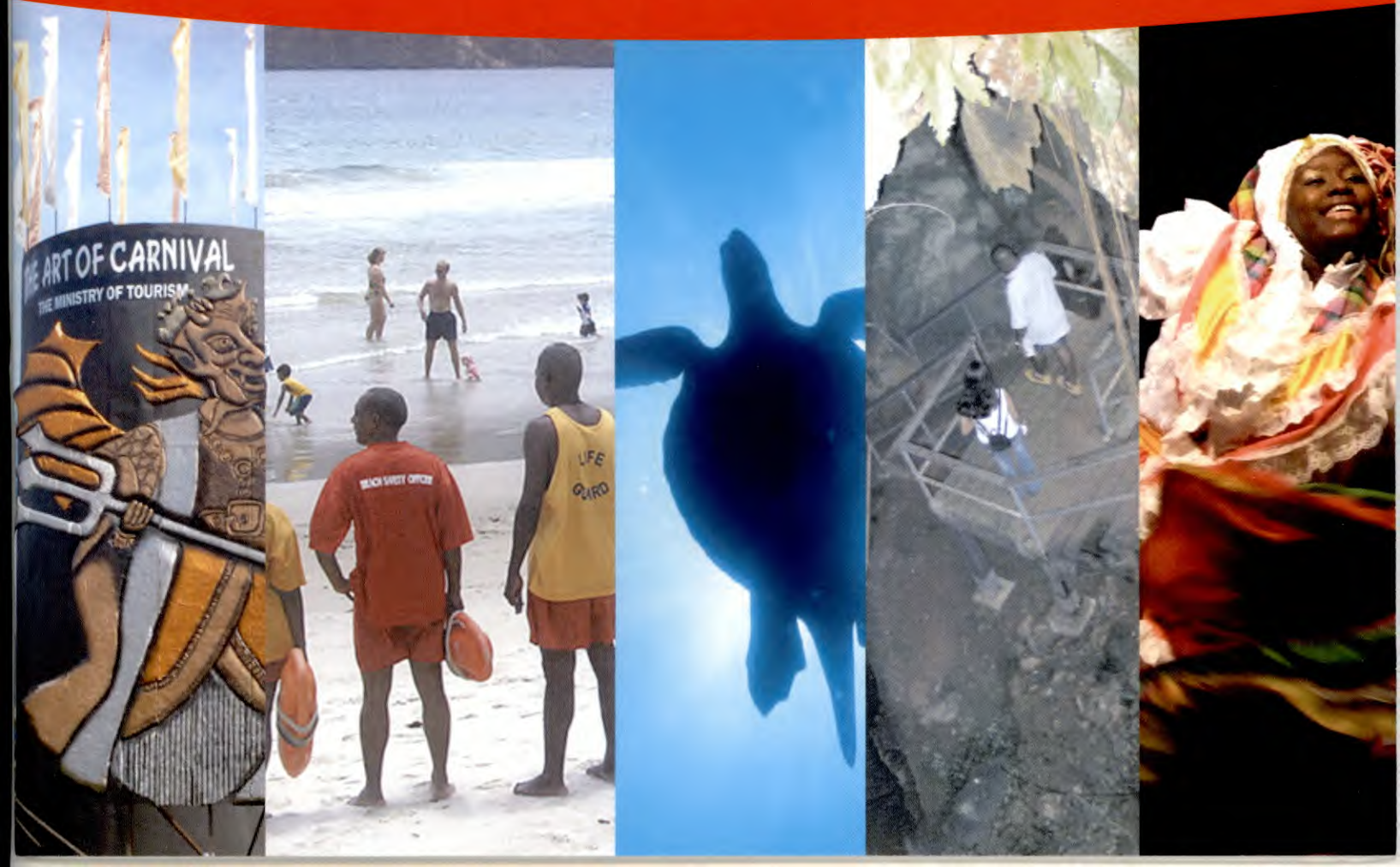




**MINISTRY OF
TOURISM**
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

MINISTRY OF TOURISM ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



MINISTRY OF TOURISM
ADMINISTRATIVE
REPORT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Tourism was established as a separate Ministry in 2003 and is responsible for tourism policy development; catalyzing and facilitating growth of the tourism sector; encouraging investment in the sector; building stakeholder partnerships; and monitoring trends in the tourism industry. The Minister of Tourism also has responsibility for the provision of lifeguard services at selected beaches, and for the Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC), the implementation and marketing arm of the Ministry, and the Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago which manages the operations of the Emperor Valley Zoo.

The strategic direction and operations of the Ministry of Tourism are guided by the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan for the development of the tourism sector to contribute significantly to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). During fiscal 2008, in pursuance of the development pillar of creating competitive business, the Ministry focused heavily on technical support and training for the sector, including community groups, and product development.

Accomplishments of the Ministry during the reporting period included the establishment of an office for the Trinidad and Tobago Tour Guides Association, and training of 841 stakeholders in a variety of skills, inclusive of customer service, professional culinary service, Spanish proficiency, HIV/AIDS awareness, disaster preparedness and energy conservation. Tourism awareness programmes were ongoing through water safety campaigns in the national media as well as in schools and communities, career fairs, and the generation of brochures and maps. National Tourism Week was celebrated in September 2008 with the theme, Challenge of Responding to Climate Change.

Fiscal 2008 saw the outreach by the Ministry to Local Government bodies which resulted in the provision of technical assistance geared towards the development of three (3) heritage sites, namely, the North Post Heritage site in Diego Martin, the Banwari Heritage site in Siparia and Devil's Woodyard in Princes Town. The Ministry also engaged community groups and public and private sector organizations to facilitate the upgrade/refurbishment of several sites and attractions throughout Trinidad with a view to enhancing the visitor experience and ensuring the maintenance of a quality product. Sites and locations that benefitted from these initiatives were the North-east region of Trinidad (Grande Riviere, Toco, Matura, Fishing Pond), Lopinot, San-Fernando Hill, the Indian Caribbean Museum and Gasparee Caves.

The Ministry of Tourism succeeded in 2008 in obtaining Cabinet approval for a Draft National Tourism Policy to be published for public comments and for two public consultations to be held thereon, one in Trinidad and one in Tobago. Also, a Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Tourism to review the incentives available to investors under the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22. The Committee submitted its Report to Cabinet in September 2008. Research projects resulted in the production of a study on the viability of Cruise Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago and the exploration of Sport Tourism.

Capital investment in the tourism sector in fiscal 2008 totaled \$886,800,000, with an estimated \$98,300,000 in revenue foregone. Total employment generated amounted to 2,427 jobs.

The Ministry launched its first two year lifeguard trainee programme in February 2008 to supplement the cadre of trained lifeguards to man the beaches under its portfolio. Professional training for serving lifeguards was also ongoing throughout the year.

The major challenges experienced by the Ministry of Tourism related to the lack of timely statistical data, human resource constraints due to the inability to attract and retain qualified staff, and inadequate office space. Despite these, the Ministry was able to meet its statutory obligations, particularly in its accounting and reporting functions, and made significant strides in establishing functional and productive public and private sector partnerships aimed at providing support to and facilitating the growth of the tourism sector.

2. BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Tourism was established in March 1994 to serve as a catalyst in developing Trinidad and Tobago as a premier tourist destination. The Ministry has seen a number of attachments to other Ministries and was eventually assigned its own portfolio and Minister in 2003. The Ministry of Tourism is mandated to play the lead role in the development of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago, working closely with the Tobago House of Assembly (THA). It is responsible for general tourism policy development, for catalyzing and facilitating growth of the tourism sector, for encouraging investment in the sector, for building stakeholder partnerships and for monitoring and evaluating trends in the industry.

The Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC) is the implementation arm of the Ministry of Tourism. This Special Purpose Company became operational in 2005 and is mandated to develop and market Trinidad and Tobago's tourism product and to grow the local tourism sector. This role was previously performed by the now defunct Tourism and Industrial Development Company Limited (TIDCO). While the Division of Tourism and Transportation of the THA is responsible for the development of tourism in Tobago, the TDC works closely with the THA in marketing the sister isle and in some areas of product development.

The Ministry of Tourism is also responsible for the Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago, which came under the purview of the Ministry in fiscal 2007, and for Lifeguard Services, which came under the purview of the Ministry in fiscal 2003. The Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago is responsible for the upkeep and operation of the Emperor Valley Zoo. The Lifeguard Services Division is responsible for delivering lifeguarding and water safety services, as well as maintenance and janitorial services at beaches in Trinidad which fall under its control.

3. VISION 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Ministry of Tourism is guided in its operations by the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. It is the intention of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago that by the year 2020, Trinidad and Tobago will have achieved developed nation status. The tourism sector is expected to play a critical role in the achievement of this goal, as it has the potential to contribute significantly to the nation's Gross Domestic Product, to generate employment, to earn foreign exchange, to alleviate poverty and to stimulate other industries and sectors within the national economy. Tourism is also seen as a potentially significant industry for diversification of the economy. The Vision, Mission and Goals for tourism as outlined in the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan are as follows:

Vision for Tourism

By 2020 tourism in Trinidad and Tobago will contribute significantly to the GDP, through job creation and increased revenues, driven by a uniquely differentiated internationally competitive product, complemented by comprehensive, fully functional physical infrastructure, modern competitive institutional framework and supported by the people of Trinidad and Tobago. The sector will be anchored by properly marketed flagship products with brand names that are globally well-known.

Mission

To fully develop Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry by the sustainable development and aggressive promotion of an innovative, differentiated, high value, internationally competitive visitor experience, supported by strong brand recognition, public and private sector partnership and a positive cultural transformation.

Goals

Eight (8) goals have been identified towards achievement of the Vision for tourism for 2020. These are as follows:-

- Goal 1. To ensure that the tourism sector is a development priority driven by a strong and effective public/private sector partnership
- Goal 2. To develop the Trinidad and Tobago tourism industry to realize its full economic potential.
- Goal 3. To institute investment incentives supported by efficient enabling procedures to ensure Trinidad and Tobago becomes an exciting risk-reduced investment opportunity.
- Goal 4. To ensure that Trinidad and Tobago has the supporting infrastructure necessary for sustainable growth.
- Goal 5. To position Port of Spain as the meetings and conventions capital of the Southern Caribbean.

- Goal 6. To upgrade Trinidad and Tobago's existing room stock to acceptable international standards and to establish a critical mass of new rooms and provide a full range of accommodation options.
- Goal 7. To build a service culture, and position Trinidad and Tobago as the country that provides the warmest welcome and highest level of international quality service in the Caribbean.
- Goal 8. To ensure that Trinidad and Tobago is marketed as a recognized tourism destination in every principal market.

Key Issues Facing Tourism

- Enlisting the highest level of Government support
- Development of a National Tourism Policy and Sub-Policies
- Increasing visitor arrivals and expenditure
- Expansion of room stock
- Expansion of airlift
- Branding of the destination
- Sustainable improvement of the tourism product
- Improvement of destination competitiveness
- Building of public awareness and buy-in to tourism
- Building an Information Database
- Ensuring environmental sensitivity
- Developing an effective institutional structure
- Proactive approach to destination marketing
- Fostering human resource development
- Gaining buy-in at both public and private sector levels

Strategies

The Ministry of Tourism focused on several initiatives during fiscal 2008.

These included:

1. Establishment of a National Tourism Policy.
2. Continued effort at streamlining of the **incentives** offered to investors in tourism projects, and at establishing the relevant investment guidelines to expedite the investment process.
3. Establishment of a Standing Committee on Tourism in Trinidad that will bring significant players together, to steer the development of the tourism industry. This Committee will function in a similar operational pattern to the Tobago Tourism Standing Committee.
4. Development of a high quality tourism product consistent with international standards.
5. Investment in human resource development on a sustained basis.
6. Engagement and empowerment of local communities in tourism planning and management to assist in the development of a sustainable tourism industry.
7. Establishment of partnerships between private and public sector agencies and institutions in order to enhance the development of linkages between tourism and other economic sectors.
8. Collaboration with the Central Statistical Office and other agencies in the collation of sound and timely research data that will inform tourism policy decisions and strategies.
9. Improvement in the standard and functioning of the Lifeguard Service
10. Oversight of the operations of the TDC.

4. FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

The Ministry of Tourism operates under the accounting system and budgeting process of the Public Service which is guided by the Exchequer and Audit Act, Chap. 69:01.

The budgeting process in the Public Service is administered by fiscal years. Each fiscal year begins on October 1st of the respective year and ends on September 30th of the following calendar year. The Budget of the Ministry consists of the Recurrent Budget and the Capital Budget or Development Programme. The Recurrent Budget is used to fund expenses associated with the day –to- day operations of the Ministry and includes items such as staff salaries, utility bills, and purchase of goods and services and minor equipment. Also included in this section of the Budget are funds allocated for the operations of the TDC and the Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago, which fall under the purview of the Ministry of Tourism.

The Development Programme of the Ministry consists of funds allocated to the Ministry for the implementation of various developmental projects, in keeping with the Ministry's mandate. Projects are categorized for funding under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) and the Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF). Projects may be infrastructural, that is, based on construction, refurbishment or upgrade works; or social in terms of building awareness and capacity geared towards the development and sustainability of the industry.

The Ministry prepares Annual Estimates for both Recurrent and Capital Budgets by May of each year and submits these to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment, in accordance with the Call Circular for the respective year. Funds are approved and allocated upon the reading of the National Budget by the Minister of Finance. At the mid-term of the financial year, a Mid Term Review is conducted by the Ministry of Finance. This exercise is a form of monitoring of the actual rate of implementation of projects provided for in the annual estimates.

Throughout the fiscal year, status reports which monitor progress in terms of project performance and expenditure are submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment. In this regard, monthly reports on the Recurrent and Capital Budgets are also submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

At the end of the fiscal year, an Achievement Report detailing all works completed under each project is prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment.

Upon finalization of the various Budgets for the accounting period, Appropriation Accounts are submitted to the Ministry of Finance accounting for all funds provided to the Ministry in the financial year and detailing all transfers and expenditure for the period.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The roles of the Ministry of Tourism are administered by five (5) core Technical Divisions comprising:

- Research and Planning Division – the responsibilities of this Division include research, planning, project implementation, as well as overall monitoring of the tourism sector; the Tourism Advisory Unit reports to the Director, Research and Planning and is responsible for tourism policy formulation and advice
- Investment Facilitation and Monitoring Division – this Division is primarily responsible for investment facilitation and for the administration of the provisions of the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22.
- Corporate Communications Division – this Division is charged with the responsibility of public awareness, corporate communications, media relations and related project execution.

- Legal Division – this Division is responsible for providing legal advice, legal drafting and legislative review.
- Lifeguard Services Division – this Division is responsible for aquatic lifesaving and other forms of public water safety, and for maintaining lifeguard towers and quarters as well as some level of beach maintenance at Lifeguard – patrolled beaches.

These Divisions are operationally supported by five (5) other Divisions comprising Human Resources, General Administration, Accounts, Audit and Information Technology. The roles of these Divisions are as follows:

- Human Resources Division - the primary responsibilities of this Division are to handle all Human Resource issues relating to filling of vacant positions, facilitating the creation of new positions, training and developing staff, administering staff benefits and supervising the IHRIS system.
- General Administration Division – this Division is responsible for the administration of records management via Registry, messenger and mail support; procurement of office machines and supplies; and facilities management; as well as the provision of a safe and comfortable work environment for staff.
- Accounts Division – the main responsibility of this Division is to ensure that the financial resources of the Ministry are prudently managed in keeping with the Ministry’s mandate and in accordance with the Exchequer and Audit Act.

- Internal Audit Division – this Division has been charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the financial and physical assets of the Ministry and ensuring that operations of the Ministry are compliant with the Financial Regulations.
- Information Technology Division – the Division has responsibility for the effective design, implementation, maintenance and strengthening of institutional technologies that improve service quality, and increase efficiency/effectiveness in operations of core and administrative units.

The Ministry's Organisational Chart is attached as an Appendix.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

The Ministry of Tourism has fifty-seven (57) members of staff on its Staff Establishment as well as thirty (30) contract positions, fifteen (15) of which were vacant in 2008.

The Ministry also had four (4) On –the- Job Trainees and two (2) interns on short term contract. The daily - rated workers attached to the Lifeguard Services Division totaled one hundred and ten (110) in number.

Positions on the Ministry's Staff Establishment are filled by the Public Service Commission, while contract officers are recruited by the Ministry through the advertisement of contract positions and upon selection contractual agreements are formed.

Trainee and Intern positions are often filled by entering into contractual agreements with persons identified through the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality Training Institute and the University of the West Indies.

7. PROCUREMENT

The Ministry of Tourism's procurement system operates in accordance with the provisions of relevant legislation and Public Service procedures and policies, and ensures that the principles of transparency, accountability and value for money guide all decisions. The Central Tenders Board Ordinance No. 22 of 1961 outlines procedures to be followed to obtain the most suitable supplies and services.

In the purchase of goods and services, the Permanent Secretary has the authority to expend up to five hundred thousand Dollars (\$500,000), and the Ministerial Tenders Committee has authority for expenditure between five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) and one million dollars (\$1,000,000). Purchase of any goods or services over the cost of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) is managed by the Central Tenders Board. The Permanent Secretary also has the authority to procure consultancy services up to a maximum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).

Tender Procedures used by the Ministry of Tourism

The General Administration Unit purchases goods and services for the Ministry. The Ministry has various methods of procuring goods and services, the most common of which is the use of the three-quotation system. This is where three quotes are received for the required good or service. These are then evaluated and suppliers are selected based on lowest cost for the required quality of good or service.

The Ministry also uses Open Tendering as a method of procuring goods and services of higher value. This is done by inviting tenders through advertisement in the local media. Bids are evaluated upon receipt and selection is made based on lowest cost for the required quality of good or service.

Selective tendering is used when only a few firms are able to supply the required good or service. These firms are given letters of invitation and terms of reference which detail specifications and instructions to tenderers. Within ten working days all bids must be submitted and as above, bids are evaluated upon receipt and selection is made based on lowest cost for the required quality of good or service. The procedure for a Sole Tender is the same as that for Selective Tendering but in this case only one bid is invited.

In the case of an emergency such as natural disaster, a Sole Selective Tender procedure would be used to procure goods and services required within a short time. This type of procedure requires the approval of the Minister of Finance.

8. REPORTING FUNCTIONS

This section details the types and purposes of Reports produced by the various Divisions of the Ministry of Tourism and the various users of this information. Reports are normally prepared on a daily, monthly, quarterly, half yearly and annual basis as follows:

1. Daily Reports

- Notification of Expenditure Report- this Report is prepared by the Accounts Unit and submitted to the Treasury Division of the Ministry of Finance. It details all records of expenditure by the Ministry on a daily basis.

2. Monthly Reports

- PSIP Status Reports – this Report is prepared by the Research and Planning Division and reflects actual expenditure, commitments and project performance on a monthly basis. This report is submitted for the consideration of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment.

- Vision 2020 Progress Report – this Report details the Vision 2020 goals for Tourism, proposed actions, target dates, responsible agencies, accomplishments and challenges. This Report is prepared by the Tourism Advisory Unit and submitted to the Minister and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism and the Trinidad Standing Committee on Tourism.

- Return of Expenditure – this Report details expenditure on each vote of the Ministry. It is prepared by the Accounts Unit and submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

- Reconciliation Statements – this Report reconciles the records of expenditure of the Ministry held at the Ministry of Tourism with those records held at the Ministry of Finance. It is prepared by the Accounts Unit and submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

- Application for Credits – this Report is used to apply for funds/ releases under the Consolidated Fund. It is prepared by the Accounts Unit and submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

- Transfer of Funds – this Report is prepared by the Accounts Unit and submitted to the Ministry of Finance. It identifies and requests approval for transfer of funds between votes with surpluses and shortfalls, to meet the financial commitments of the Ministry.

- Internal Audit Reports – Reports on the work of the Internal Audit Division are prepared and submitted to the Permanent Secretary.

Quarterly Reports

- Report on Tourism Investment – this Report details the investment incentives granted, revenue foregone and employment generated for the period through investment in Tourism infrastructure or ancillary services. This Report is prepared by the Investment Facilitation and Monitoring Division and submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

3. Half Yearly Reports

- At the mid-term of the financial year, a Mid Term Review is conducted by the Ministry of Finance. This exercise is a form of monitoring of the actual rate of implementation of projects provided for in the annual estimates. This Report considers both the Recurrent and Capital Budgets and is submitted for the consideration of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment.
- Tourism Statistical Database – This Report, which is an internal document prepared by the Research and Planning Division and submitted for the information of the Minister and Permanent Secretary, presents a statistical overview of performance in the tourism industry covering areas such as tourism arrivals, room stock, airlift and contribution to Gross Domestic Product.

4. Annual Reports

- Annual PSIP Achievement Report – This Report is prepared by the Research and Planning Division and details all works completed, expenditure and allocations under each project for the fiscal year. It is submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment.
- Report on Project Performance under the IDF - This Report is prepared by the Research and Planning Division and details all works completed, expenditure and

allocations for all projects funded under the Infrastructure Development Fund for the fiscal year. It is then submitted for the consideration of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and subsequently to the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, Housing and the Environment.

- Annual Administrative Report – this Report is prepared by the Research and Planning Division with inputs from each Division of the Ministry of Tourism. It gives an overview of the strategic focus and daily operations of the Ministry; highlights all achievements by Department for the year in review and any challenges that may have been experienced in the execution of the Ministry's mandate. This report is a statutory obligation for every Ministry and is to be submitted to Parliament annually.
- Freedom of Information Act Report - this Report is prepared by the Legal Division and is published in the newspapers. It describes the Ministry's mandate and the resources used to implement the strategic goals and objectives of the Ministry.
- ICT Inventory Questionnaire- This Report is prepared by the Information Technology Division and submitted to the Ministry of Public Administration. It details all IT hardware, software processes, and expenditure for the Ministry of Tourism.
- Input into the National Budget – this Report is prepared by the Research and Planning Division and submitted to the Ministry of Finance. It identifies key programme and project achievements and future plans with timelines and cost estimates.

9 INTERNAL AUDIT PROCEDURE

The main function of the Internal Audit Division is the conduct of audit exercises. The audit exercise must be identified and scheduled with the department which is to be audited. The audit is based largely on items of a financial nature which may include the audit of Vote Books, Pay Record Cards and the Advances Ledger. These items are then examined and compared with supporting documents such as the Schedule of Accounts, Salary Sheets, etc. in order to verify the accuracy and authenticity of all records and to protect the Government's financial and physical assets.

If records do not comply with financial regulations, an audit query is issued to which the non-compliant department must respond. External Auditors from the Auditor General's Department conduct annual audits on the Ministry and the relevant Departments must assist in the conduct of the exercise by producing the supporting documents for examination.

10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2008

This section identifies the role and responsibilities of each Division of the Ministry of Tourism, the achievements of each Division for fiscal 2008 and the challenges faced by each Division during the year.

I. Research and Planning Division

Role

The Research and Planning Division spearheads the Ministry's mandate of facilitating the development of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago, so as to increase its contribution to the country's economic and social development. The Division is involved in research and data collection to facilitate the planning and policy formulation process.

The Division also executes a number of Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) projects, and has a monitoring and control function as it relates to PSIP and the TDC.

Responsibilities

- To undertake economic research that facilitates advice and the effective and efficient monitoring of the industry.
- To prepare annual PSIP Budget Estimates for the Ministry
- To administer the release of funds from the Ministry of Finance to TDC and Zoological Society of Trinidad and Tobago, and towards the Ministry's PSIP
- To execute PSIP projects
- To monitor the progress of the Ministry and the TDC's achievements under the PSIP
- To maintain a Statistical Database of visitor arrivals and other tourism statistics
- To undertake research to facilitate the preparation of Cabinet Notes, Speeches, Media Briefs, Position Papers, and Comments on issues etc.
- To facilitate industry training to stakeholders including hoteliers, culinary artistes, community groups, etc
- To work with stakeholders in building awareness of career opportunities in tourism
- To provide Spanish Training to tourism industry stakeholders in keeping with Government's initiative to make Spanish the first foreign language of Trinidad and Tobago
- To assist in Strategic Planning for the Industry
- To work with Local Government bodies and community groups to foster community tourism development

Achievements

1. Industry Support

- The Ministry was instrumental in setting up an office for the Trinidad and Tobago Tour Guides Association

- Training was provided to 841 stakeholders in the industry including tour guides and operators, Port of Entry staff, transport operators and staff in the accommodation sector. The breakdown is as follows:
 - 140 tour guides and Port of Entry staff received training in Customer Service
 - tour guides and operators, transport operators and hotel staff benefitted from training in the Spanish Language
 - 33 persons involved in the food and beverage sector received training in Professional Culinary Service
 - 60 Managers in the accommodation sector benefitted from training in Disaster Preparedness and Energy Conservation
 - 95 tour guides from the communities of Lopinot; Brasso Seco; Diego Martin; and Salybia benefitted from training in the essentials of tour guiding
 - 50 tour guides received training in Protocol, First Aid and Water Safety
 - 200 members of staff from the Chaguaramas Development Authority, Tourist Taxi Drivers Association, Tour Guides Association, Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute and the Accommodation Sector were exposed to a series of HIV/AIDS Awareness Workshops

2. Building of Tourism Awareness through the promotion of various tourism related themes as follows:

- Celebration of National Tourism Week. The theme of the 2008 celebration was the “Challenge of Responding to Climate Change”. Partnerships were forged with the Forestry Division and activities included a tree planting exercise and an Energy Conservation Workshop for stakeholders to create awareness in this area.
- Conduct of tourism and water safety awareness programme in schools and communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Beneficiaries were: 1 Early Childhood Care and Education Centre; 42 Primary and 5 Secondary Schools; 1 Tertiary and 3 Technical Institutions; and 9 church, sporting and community groups.

- Participation in 3 Career Fairs at schools in collaboration with the National Training Agency, the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute and the Nazarene College.
- Brochures were developed for the Lopinot Tourism Action Committee, the Indian Caribbean Museum and on Careers in the Tourism Sector. Maps of Trinidad and Tobago were also developed for distribution.

3. Research Projects

- Leisure Hospitality and Tourism International was contracted to undertake a Study on the Viability of Cruise Tourism and Home Porting in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Research was conducted in the area of Sports Tourism and the following recommendations were made:
 - i. Development of a policy and strategy document for Sport Tourism
 - ii. Development of partnership between the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism to facilitate ongoing research to support the development of policy and strategy documents for Sport Tourism
 - iii. Establishment of a task force including representation from the private sector to manage and coordinate all aspects of Sport Tourism

4. Community Tourism

In 2008, technical assistance was provided to Regional Corporations for the development of sites and attractions within the respective regions as listed below. This was to ensure that stakeholders attached to community sites, were equipped with the necessary skills to operate effectively, and to encourage interest in investing in tourism at the community level.

- Diego Martin - North Post Heritage site
- Siparia - Banwari Heritage site
- Princes Town - Devil's Woodyard

5. Sites and Attractions Development

Enhancement works funded by the Ministry were conducted at several sites and attractions located throughout Trinidad to enhance the visitor experience and to ensure the maintenance of a quality product. Enhancement works were as follows:

Turtle Village Trust

- The Ministry collaborated with the Turtle Village Trust and BHP Bhilliton in doing tourism enhancement works in the North East region of Trinidad. Projects included capacity building and equipping of community groups in the areas of Grande Riviere, Toco, Matura and Fishing Pond; as well as a Signage project for those areas.

Gaspree Caves Enhancement

- The Ministry of Tourism and the Chaguaramas Development Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the infrastructural upgrade of the Gaspree Caves. Upgrade works included structural improvements, landscaping, and enhancement of security.

Lopinot

- Purchase of office supplies for the Lopinot Tourism Action Committee to facilitate the re-opening of its office and to enhance the efficiency of the organisation's administrative function.

San Fernando Hill

- Purchase of binoculars for the San Fernando Hill

Indian Caribbean Museum

- Upgrade works to the site to improve the visitor experience.

Salybia Ecological and Tourism Team (SeTT)

- The Ministry collaborated with SeTT in upgrading the beach facilities at Salybia to include washroom facilities and river recreational activities.

6. Air lift

The Ministry is represented on two Committees which deal with the issue of Airlift in Trinidad and Tobago. These are the Airlift Committee of the Tobago Standing Committee on Tourism and the Standing Negotiating Committee for Air Services Agreements. The major issues addressed include:

- CARICOM Multilateral Air Services Agreement
- Open Skies Policy
- Liberalized Air Service Agreements with the United States and the European Union
- Negotiations with International airlines to provide service to Trinidad and Tobago, with special emphasis on Tobago
- The provision of improved inter-island air transport to accommodate international, regional and domestic travelers.

Trinidad and Tobago as a member of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) is also represented at discussions related to the following:

- Competitiveness of the Caribbean's air transport sector
- Balancing the volatile international airline services
- The inescapable link between tourism and air transport
- The region's declining global tourism market share
- The escalating cost of regional air travel

Regional and International Initiatives

Conferences

The Ministry assisted with the hosting of the following meetings and conferences in 2008:

- CARICOM Meetings namely:
 - Meeting of stakeholders to review the Draft Report of the study of the costs of Air Travel in the Caribbean Region
 - Twenty-eighth Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) on Tourism Transportation and Civil Aviation
- Caribbean Tourism Organization – Business Meeting and Annual General Meeting and Elections

Challenges

Challenges faced by the Research and Planning Division include:

- **Statistics** – The Division collects data from a variety of sources and was faced with a number of difficulties as it relates to the collection of tourism related data e.g. varying figures, lack of available data in some areas which on occasion resulted in the untimely submission of reports.
- **Training** – There is a need to put in place a structured programme of training to build the capabilities of staff for the effective discharge of their functions.

II. Tourism Advisory Unit

Role

The Tourism Advisory Unit spearheads the Ministry's mandate of formulating Tourism Policy, through research and through representation at regional and international trade

and tourism negotiations. This is aimed at facilitating the development of the tourism industry in Trinidad and Tobago, so as to increase the contribution of the tourism industry to the country's economic and social development.

Responsibilities

- To spearhead the formulation of tourism policy, sub-policies and guidelines that would advance the country's tourism thrust and guide the development of the various niches being promoted.
- To collaborate with other Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, in forging policy positions relating to bilateral and multilateral international negotiations and Agreements
- To collaborate with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) in initiatives towards the development of a Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework for the wider Caribbean region
- To collaborate with the Research and Planning Division in the preparation of research documents eg. Cabinet Notes, Speeches, Briefs, and Comments/Advice on tourism related issues
- To collaborate closely with the TDC and stakeholders in the industry in the implementation of various projects/events
- To spearhead the planning and hosting of tourism-related events, conferences and workshops as they arise

Achievements

1. Revision of National Tourism Policy

Tourism Intelligence International was contracted by the Ministry of Tourism to revise the Draft National Tourism Policy. The Tourism Advisory Unit provided comments during the second quarter of 2008 for consideration in order for amendments to be made to the Draft National Tourism Policy. The comments included input from other Ministry of Tourism representatives. It was envisaged that these comments would then be incorporated in the revision of the Draft Tourism Policy by the Consultant.

The Revised Draft National Tourism Policy was submitted to Cabinet in the third quarter of 2008. Cabinet agreed that the Draft Policy be published for public comment and that the Ministry of Tourism host two (2) public consultations, one (1) in Trinidad and one (1) in Tobago.

2. Vision 2020 Status Report:

Beginning in September 2008, the Tourism Advisory Unit spearheaded the compilation of a monthly status report on the Vision 2020 Goals for the tourism sector. The status report included projects adopted by the Ministry of Tourism and the TDC towards the achievement of the Vision 2020 Goals for the sector.

3. Regional and International Initiatives:

▪ CARIFORUM/EU EPA

During the first quarter of 2008, the Tourism Advisory Unit provided comments in a Brief on the Review of Schedule of Commitments for CARIFORUM in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union for Tourism Services in terms

of specific areas of conflict between the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22, and the EPA.

This Brief was submitted to inform a report prepared by a Working Committee that was established to review Tourism Incentives for the Accommodation and Ancillary Sectors. The Committee comprised representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, the Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC) and the Tobago House of Assembly (THA).

Challenges

Human Resource Constraints

- There were human resource constraints within the Tourism Advisory Unit which significantly impacted upon the effective functioning of the Unit during the period August 2007 to July 2008. The posts of the Senior Tourism Advisor, Tourism Advisor I and Tourism Officer remained vacant during this time. Only the latter two positions were subsequently filled.

III. Investment Facilitation and Monitoring Unit

Role

This Unit is primarily responsible for investment facilitation and monitoring through the development of incentives, the administration of provisions of the Tourism Development Act and the monitoring of the accommodation sector in general and approved tourism projects. The activities of this Unit are carried out in collaboration with the Ministry's Legal Unit and the TDC's Investment Promotion Division

Responsibilities

- To appraise projects recommended for incentives by the TDC based on the provisions of the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22 (TDA)
- To facilitate the preparation of Final Orders based on the TDA so that investors could access final benefits and concessions
- To maintain an up-to-date and accurate database of approved tourism projects
- To facilitate the creation of a favourable investment climate for Trinidad and Tobago to be competitive with other Caribbean islands
- To formulate guidelines to facilitate the administration of the TDA

Achievements

Tourism Projects

- Investment incentives were granted to sixty-seven (67) tourism projects, of which three (3) were accommodation, sixty –one (61) were transportation projects, two (2) were boat projects and one (1) was a restaurant project.
- Total estimated capital investment amounted to \$886,800,000
- Total employment generated amounted to 2,427 jobs
- Total revenue foregone was estimated at \$98,300,000

This can be broken down as follows under the various categories of tourism projects:

1. Accommodation

In fiscal 2008, the accommodation sector saw incentives for refurbishment of two hotels as management sought to maintain standards and remain competitive. The total estimated capital expenditure for 2008 was \$49.2 million, while the revenue foregone was \$6.8 million. The 428 room Hyatt Regency Trinidad was completed

at an estimated capital cost of \$806.4 million. Employment generated as a consequence of the three accommodation projects was 2,243 jobs.

2. Taxis

In fiscal 2008, the total estimated capital expenditure was \$7.0 million while the revenue foregone was \$3.9 million. Sixty -one (61) persons benefited from these taxi incentives.

3. Boats

Two boating facilities received incentives in fiscal 2008. The estimated capital expenditure was \$4.2 million and the revenue foregone was \$500,000. Employment generated was estimated at 13 jobs.

4. Restaurant

One restaurant project received interim approval in 2008. The estimated capital expenditure was projected at \$20 million and the revenue to be foregone was \$4.6 million. It was estimated that 115 jobs would be created at both construction and operations phases. As at September 2008, the project had not commenced.

Grant of Final Approval for Tourism Projects

Fiscal 2008 heralded the final approval of projects under the TDA for the first time. Five out of fourteen projects recommended by the TDC for final approval were approved and the Orders published in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette, thereby allowing the investors to access their benefits.

Cabinet Appointed Committee to Review Incentives

On May 1, 2008, Cabinet agreed to the appointment of a Committee to conduct a review of incentives under the TDA and to submit a final Report to the Minister of Tourism by August 31, 2008. This Committee was established in June 2008 and was

chaired by the Permanent Secretary with support provided by the staff of the Investment Facilitation and Monitoring Unit. The work of the Committee concluded with the submission of the Report to the Minister of Tourism on September 4th 2008 and subsequently to Cabinet. The recommendations of this Report are expected to improve the investment climate for tourism by easing the conduct of business activities in the country as well as creating a more competitive package of investment incentives.

Challenges

- Insufficient technical staff to treat adequately with the issue of monitoring and to a lesser extent formulation of guidelines as there was only one member of the professional staff in the Unit during this period.

IV. Lifeguard Services Unit

Role

The Lifeguard Services Unit is divided into two sections, the Lifeguards Section which deals with the lifeguarding operations of the Unit and the Facilities Management Section which is responsible for the maintenance of lifeguard towers and facilities at patrolled beaches. The main responsibility of this Unit is to provide a safe environment at lifeguard patrolled beaches in Trinidad and to disseminate information on water safety in an effort to educate and protect visitors to the beaches and save or resuscitate lives.

Responsibilities

- To provide a safe bathing environment at the beaches in Trinidad that are patrolled by Lifeguards

- To encourage and use preventative lifeguarding methods which include marking safe and unsafe bathing areas and informing the public of the dangers that exist in and around beaches
- To assist bathers in distress and provide preliminary after-care and transport to a public health institution
- To maintain life-saving equipment
- To maintain lifeguard towers, facilities and surrounding environment
- To maintain a safe and clean beach environment

Achievements

- Provision of a daily lifeguard service at the following beaches: Maracas/ Tyrico, Las Cuevas, Manzanilla and Mayaro
- Provision of lifeguard service on weekends and Public Holidays at the following beaches: Salybia, Quinam, Los Iros and Vessigny
- Repair works to two lifeguard towers at Vessigny, two at Los Iros and one at Quinam
- Rebuilding of one lifeguard tower at Maracas
- Repair works to lifeguard towers at Indian Bay, Beaumont, Radix, Plaisance, Church Road, De Rose, St. Anns and Rabita in Mayaro
- Renovation of Public Change Rooms and lifeguard tower at Salybia
- Installation of Bilingual (Spanish-English) signs at Maracas, Mayaro, Manzanilla, Las Cuevas, Vessigny, Salybia, Quinam and Los Iros
- Institution of the Lifeguard Recruitment Programme in February 2008 to increase the pool of trained lifeguards available for recruitment into the Lifeguard Service. This programme commenced with an initial intake of 25 trainees.
- Purchase of one Ambulance
- Purchase of one lifeguard patrol vehicle
- Purchase of one bus to facilitate the transport of lifeguards to and from beaches
- Purchase of rescue and resuscitation equipment

- Provision of ongoing training programmes for lifeguards in the areas of physical fitness, use and maintenance of equipment, first aid and after - care of rescued persons.
- During fiscal 2008, 78 persons were rescued from drowning by Lifeguards. Unfortunately, 8 incidents of drowning occurred.

Challenges

- Inadequate security at lifeguard towers to prevent recurring incidents of vandalism which result in constant refurbishment works to ensure comfort of staff members.
- Shortage of manpower resulting in difficulty in maintaining an adequate Lifeguard presence at patrolled beaches.

V. Human Resource Management

Role

The role of the Human Resource Management Unit is to efficiently manage and maintain records of each member of staff in accordance with Public Service Regulations.

Responsibilities

- To fill vacant positions
- To facilitate the creation of new contract positions
- To train and develop staff
- To administer staff benefits
- To supervise the IHRIS system

Achievements

- Leadership Training was provided to 24 persons from Middle and Senior Management of the Ministry of Tourism
- 91% of vacancies in established positions and 30% of vacancies in contract positions were filled

- The Ministry of Tourism was positively recognized by the Director of Personnel Administration for the efficient management of staff vacancies due to sick or vacation leave under Delegated Authority
- Recruitment of trainees and interns in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality Training Institute and the University of the West Indies.
- Training was provided to monthly paid / senior/technical / general staff at a cost of \$ 212,880.07
- Training was provided to daily rated workers at a cost of \$633,206.12
- Staff participated in forty-one (41) training programmes as follows:
 - 13 programmes conducted by State Agencies
 - 25 programmes conducted by local private institutions
 - 3 programmes conducted by International Organisations
- There was no major industrial relations action taken as the Ministry engaged in monthly meetings with the representative Union, National Union of Government and Federated Workers (NUGFW), to address issues that could have become contentious.

Challenges

- Shortage of staff within the Human Resource Unit
- Unfilled positions in several Units throughout the Ministry

VI. Communications Unit

Role

The Communications Unit is responsible for the advertising and publicity campaigns of the Ministry of Tourism in order to promote the mandate of the Ministry, and “sell”

the roles and benefits of tourism to the local populace. The Unit also assists with strengthening linkages and forging relationships amongst internal and external tourism stakeholders.

Responsibilities

- To sensitize the public on the role and benefits of tourism.
- To keep the public informed on tourism policy and activities being taken to achieve policy goals as well as projects undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism.
- To monitor the comments and feedback of the public with respect to the performance of the Ministry, its agencies and the performance of the tourism sector.
- To develop and implement an effective internal communications strategy in the Ministry
- To develop and implement proactive, efficient and effective media relations so as to engender healthy communications between media practitioners and the Ministry of Tourism.
- To conceptualize, plan and implement events and special projects for the Ministry of Tourism.
- To collaborate with other Ministry Units and the TDC in planning events where necessary

Achievements

- Development of a customer- service series on tourism for radio, print and television.
- Published Quarterly Tourism Wrap Ups in the print media

- Promoted Water Safety campaigns
- Provided support for booth displays, career sessions and other promotional events of the Ministry and the TDC
- Provided protocol and logistical support to the Minister of Tourism at functions, meetings etc.
- Prepared speeches and briefs for the Minister and Permanent Secretary

Challenges

- Lack of effective communication flow between the Ministry of Tourism and its internal and external clients
- Inadequate staffing
- Inadequate feedback/information from Divisions to enable the Communications Unit to provide appropriate support.

VII. Accounting Unit

Role

The role of the Accounting Unit is to ensure that the financial resources of the Ministry are prudently managed in keeping with the Ministry's mandate and in accordance with the Exchequer and Audit Act. The functions of the Accounting Unit range from applying for the release of funds from the Ministry of Finance to giving an account to Parliament at the end of the financial year for all funds appropriated.

Responsibilities

- Budgetary Control
- General Accounting
- Payroll Accounting
- Reporting – Appropriation Account
- Financial Advice – Liaise with Financial Management/Treasury Officer in charge of the Ministry of Tourism

Achievements

- Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure completed within stipulated time frame.
- Appropriation Accounts submitted to the Auditor General's Department within stipulated time frame.
- TD 4s completed and distributed in a timely manner.
- Timely submission of monthly reports to Ministry of Finance
- Timely submission of quarterly projections and requests for releases to the Ministry of Finance.
- Training of staff in Accounting and financial regulations
- Timely payment of salaries and bills.

Challenges

- Problems experienced with IHRIS with respect to adjustments to salaries and wages.
- Lack of a dedicated messenger service to the Accounting Unit to facilitate timeliness of responses to requests by the Ministry of Finance and other governmental agencies
- Need for the relocation of the cheque dispatch Unit outside of the Accounting Unit

VIII. Internal Audit

Role

The main function of this Unit is to safeguard the financial and physical assets of the Ministry and to ensure that operations of the Ministry are compliant with the Financial Regulations.

Responsibilities

- To examine and evaluate the Accounting records of the various departments of the Ministry to ensure that proper procedure are maintained and Financial Regulations and Instructions are adhered to.
- To conduct audit examinations
- To ensure that proper procedures and systems are in place for review by external auditors
- To ensure that the established internal controls are effective and are functioning adequately

Achievements

- There was no excess of expenditure over income
- There was no incidence of fraud or misallocation of funds
- Fewer audit queries were issued as there was improved staff adherence to Financial Regulations

Challenges

- Current staff require more training in order to improve performance
- Travelling constraints hinder the conduct of certain audit exercises

IX. Legal Unit

Role

This Unit provides legal assistance and support to the Permanent Secretary and Heads of Divisions on all aspects of the Ministry's business and operations.

Responsibilities

- To provide legal advice and opinions
- To review, develop, prepare and oversee proper execution of legal instruments
- To review and assess legal implications associated with contracts

- To assist in the evaluation and development of new legislation and regulations
- To facilitate legal reform after evaluating existing local, regional and international legislation
- To ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, 2000
- To provide legal support to the Investment Facilitation and Monitoring Unit in the administration of the TDA

Achievements

- This Unit delivered efficiently and on time in respect of all assignments given by the Minister, Permanent Secretary and various Divisions

X. Information Technology Unit

Role

The primary responsibility of the IT Unit is to collaboratively design, implement, maintain and strengthen Institutional technologies that improve service quality, produce Ministry savings and increase efficiency/effectiveness in core and administrative units.

Responsibilities

- To align technologies and technology support functions with the Mission, Priorities and Goals of the Ministry
- to produce outcomes in alignment with Government's "fast forward" Initiative of a "Knowledge Based Society"
- To create a user friendly technical environment.
- To invest in strategic technologies that empower and strengthen existing infrastructure.

- To utilize best practices and references of E-Gov policies for managing and implementing Information Technology Solutions
- To establish a web site for the Ministry of Tourism

Achievements

- Provision of a Secure and reliable Network Infrastructure
- Establishment of a website for the Ministry of Tourism- www.tourism.gov.tt
- Relocation and upgrade of Network/Communication Systems
- Implementation of VOIP communication
- establishment of a networked information system that facilitates secure, fast and easy communication and sharing of information
- Standardization of workstations and software
- Installation of an Audio Visual System for the Ministry
- Execution of the Integrated Human Resource Information (IHRIS) project

Challenges

Shortage of Staff

- There was a shortage of staff in the IT Unit in 2008 as only two contract positions were filled.

Communication Backbone Program

- The implementation of the Communication Backbone Programme was put on hold pending agreements between the Government and supplier.

IT Skills of Staff of the Ministry

- There is a need for training of staff of the Ministry in IT skills which is hindered by the limited number of IT personnel.

XI. General Administration Unit

Role

The primary responsibility of the General Administration Unit is to provide timely administrative services in the areas of records management, messenger and mail support, procurement of office machines and supplies, staff safety and comfort, and facilities management on behalf of the Ministry of Tourism.

Responsibilities

- To procure goods and services on behalf of the Ministry of Tourism
- To ensure the maintenance of a safe and clean working environment
- To ensure proper operation and maintenance of office equipment and vehicles
- To provide accommodation for the Head Office of the Ministry of Tourism
- To maintain an effective filing system for the Ministry of Tourism
- To provide an efficient messenger and mail support system
- To ensure adherence to proper Procurement procedures

Achievements

- Improved security in the form of the supply and installation of an electronic magnetic lock for the entrance to the Accounting Unit.
- Enclosure of stairway in the reception area of the Head Office of the Ministry of Tourism.
- Preparatory works towards the provision of Security Services to the Head Office of the Ministry of Tourism.
- Provision of Janitorial Services to the Head Office of the Ministry of Tourism.

- Award of a contract to the Employers' Solution Centre to ensure that the Ministry of Tourism is compliant with the OSH Act 2004. The Terms of Reference are as follows:
 - Conduct of a risk assessment of the Ministry of Tourism
 - Development of an Emergency Response Plan for the Ministry of Tourism
 - Development of a Health and Safety Policy for the Ministry of Tourism
 - Guidance in the establishment of a Health and Safety Committee for the Ministry of Tourism.

Challenges

- Inadequate staff to maintain operational effectiveness of Unit as there were several vacancies in the Unit.

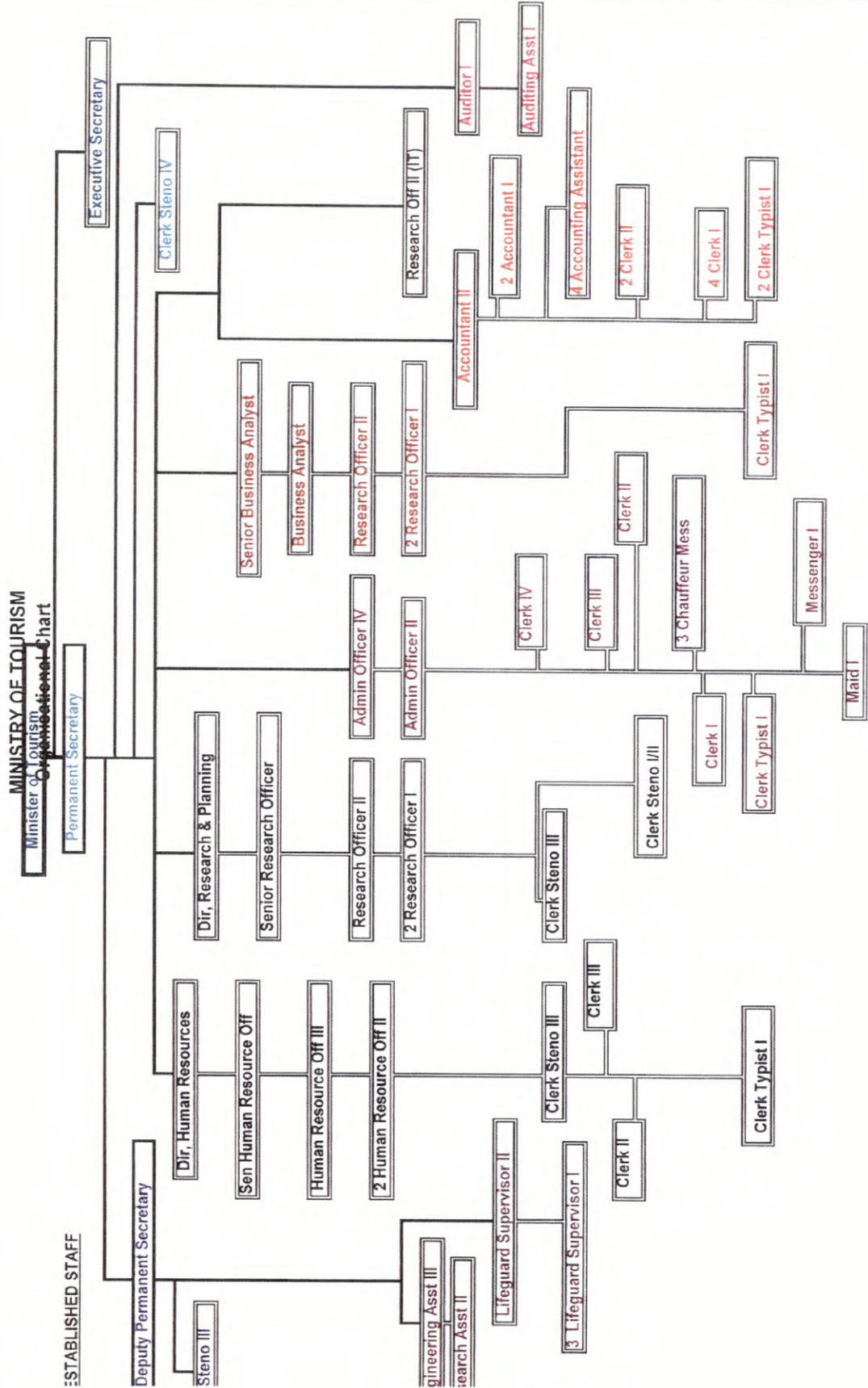
11 Recommendations

- I. That the challenges encountered by each Division of the Ministry be addressed with a view to facilitating improved operational effectiveness of the Ministry
- II. That the issue of inadequate office space be rectified
- III. That improved systems for Monitoring and Evaluation be instituted in the Ministry
- IV. That a review and rationalization of the structure and staffing of the Ministry be conducted

12 Appendices

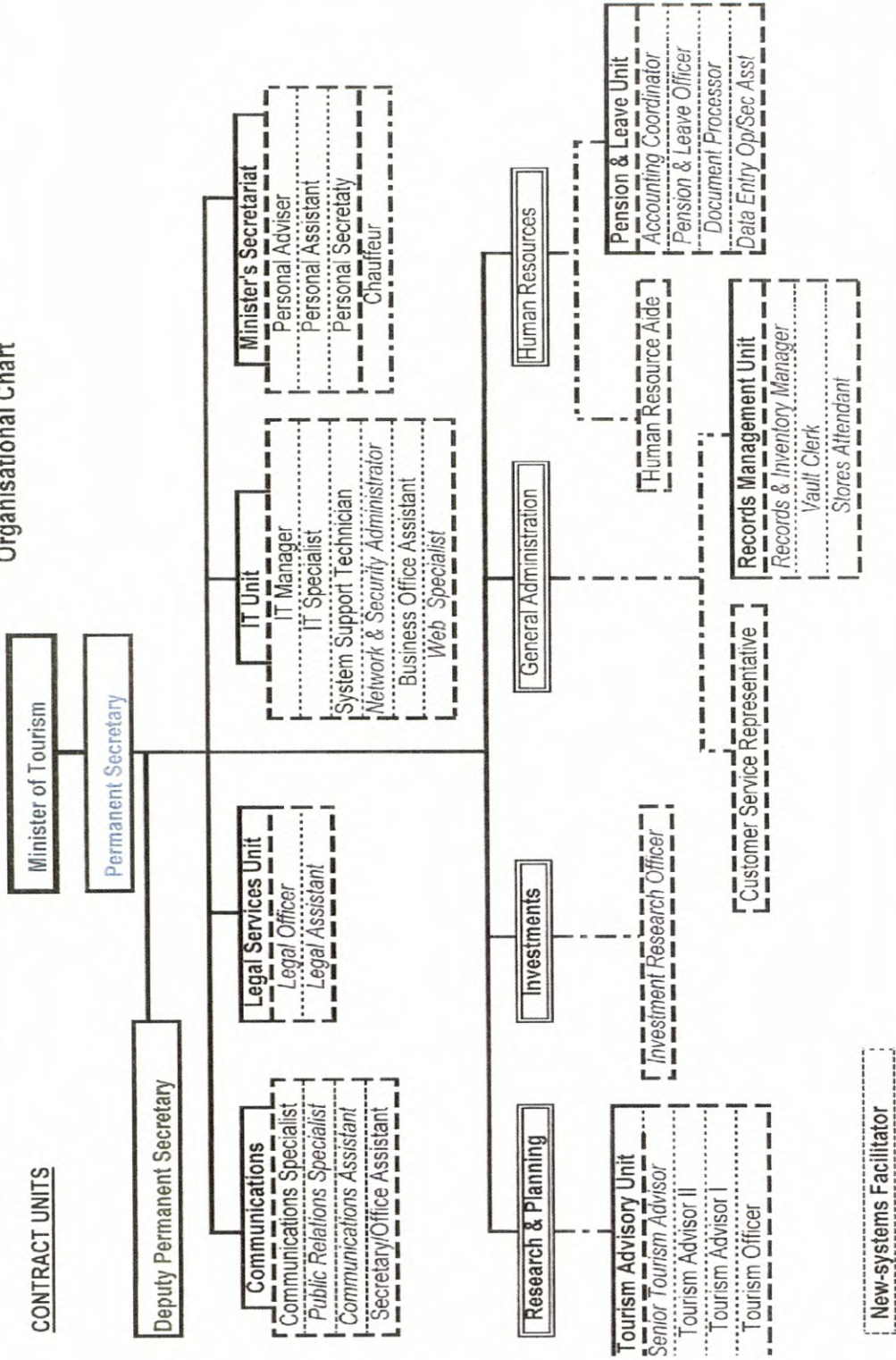
Organizational Charts

Appendix



MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Organisational Chart



MINISTRY OF
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