agreed would be redeployed in the wider public service (Minutes No. 3107 of November 30, 2006 and No. 1846 of July 9, 2009 refer).

In light of the above decisions a phasing out of requests coming to the GISD has been slowly taking place. An inventory of equipment at GISD was completed and reviewed by the Auditor General's Department. Cabinet has approved a priority list for redistribution of equipment, while some will be held for archival display purposes. An inventory of all media assets has been completed and the Auditor General's Department will be asked to audit this material in 2010.

2.1.6.3 Achievements

All Units met the communication needs and requests through dissemination of Information.

The Radio Unit fulfilled the Division's obligation in maintaining weekly radio production schedules, even with limited studio facilities.

The Photographic Unit has continued to provide photographic services to traditional external clients schools, ministries, NGO's, state enterprises.

The Television Unit's mandate has progressively been taken over by the GISL, but during the year has continued to provide assistance when requested.

To assist the GISL in becoming operational some equipment from GISD has been transferred on loan to GISL. Equipment located at GISD is utilized to assist GISL in providing weekly programmes to the television stations and assistance continued to be rendered on a weekly basis with respect to scheduling.

The Print and Public Relations Unit continued to disseminate information via press releases. These requests were principally from the Office of the President and the Office of the Prime Minister.

Director of Information/Administration Officers and staff kept all the administrative responsibilities of the Division functioning, pending closure.

The Board of Film Censors administrative secretary is located at the Division. Her responsibilities include scheduling of films to be censored, attending board meetings and preparing the monthly pay sheet for The Board. These functions are carried out by a Clerk/Stenographer II.

Over the past year, in spite of the prospect of closure, challenging situations, and low morale, the GISD staff strove to fulfill its mandate.

2.1.7 Board of Film Censors

The Board of Film Censors is a statutory body, which falls under the purview of the Ministry of Information. It is made up of fourteen members who are appointed by the Minister responsible for Information and comprises representatives from the Government Information Services Division; Ministry of National Security; Tobago House of Assembly; the Inter-Religious Organization; the Film Distribution Industry and the public.

The Board is responsible for the censoring of cinematograph films, trailers and posters. The daily operations of the Board are carried out by a Secretary. The Board meets monthly and upon request, rates films, trailers and posters. The Secretary to the Board is housed in the Government Information Service Division.

Cabinet has approved a policy that would see the conversion of this agency from a censoring to a rating agency, more akin to what obtains in developed nations.

2.1.7.1 CEVE (Cinema Exhibition and Video Entertainment) Consultation

In early 2006, the then Ministry of Public Administration and Information (MPAI) was asked by the Law Reform Commission (LRC) to review their proposed Bill to revise the legislative framework for the administration of Cinematograph Exhibition and Video Entertainment (CEVE) in Trinidad and Tobago. The framework proposed was geared primarily to broadening the Censorship powers of the Film Censors Board to include new formats, particularly video and DVD, and to providing for the licensing of Video Store Proprietors via Magistrates' Courts.

From February to March 2008, the MoI engaged the Film Censors Board to gain their feedback on the proposed policy. This feedback led to the strengthening of the policy concerning the appropriate administration of the sector and compliance with intellectual property concerns. Pursuant to this internal review, it was recommended that wider engagement is required to mature the policy for the preparation of regulatory instruments. To this end, Cabinet by Minute No. 79 of January 15, 2009, agreed:

- to approve, in principle, the Draft Policy for Cinema Exhibition and Video Entertainment in Trinidad and Tobago; and
- that the Draft Policy be published for public comment with a view to being converted into a Green Paper for subsequent submission to Cabinet.

In 2009, the Policy Green Paper underwent two phases of public consultation. The first phase began on May 2 2009 and closed on June 30, 2009. This phase generated significant comments from varied participants in the public and private sectors as well as civil society, including:

- The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce;
- The Home Entertainment Committee, established by the Ministry of Legal Affairs;
- The Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago;
- The Trinidad and Tobago Computer Society; and
- Various private individuals.

The Policy was amended in light of these comments, and reissued for the second phase of public consultation in November 2, 2009. This phase also generated interest from a wide range of participants across public and private sectors and civil society.

Pursuant to this Workshop, the Policy was again amended to reflect the convergence of the stated objectives and guidance garnered from this process. These included:

- The alteration of the authorization frameworks proposed such that both Exhibitors and Proprietors are required to register their operations with the Authority;
- The strengthening of the proposed Classification Scheme and Equivalence Framework to better cater for existing systems of software and video classification;
- The revision of the Exhibitor's and Proprietor's obligation to display the classification by including provisions such that only Authority-issued labels should be used for this purpose;
- The revision of the Classification Scheme's obligations such that only the most severe classifications are accompanied by strict restrictions and associated enforcement provisions with regard to accessibility to minors; and
- That venues can be licensed for exhibition on a temporary basis so as to provide for the execution of limited presentation of such product at fairs and festivals.

Other salient points identified by stakeholders throughout the consultative process include:

- Whether the function of the proposed Sector Regulator should be applied to content accessed or downloaded via the Internet. It is recommended that such advisory services can be provided as an additional service, but without any statutory obligation at this time.
- That surplus revenues from the operation of the Authority may, instead of being returned to the Consolidated Fund be reinvested into the enhancement of the domestic film and video entertainment development industry. This is an interesting concept that will require harmonisation with the role and function of the Film Company of Trinidad and Tobago
- That the question of copyright, and how the imperatives of copyright protection will affect common domestic trends in video entertainment, will be critical in the implementation of this Policy and its impact on the public. Accordingly, it has been recognised that the functions of this body may have some synergies with the strategies proposed by the Home Entertainment Committee established by the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Following the consultation process, the Ministry intends to submit in 2010, the revised Cinematograph Exhibition and Video Entertainment Policy for its approval. Following this, the necessary legislation will need to be drafted and when approved by Cabinet it would be laid in Parliament. This will amend the previous legislation and create the legislative framework for the creation of the Film and Video Review Authority.

The Ministry has undertaken preliminary work to develop an organisational structure and other frameworks to determine the expected operating cost of this Authority and facilitate its timely implementation. Once the Draft Policy is approved, it will be necessary to engage the Public Management Consulting Division of the Ministry of Public Administration to finalise an organizational structure for the proposed statutory body. The outcome of such an engagement will be submitted to Cabinet.

2.2 Delegated Levels of Authority

2.2.1 Administrative Functions

The Permanent Secretary, supported by the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Corporate Services and Human Resource Management Divisions continue to administer the functions devolved by the Chief Personnel Officer and functions delegated by the Public Service Commission. The table below describes the functions devolved by the Chief Personnel Officer.

Monthly Paid Employees	Daily-rated Employees
Contract employment	Duty Leave
Secondment	No Pay Leave
Duty Leave, Special Duty Leave	Time off/Leave for Union sponsored seminars or other similar activities
Special Leave	Study Leave
Accumulation of Leave	No Pay Study Leave
No Pay Study Leave	Special Leave
Leave of absence without pay	Leave for Union Business
Extension of Sick Leave, Injury Leave	Normal Sick Leave
Leave to pursue course in Trade Unionism	Extension of Sick Leave
Compensation in lieu of uniforms not issued	Time off as Union Representative
Compensation in lieu of annual vacation leave	
Separation Allowance	

2.2.2 Regulations related to Acts of misconduct / discipline

Regulation	Acts of Misconduct/Discipline
135 (1)	Failure to attend to matters promptly within the scope of office
135 (2)	Lack of courtesy to a member of the public or other public officer
135 (3)	Wilful failure to perform duties
136 (1)	Absence with leave or reasonable excuse from office
136 (2)	Failure to seek approval to leave the country
137 (2)	Failure to disclose activities outside Service
140	Breach of rules relating to broadcast
141	Indebtedness to the extent that impairs efficiency, etc
142	Failure to notify bankruptcy proceedings
149 (1) (a)	Failure to perform duties in a proper manner
149 (1) (b)	Breach of written law
149 (1) (d)	Behaviour that is prejudicial to, or discredits the Service
149 (2) (b)	Disobedience to orders
149 (2) (d) and (f)	Neglect of duty
149(2) (g)	Unlawful or unnecessary exercise of duty
149 (2) (a)	Absence without leave from office or habitually irregular arrival /departure from office
149 (2) (a)	Persistently unpunctual
149 (2) (c)	Unfit for duty through drunkenness or use of drugs

2.2.3 Financial Functions

The Permanent Secretary (Accounting Officer) is authorized to award contracts for the procurement of goods and services up to a limit of TT\$500,000.00 and for consultancy services up to a limit of TT\$200,000.00.

The Permanent Secretary delegated responsibility, only in respect of the procurement of goods and services are as follows:

- Deputy Permanent Secretary - \$150,000.00
- Heads of Divisions - \$50,000.00

2.3 Reporting Functions of the Ministry 2008-2009

	Line Minister	Ministry of Planning Housing and the Environment.	Ministry of Finance	Auditor General	Chief Personnel Officer	Public Service Commission	Cabinet	Parliament	Policy Monitoring and Education Unit, Office of the Prime Minister
Annual Operating Budgets; Strategic Plan	X		X				X		
Monthly Financial Reports			X						
Annual Performance Reports	X		X				X	X	
Status Reports on the Vision 2020 Operational Plan		X							
Annual Financial Report			X	X					
Monthly Status Report on PSIP			X						
Monthly reports on Devolved Functions					X				
Annual Administrative Report							X	X	
Quarterly reports on Delegated Functions						X	X		
Freedom of Information Annual Public Statement	X								
Ministerial Performance Management Framework									X

3.0 FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

3.1 Budgetary Process

The Mol is funded through the system of Parliamentary appropriations, where approved funds identified under the various sub-heads are disbursed through the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance releases funds to the Ministry of Information from the Consolidated Fund. Cheques can only be issued on the Exchequer Account on receipt of credit, approved by the Comptroller of Accounts.

3.2 Expenditure versus Budget

For the financial year October 01 2008 to September 30, 2009, the Ministry of Information was allocated \$378,938,479.00 to execute its mandate. Actual expenditure was **\$256,110,725.73** as shown in **Table 6** below.

The variance arose due to the following:

- Releases not always in keeping with requests

Sub-Head		Estimates Revised \$	Actual Expenditure \$	Variance \$
01	Personnel Expenditure	37,362,871.00	29,377,247.00	7,985,623.48
02	Goods and Services	45,044,847.00	31,406,747.45	13,638,099.55
03	Minor Equipment	13,390,345.00	1,444,654.58	11,945,690.42
04	Current Transfers and Subsidies	46,034,041.00	46,009,386.89	24,654.11
06	Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies	190,055,000.00	114,677,965.00	75,377,035.00
Total Recurrent Expenditure		331,887,104.00	222,916,001.44	108,971,102.56
09	Development Programme	47,051,375.00	33,194,724.29	13,856,650.71.
Total Development		47,051,375.00	33,194,724.29	13,856,650.71
Total Expenditure		378,938,479.00	256,110,725.73	122,827,753.27

- Non-receipt of acting approvals
- Vacant posts and contract positions not being filled
- Planned events did not materialize
- Procurement delays with respect to projects

4.0 PROCUREMENT

The Ministry of Information operates within the legal and regulatory framework of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance 22 of 1961, and the Central Tenders Board Regulations 1965. Their amendments and subsidiary legislation provide as follows:

4.1 Goods and related Services

- The Permanent Secretary (Accounting Officer) has the authority to award contracts up to a limit of **TT\$500,000** on the basis of at least three (3) quotes from bidders;
- The Ministerial Tenders Committee (MTC) of the Ministry of Information (Mol) may award contracts ranging in cost from **TT\$500,000 to TT\$1,000,000** by issuing public Tender Notices and/or selective letters of invitation with the relevant approvals; and
- The Central Tenders Board (CTB) may award contracts costing over **TT\$1,000,000** based on public advertising and/or selective tendering with the relevant approvals.

4.2 Consulting Services

- The Permanent Secretary (Accounting Officer) has the authority to award contracts up to a limit of **TT\$200,000** on the basis of at least three (3) proposals from consultants/consulting firms;
- The Ministerial Tenders Committee (MTC) of the Ministry of Information (Mol) may award contracts ranging in cost from **TT\$200,000 to TT\$1,000,000** on the basis of public advertising and/or at least three (3) proposals from consultants/consulting firms in cases where the MTC is satisfied with the justification advanced; and
- The CTB may award contracts costing over **TT\$1,000,000** based on public advertising and/or selective tendering where the CTB is satisfied with the justification advanced.