The Ministry of Tertiary Education
and Skills Training

# TEST

# ADMINISTRATIVE
## REPORT
### OCTOBER 2014-SEPTEMBER 2015

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### TABLES

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# 1.0  MISSION

The mission of the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training (MTEST) is to develop the human resources of the country by increasing access to quality tertiary education and technical vocational education and training.

# 2.0  VISION

MTEST's vision is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens through increased access to quality post- secondary education.

# 3.0  STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

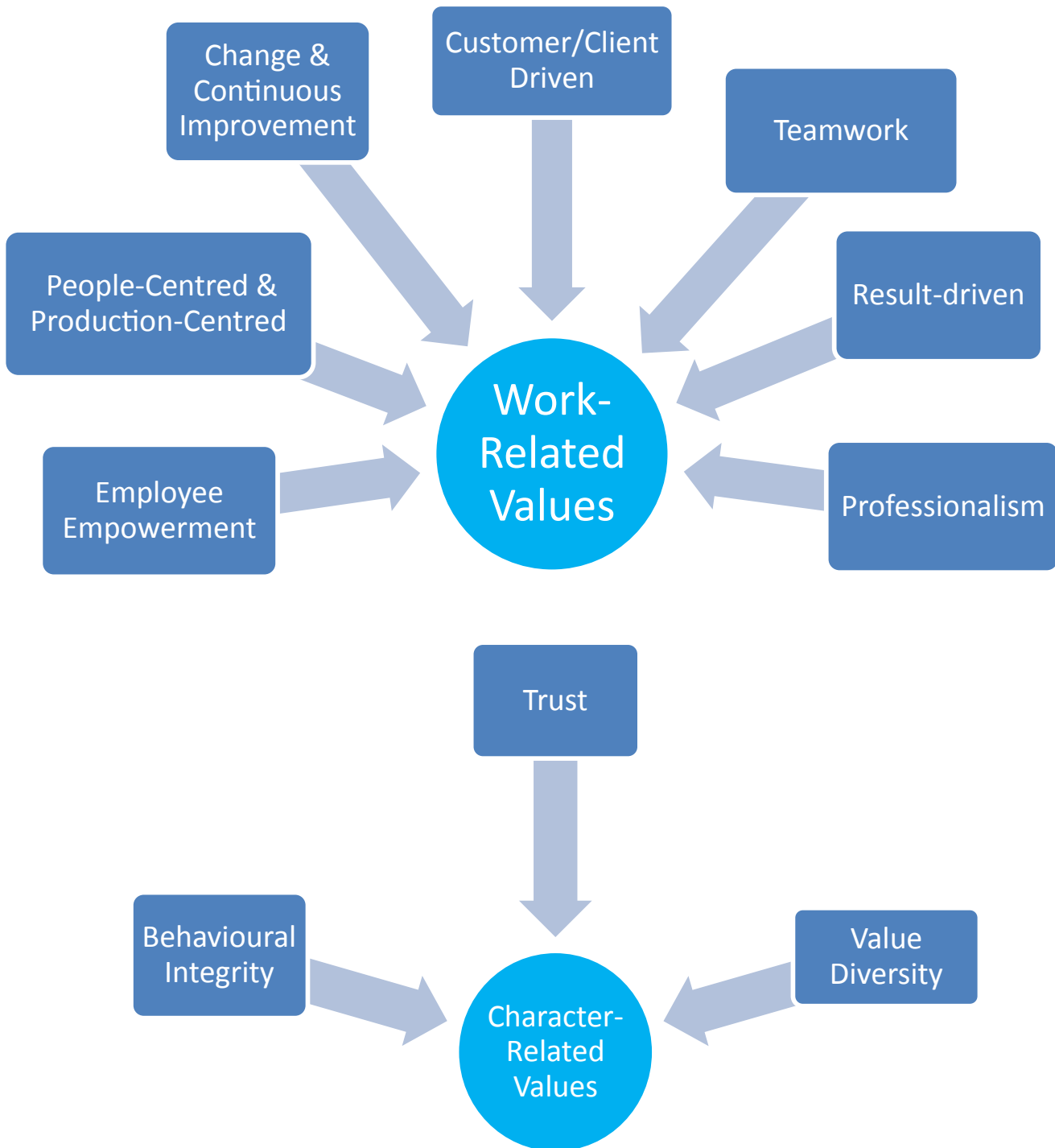To achieve its vision, the Ministry is guided by its strategic objectives which are:

- Facilitate institutional strengthening via Professional Development and Training Programmes for educators at all levels;

- Enhance and sustain all tertiary education and technical vocational education and training programmes to develop quality graduates in sufficient numbers and capabilities to drive a knowledge intensive economy;

- Develop human capital for economic participation for a more diverse knowledge intensive economy and align tertiary education throughout with diversification strategy and market needs;

- Enhance regional and international involvement in labour and education with appropriate linkages;

- Increase access to tertiary education and technical vocational education and training programmes; and

- Increase the participation rate in tertiary education to 60% by 2015.

## 3.1  CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

The Ministry is a leading partner in the development of the human resources of the country. Its mandate is the development of the Tertiary Education and Technical Vocational and Educational Training Sectors.

In pursuing the mandate, the Ministry is guided by the following values, principles and a corporate ethos, which value the contribution of staff, the effective use of resources and excellence in performance.

Change & Continuous Improvement

Customer/Client Driven

Teamwork

People-Centred & Production-Centred

Result-driven

Work-Related Values

Employee Empowerment

Professionalism

Trust

Behavioural Integrity

Value Diversity

Character-Related Values

# Principles

## Results Oriented

The staff is committed to achieving the Ministry's targets and national goals and is dedicated to being result oriented and high performing.

## Partnerships

The Ministry recognises that networking and partnerships, with Agencies, other Ministries and the Private Sector are critical for success.

## Honesty

The staff of the Ministry is guided by the principle of honesty in all actions.

## Client Focus

We continue to value our clients and strive to maintain a high quality customer service.

## Professionalism

The staff of the Ministry is committed to being professional in our interactions and relations with each other and our public as well as in our work.

## People Centered

People are our key asset and resource and are to be highly valued.

# 4.0 FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

## 4.1 BUDGET FORMULATION

The Ministry is funded through the system of Parliamentary Appropriation, where approved funds identified under the various sub-heads are disbursed in the form of releases and warrants by the Ministry of Finance and the Economy.

The Accounting Unit within the Ministry allows for the effective management of the Ministry's financial and accounting operations.

At the beginning of the budgetary cycle, Agencies/Divisions of the Ministry submit requests for funding to the Permanent Secretary, based on their strategic direction for the upcoming fiscal year. Each Agency/Division would therefore consider its core functions, particularly as they relate to projects/programmes for that particular year, but keeping in view their long-term goals, its human resource needs, as well as its physical work environment, when preparing their submissions. Before such plans are submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Economy (Budget Division) and the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, further discussions are held between the Permanent Secretary, Heads of Agencies/Divisions and other key persons to clarify justifications and review profiles. Upon receipt of the allocations, the Agencies/Divisions are requested to re-prioritise their projects/programmes, if necessary, in accordance with the allocation received.

With regard to the projects under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP), the Ministry ensures that the resources are properly allocated, particularly to ongoing projects that are at critical stages and/or new projects that have been identified as high priority.

## 4.2 EXPENDITURE VERSUS BUDGET

### TABLE 1: – MTEST ACTUAL EXPENDITURE VERSUS BUDGET – 2014/2015

| | Sub‑Head | Revised Estimates $ | Actual Expenditure $ | Variances $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | Personnel Expenditure | 35,350,600.00 | 32,496,288.64 | 2,854,311.36 |
| 02 | Goods and Services | 31,309,140.00 | 22,384,535.32 | 8,924,604.68 |
| 03 | Minor Equipment | 2,965,800.00 | 1,728,068.67 | 1,237,731.33 |
| 04 | Current Transfers and Subsidies | 2,178,375,201.00 | 2,131,583,294.41 | 46,791,906.59 |
| 06 | Current Transfers to Statutory Boards and Similar Bodies | 145,099,100.00 | 142,813,019.31 | 2,286,080.69 |
| | Total Recurrent Expenditure | 2,393,099,841.00 | 2,331,005,206.35 | 62,094,634.65 |
| 09 | Development Programme | 385,360,000.00 | 373,750,219.75 | 11,609,780.25 |
| | Total Expenditure | 2,778,459,841.00 | 2,704,755,426.10 | 73,704,414.90 |

Source: Appropriation Account for the Financial Year 2015

The Variances Are Explained Below:

## 01 Personnel Expenditure

Provision made for payment of arrears of salary and COLA and buyout of unutilised leave of Ministers not utilised.

## 02 Goods and Services

Provision made for payment of arrears not utilised Positions not filled
Outstanding invoices not submitted on time

## 03 Minor Equipment Purchases

Provision made for purchases for relocation to Chaguanas not utilised

## 04 Current Transfer and Subsidies

Expenditure not materialised

## 06 Current Transfers to Statutory Board and Similar Bodies

Invoices for services relevant to School of Nursing not submitted on time

## Warrants

In pursuance of its mandate, MTEST also received warrants totaling eight hundred and twenty-one million, eight hundred and eighty-four thousand, four hundred and seventy-seven dollars ($821,884,477.00) as detailed below:

- Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses(GATE)–Six hundred and ninety-ninemillion,eight hundred and eighty-four thousand, four hundred and seventy-seven dollars ($699,884,477.00)

- Capital Works (Infrastructure Development Fund) - One hundred and twenty-two million dollars ($122,000,000.00)

## 4.3 Debt Policy

The Ministry's policy on debt accumulation is in keeping with that of the Government Service of Trinidad and Tobago, which states that expenditure plus commitments should not exceed the allocations and releases of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy to the respective Ministry.

## 4.4 Investment Policy

The Ministry does not have an investment policy, but expends large proportions of its allocations on the acquisition of property, facilities, equipment, vehicles and other items that are required in the fulfillment of its mandate. Prior to funding, Cabinet's approval is essential for all new projects. Requests for funding for new and ongoing projects are submitted to the Ministry of Finance and the Economy in accordance with the Ministry of Finance Call Circular No. 1 of February 12, 2012.

# 5.0 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

## 5.1 CAREER PATH SYSTEMS

The Ministry develops its employees by providing training opportunities, rotating staff where possible to enable them to gain valuable experience which would assist them in making informed choices regarding their career path. The Human Resource Division provides advice to employees regarding a career path within the Public Service. Although vacancies are filled by the Service Commissions Department, based on qualification, interviews and seniority, public officers, once they meet the requirements for positions that are available in the Ministry, are recommended to act in higher positions.

## 5.2 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The Ministry utilises the Performance Management Appraisal System, which is implemented throughout the Public Service in accordance with the Personnel Department Circular No. 9 dated November 21, 2001. Position Descriptions have been developed for all officers and periodic reviews, as well as Performance Appraisal Reports are completed annually to evaluate officers' performance for the stipulated period. Performance Appraisal Reports are also completed in respect of each twelve-month period of engagement, for each year for persons employed on contract.

## 5.3 PROMOTION

Promotion in the Public Service is under the purview of the Service Commissions Department who employs one or more of the following methods when assessing persons to be promoted:

• Performance
• Seniority
• Interviews
• Examinations

## 5.4 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

The Ministry recruits persons, on contract, in accordance with the Guidelines for Contract Employment in Government Ministries, Departments, and Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, Chapter 24:01 issued by the Personnel Department, under cover of Circular Memorandum PD (bm):12/2/1 Vol. IV dated May 19, 2006.

Persons are recruited, on contract under the following circumstances:

• where there is a dearth of suitable candidates for permanent appointment to those pensionable offices on the establishment of any Ministry/Department/Statutory Authority and there is urgent need for the services attached to such offices.

• where special projects or programmes of specified duration (often funded by International Agencies) are undertaken by any Ministry/Department/Statutory Authority and need to be executed and monitored by personnel, additional to those on the permanent establishment of the Ministry/Department/Statutory Authority; and

• where a need has been identified for specialised services of an individual – eg. an advisor in a particular area of expertise, and such need cannot be met by the filling of any existing position on the establishment.

## 5.5 EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SERVICES

The services of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) are available to members of staff upon his/her request. An employee can also be recommended by a supervisor. However, the employee must give their consent, if recommended.

## 5.6    CATEGORY OF EMPLOYEES

**Table 2** shows the categories of employees at MTEST along with the number of persons in each category.

## TABLE 2: -- CATEGORY OF EMPLOYEES

| Category | Permanent | Temporary | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Public Officers | 98 | 52 | 150 |
| Contract Workers | 101 | | 101 |



Employees in business attire
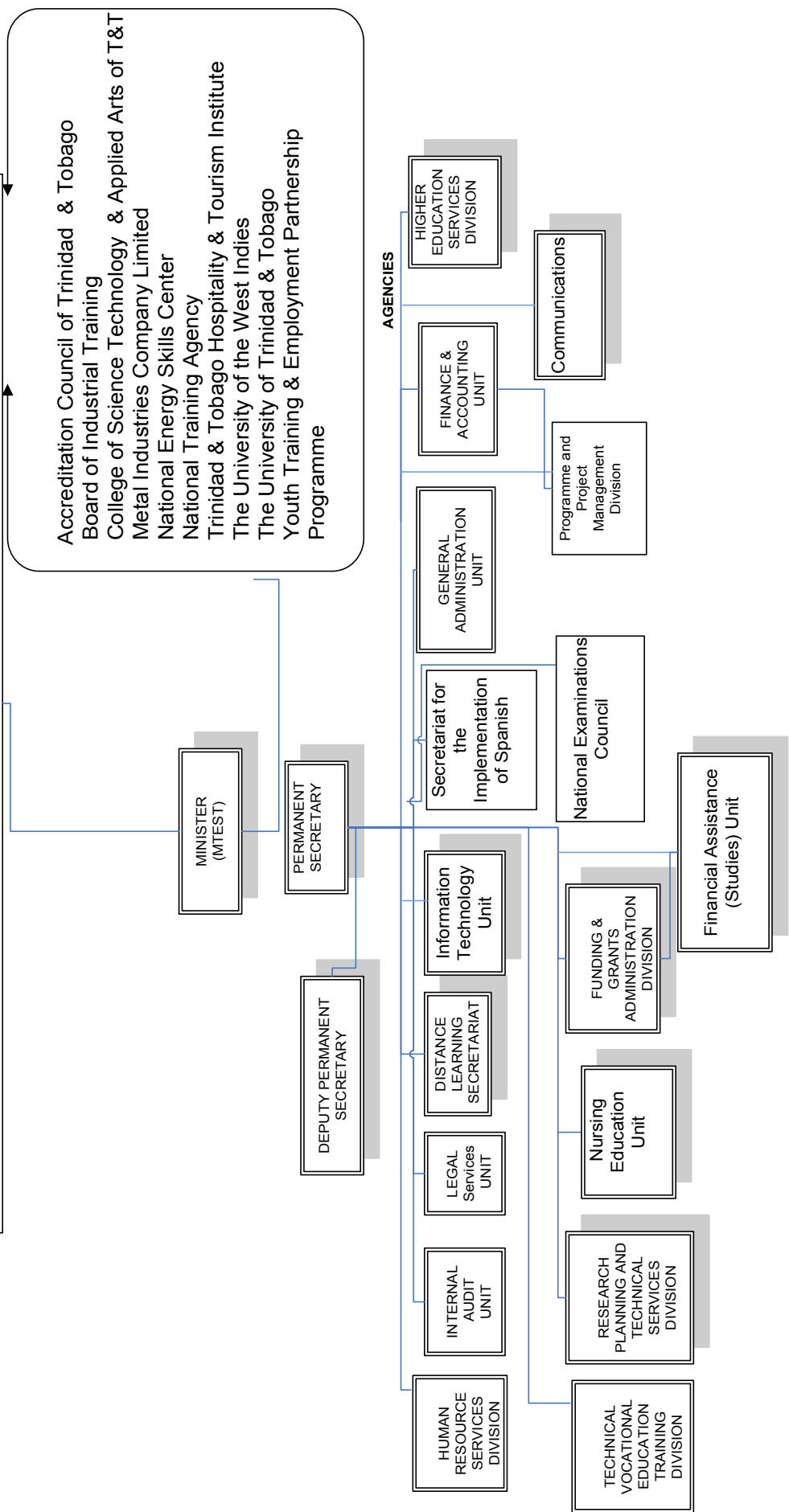
# 6.0 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## 6.1 Corporate Structure

The Ministry comprises seventeen (17) divisions and units and ten (10) external agencies. **Table 3** describes the Corporate Structure of the Ministry by functionality. The organisational structure at **Figure 1** outlines the reporting relationships of the Ministry's divisions/units and the agencies:

## TABLE 3: – Divisions /Units and Agencies

| Internal Divisions/Units |
| --- |
| Corporate Communications |
| Distance Learning Secretariat |
| Finance and Accounting Unit |
| Funding and Grants Administration Division |
| Financial Assistance (Studies) Unit |
| General Administration Unit |
| Higher Education Services Division |
| Human Resource Services Division |
| Information Technology Unit |
| Internal Audit Unit |
| Legal Services Unit |
| National Examination Council |
| Nursing Education Unit |
| Programme and Project Management Division |
| Research, Planning and Technical Services Division |
| Secretariat for the Implementation of Spanish |
| Technical and Vocational Education and Training Division |
| **External Agencies** |
| |
| Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) |
| Board of Industrial Training (BIT) |
| College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) |
| Metal Industries Company Limited (MIC) |
| National Energy Skills Center (NESC) |
| National Training Agency (NTA) |
| Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (TTHTI) |
| University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) |
| The University of the West Indies ( The UWI) |
| Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) |

# MINISTRY OF TERTIARY EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

**Agencies:**

Accreditation Council of Trinidad & Tobago
Board of Industrial Training
College of Science Technology & Applied Arts of T&T
Metal Industries Company Limited
National Energy Skills Center
National Training Agency
Trinidad & Tobago Hospitality & Tourism Institute
The University of the West Indies
The University of Trinidad & Tobago
Youth Training & Employment Partnership Programme

**MINISTER (MTEST)**

**PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY**

- HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES DIVISION
- INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT
- LEGAL Services UNIT
- DISTANCE LEARNING SECRETARIAT
- Information Technology Unit
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATION UNIT
- FINANCE & ACCOUNTING UNIT
- HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES DIVISION
- Communications
- Programme and Project Management Division
- Secretariat for the Implementation of Spanish
- National Examinations Council
- Financial Assistance (Studies) Unit
- FUNDING & GRANTS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
- Nursing Education Unit
- RESEARCH PLANNING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION
- TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING DIVISION

**AGENCIES**

## 6.2    SERVICES/PRODUCTS

The Services/Products provided by the Ministry are as follows:

* Post Secondary and Tertiary Education Programmes;
* Funding of tuition fees for nationals pursuing tertiary education;
* Financial assistance for post-secondary studies;
* Provision of loans for tertiary education expenses to nationals;
* Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Programmes;
* Hosting of Career and Recruitment Fairs, in consultation with agencies under the purview of the Ministry;
* Nursing Education Programmes;
* Distance Learning Programmes;
* Spanish Language Programmes

## 6.3    LEVELS OF AUTHORITY

### ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The Permanent Secretary supported by the Human Resource Services Division continue to administer the functions devolved by the Chief Personnel Officer and functions delegated by the Public Service Commission. **Table 4** describes the functions devolved by the Chief Personnel Officer.

### TABLE 4: 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 and other similar activities |
| Special Leave | Study Leave |
| Accumulation of Leave | Special Leave |
| No Pay Study Leave | No Pay Study Leave |
| Leave of absence without pay | Leave for Union Business |
| Extension of Sick Leave | Normal Sick Leave |
| Leave to pursue course in Trade Unionism | Extension of Sick Leave |
| Compensation in lieu of Annual Vacation Leave | Time off as Union Representative |
| Compensation in lieu of uniforms issued | |
| Separation Allowance | |

### FUNCTIONS DELEGATED BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC)

The following functions are delegated by the PSC:

a) Acting appointments up to Range 68 for a period not exceeding six (6) months except for positions that require consultation with the Prime Minister;

b) Appointments on a temporary basis for periods not exceeding six (6) months, on the expiration of that person's first (1st) appointment on a temporary basis by the PSC to that office, except in offices that require consultation with the Prime Minister;

c) Confirmation of appointments;

d) Power to make transfers within the Ministry's Divisions up to Range 68;

e) Acceptance of resignations;

f) Noting retirements - compulsory and voluntary having attained the age of 55;

g) The exercise of disciplinary control in respect of minor infractions set out in the Code of Conduct. Infractions and their related Regulations are set out in **Table 5:**

## TABLE 5: – REGULATIONS RELATED TO ACTS OF MISCONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

| Regulation | Acts of Misconduct/Discipline |
|---|---|
| 135 (1) | Failure to attend to matters promptly within the scope of the office |
| 135 (2) | Lack of courtesy to a member of the public or another public officer |
| 135 (3) | Willful failure to perform duties |
| 136 (1) | Absence without leave or reasonable excuse from office |
| 136 (2) | Failure to inform PS/ Head of Department when leaving the country |
| 137 (2) | Failure to disclose activities outside the 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 the 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 |

## FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS

The Permanent Secretary, the Accounting Officer is authorised to award contracts for the procurement of goods and services up to a limit of TT $1,000,000.00 and for consultancy services up to a limit of TT $500,000.00.

## 6.4    CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Ministry is responsible for mainly three (3) categories of staff- daily-rated workers, monthly paid public officers, including teaching and civil service staff, and contract employees. However, the Personnel Department is charged with responsibility for determining and/or advising on pay and other terms and conditions of service for employees within the public sector. The Personnel Department determines, through consultation and negotiations with appropriate recognised associations and unions, the terms and conditions of service of employees who fall in the categories previously mentioned among others, and also advises/makes recommendations on the terms and conditions of service of these employees.

# 7.0 PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

## 7.1. TENDERING PROCEDURES

The Ministry operates within the legal and regulatory framework of the Central Tenders Board (CTB) Act, Chapter 71:91, the Central Tenders Board Regulations, 1965 and their amendments and subsidiary legislation; and the relevant regulations in the Exchequer and Audit Act, Chapter 69:01, in the procurement of goods and services.

The Ministry operates its procurement operations under the principles of:

- Value for Money
- Transparency
- Accountability

The procurement function of the Ministry is managed by the General Administration Division. The Ministry has an established Ministerial Tenders Committee.

The Financial Limits provide for authority levels as follows:

### GOODS AND SERVICES

- Permanent Secretary         -       Up to $1,000,000.00
- Ministerial Tenders Committee   -       Up to $2,000,000.00
- Central Tenders Board       -       Over $2,000,000.00

### CONSULTANCY

- Permanent Secretary         -       Up to $500,000.00
- Ministerial Tenders Committee   -       Up to $2,000,000.00
- Central Tenders Board       -       Over $2,000,000.00

### OPEN TENDER

A request is made to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Economy to confirm the availability of the estimated cost of the goods/services to initiate tender procedures. On receipt of the confirmation of funds from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Economy, the following documents are prepared:

- Tender Notices
- The Tenderers' Instructions
- Copies of the Specifications/Scope of Works/Request for Proposal

These documents are sent to the Chairman of the Ministerial Tenders Committee for approval and signature. Copies of Tenders Notices are sent for publication in the newspapers fourteen (14) days before the tender opening.

### TENDER OPENING

The Chairman and one (1) member of the Committee open the tender box. The bids are retrieved and read out in front of representatives of the firms who are present. A Schedule of Tenders is prepared and signed by the Chairman and the Member.

### SUMMARY OF BIDS RECEIVED

A Summary is made of the cost of all bids received in ascending order.

## Evaluation of Bids – Ministerial Tenders Committee

The file with all bids and the summary sheet is sent to the Head of Division for evaluation by the appointed Evaluation Committee.

A detailed analysis is given as to why the lowest tender was not accepted. In the event that the lowest tender was not accepted, the areas that did meet the specifications are identified for e.g. what aspects of the technical specifications were not met; the delivery period; availability of spare parts; after sales services; the quality of material and so on.

## Award of Contract – Ministerial Tenders Committee

On receipt of the Evaluation Report from the Head of the Division, it is checked for conformity with the CTB Regulations. In the case of acceptance by the Ministerial Tenders Committee, a letter of Award is prepared. Upon the award of a contract, the firm is given fourteen (14) days to post a Performance Bond/Cash Performance Deposit. When the Performance Bond/Cash Performance Deposit is posted, a binding contract between the Permanent Secretary and the supplier exists.

## Sole Tender

A sole tender is invited when there is only one known supplier for the item requested.

## Selective Tender

When the requested item is a specialised item or there are a few known suppliers, the Head of Division requests that selective firms be invited to tender. The procedure for the Sole Tender and Selective Tender is the same.

## Sole/Selective Tender Process

On receipt of the request, the Ministerial Tenders Committee requests approval from the Minister of Finance and the Economy to invite either a sole or a selective tender.

On the receipt of the approval of the Honourable Minister of Finance and the Economy, the Letters of Invitation are issued to the tenderers. The Letters of Invitation to the tenderers are dispatched no less than fourteen (14) days before the opening date of tenders.

## 7.2    Contractual Procedures – Ministerial Tenders Committee

The delivery period/completion of works/services period is monitored by the Division and the General Administration Division. On completion of the contract, the Head of Division submits the Contract Completion Report (CCR). Based on the CCR, the Chairman of the relevant Committee authorises releases of the Performance Bond/Cash Performance Deposit.



Employee explaining a contract

# 8.0 REPORTING FUNCTIONS

The Reporting Functions of the Ministry are detailed in **Table 6** below:

## TABLE 6: – Reporting Functions

| Reports | Line Minister | Ministry of Planning & Sustainable & Dev. | Ministry of Finance & the Economy | Auditor General | Ministry of Social Development | Ministry of Public Administration | Chief Personnel Officer | Public Service Commission | Cabinet | Parliament |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Annual operating budgets; strategic plan | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | |
| UWI-Biennial Estimates of Needs | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Monthly/Annual Financial Reports /Agencies Annual Financial Statements | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Monthly/Annual Performance Reports | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Annual Financial Report | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Annual Audit Report | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Annual Reconciled Statement of Deposit Accounts | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Quarterly reports on Devolved Functions | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Annual Administrative Report | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Quarterly reports on Delegated Functions | | | | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Social Sector Investment Programme bi-annual and annual reports | | | | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Freedom of Information Act Report | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Ministry's contribution to Budget presentation/ Achievement Reports | | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Monthly Board Meetings of Agencies | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Performance Monitoring Reports | | | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Quarterly Reports on 1 year Action Plan | | ✓ | | | | | | | | |

# 9.0    INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Ministry is committed to having all matters addressed in accordance with the laws of natural justice and in keeping with good industrial relations practices. The Ministry is guided by the Public Service Commission Regulations, 1966 Chap. VIII as amended, the Civil Service Act, Chap. 23:01, Civil Service (Amendment) Regulations, 1996 Chap. XI Code of Conduct.

# 10.0   INTERNAL AUDIT PROCEDURES

The Internal Audit Section reports directly to the Permanent Secretary, who is the Ministry's Accounting Officer. Audit Reports are submitted to the Permanent Secretary and the respective Divisional Heads indicating the findings and recommendations, with the relevant regulations from the Financial Regulations and Instructions. The Internal Audit work schedules are conducted in compliance with the following:

- The Financial Regulations and Instructions 1965, as amended
- The Exchequer and Audit Act Chap. 69:01
- Circulars from the Chief Personnel Officer, Ministry of Finance and the Economy
- Comptroller of Accounts and the Director of Personnel Administration.

The Auditor General's Department supplements the work done by the Internal Audit Section, as external auditors also make periodic checks on accounting systems and internal controls.

# 11.0   INTERNAL DIVISIONS/UNITS

## 11.1    CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

The Corporate Communications Unit has the dedicated role of promoting an environment of awareness and understanding for both the Ministry's internal and external audiences through the implementation and execution of current and effective communications strategies.

The Unit oversees the following:

- Dissemination of all information relevant to the Ministry via social media, print media, television, radio as well as advertising and providing relevant information to the media.

- Production of promotional events and material which highlight the Ministry's policies, programmes and services.

- Management of the content and design of Ministry's website and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

- Arrangement of protocol for the Minister and VIP's at official events.

- Preparation of speeches for the Minister and the Permanent Secretary.

- Organisation of the Ministry's presence at outreach events.

- Serving on Inter-Ministerial committees.

- Ensuring that all publications are uniformed and standardised and accurately reflects the Ministry, its aims and objectives.

- Ensuring that the Ministry, agencies, divisions, programmes and initiatives are coherent with the overall communications strategy, aimed at achieving the wider objective of providing quality training and tertiary education opportunities for all citizens for the development of a rich intellectual capacity.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Produced the Ministry's Annual Supplement which consisted of key achievements and projects, including geographical access, from May 2010 to May 2015. The Supplement was featured in the three (3) daily newspapers and is available on the Ministry's website.

- Disseminated information to members of staff and the public on the proposed relocation of the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training from Port of Spain to the Ministry's Administrative Complex, Narsaloo Ramaya Marg Road, Chaguanas.

- Launched the Ministry's Edu-ID initiative which took place on July 22nd, 2015 at the UTT O'Meara Campus. The Edu-ID card will benefit 70,000 students within the tertiary education sector by providing them with special discounts and offers from providers such as bmobile, Digicel, Unicomer, Flow and Microsoft Trinidad and Tobago. The card's main objective was to collect data, monitor and evaluate students' participation in the tertiary sector.

- Launched a series of factory visits to private enterprises including Bermudez, Eniath's Printing Co. Limited, FT Farfan, The Home Store, Peake's Industries Limited, MDC-UM, Prestige Holdings, S.M. Jaleel and Company Limited, ANSA McAl Group of Companies, Blue Waters, Carib Glassworks, VEMCO, National Canners Limited, and Advanced Foam to learn firsthand about the labour shortages and to identify the educational programmes that are needed in the tertiary learning institutions and skills centres for employment by graduates.

- Engaged in extensive social media marketing (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) to promote the Ministry's departments, programmes and initiatives and responded to queries by members of the public via these sites.

- Provided support and assistance to the Ministry's Social Events Committee to the hosting of several events including the 2015 Sports and Family Day, Divali, Emancipation Day, Eid-ul-Fitr and other national observances.

- Worked continuously to upgrade and update the current website in conjunction with the Information Technology Department.

- Collaborated with several private and local entities to arrange the Ministry's representation at community outreaches around the country.

- Ensured that the efforts of all agencies, divisions, programmes and initiatives were coherent with the overall communications strategy – aimed at achieving the wider Ministry's objective of providing quality training and tertiary education opportunities for all citizens.

- Represented the Ministry on inter-ministerial committees which involved promoting the Ministry's and the government's programmes and services.

- Promoted the following advertising campaigns:



UWI students at graduation

- GATE: UWI MONA MEDICAL STUDENTS 2015/2016 which intended to regulate the number of student spaces accepted at The UWI, Mona Campus due to the following issues such as the high cost of studying at regional institutions, the human resources needs of the country and the need for specialised doctors as opposed to house officers.

- THE OPENING OF THE WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE AT THE UWI, ST AUGUSTINE which is designed to become a hub for labour market information and workforce development. The research from this Centre will inform stalled economic growth, high youth unemployment and reduce the skills mismatch.

- THE TOP 15 BY 2015 which promoted the delivery in tertiary education and skills training with key state-of-the-art facilities and programmes aimed at broadening access and opportunities to citizens of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The top 15 featured projects were The Academy of Nursing and Allied Health, El Dorado; NESC Drilling Academy, Ste. Madeline; The UWI South Campus, Debe; MIC Technology Centres (Tobago, O'Meara and Penal); COSTAATT Main Campus, Chaguanas; MTEST Administrative Complex, Chaguanas; MTEST O.N.E. Store, Gulf City; UTT Main Campus, Tamana; NESC Woodford Lodge Campus, YTEPP Mobile Academy Fleet, National Life Skills Programme, St. Augustine Education City, UTT Aviation Campus, Couva; and ACTT's accreditation to 11 tertiary and training providers.

- HONOURING FATHER GERRY PANTIN which commemorated the life of Father Gerry Pantin. The Father Gerry Pantin Servol Life Centre was constructed in Strikers Village, Point Fortin and has the capacity for 40 persons between the ages of 16-19 for the Adolescent Development Programme (ADP), computer lab for training youth and adults in the community, Day Care Centre, Pre-School and Junior Life Centre. The building will also be used for other programmes such as beauty culture, parent education, volunteer health/drug, and environmental importance for parents and children.

## 11.2    DISTANCE LEARNING SECRETARIAT (DLS)



DISTANCE LEARNING
SECRETARIAT

The Distance Learning Secretariat (DLS) was established in 2000 to service a community-based system for distance learning delivery. The core functions of the DLS include:

•   Collecting data on the Open and Distance Learning sub-sector of the Tertiary Education System to guide policy development.
•   Promoting open, distance and lifelong learning among all stakeholders.
•   Championing the establishment of appropriate support infrastructure (including ICT systems, learning centres and institutions)for national distance learning delivery.

- Facilitating the delivery of appropriate programmes for training and professional development of teachers, trainers and administrators in practical tools for design, development and administration of distance and lifelong learning programmes.
- Facilitating the conversion of traditionally delivered instructional programmes into suitable distance mode courses for lifelong learning, using appropriate educational technologies.

## Strategic Objectives

The vision for the Distance Learning Secretariat (DLS) is the creation of a seamless system which brings the highest degree of responsiveness and innovation to the education sector for human development. This is achieved through action in three strategic areas:

- Connectivity – where ICTs are used to connect sub-systems to promote greater collaboration and efficiencies.
- Content – promoting technology mediated learning and the development, collection and sharing of open education content.
- Certification – collaboration with recognition and accreditation bodies to improve the acceptance of learner achievements via Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and to allow for transinstitutional articulation of students.

The reality for distance learning is anytime, anywhere access supported by a pervasive Information and Communications Technology infrastructure. To execute its mandate in the current environment the DLS spearheaded the establishment of a National Research and Education Network (NREN) to support institutional collaboration in the delivery of learning in non-traditional formats. The functions of the DLS are now concentrated in two key initiatives:

- TTRENT - The Trinidad and Tobago Research and Education Network – an Information and Communications Technology Network deployed specifically for research and education purposes.

- OFTEN - The Open and Flexible Training and Education Network through which capacity and capability building activities are executed to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders to plan programmes, develop the required content and ensure the delivery of ODL programmes and support services to learners.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- TTRENT facilitated the Jamaica Research and Education Network (JREN)/Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) Campus Security and Personal Safety Video-conference which was designed to build a Community of Practice among campus security professionals across the Region leveraging C@ribNET and its National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in providing solutions to the many challenges involved in securing campus security and student and faculty personal safety. (Oct. 2014)

- TTRENT hosted a three-day Federated Identity Workshop, with the focus on Identity Management which allows institutions to provide all users with access to resources and services in a reliable, secure manner without a proliferation of credentials or multiple signing. (Oct. 2014)

- TTRENT initiated discussions with the Caricom Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) for partnering with the network and CKLN to meet its connectivity needs (Nov 2014).

- OFTEN collaborated with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service on the establishment of a Steering Committee to outline a strategy for building a distance learning capability for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Academy (Nov 2014).

- TTRENT engaged broadband service provider Digicel to develop a proposal for the offer of an Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) for the network. (Nov 2014)

- OFTEN began collaboration with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) on a Programme and Organisational Strategy for e-Learning Development, starting with the course - Caribbean the Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Programme (CR-FELTP). (Nov. 2014)

- TTRENT initiated the content development strategy phase for the WaterCooler Project which was official named - Studious (Nov 2014).

- The TTRENT Technical Team met with Digicel to discuss its proposal for 1GB bandwidth services for the network (Jan. 2015).

- OFTEN conducted a survey called the Digital Habits of the Minds between October 2014 and January 2015 for the Pan Online Project. Completed responses were received from four (4) schools: St. Georges College, Corpus Christi College, Caribbean Union College and the International School of Port-of-Spain. Two (2) survey instruments were administered targeting students and teachers.

- TTRENT initiated negotiations with iGovTT for the relocation of its Network Operations equipment to the government data centre. (Feb 2015)

- OFTEN hosted a planning session for the development of a national Digital Content Development Ecosystem. The exercise was facilitated by Mr. Dylan Busa from Mindset, South Africa. (March 2015)

- OFTEN participated in preparatory meetings for the establishment of Secondary Schools Community Radio Clubs Initiative (April 2015).

- TTRENT engaged The UWI Telehealth Department in discussions on areas for future collaboration with the CKLN (April 2015).



- The Director, Distance Learning Secretariat (DLS) formed part of the Ministry's team to the review of the Blueprint for Tertiary Education (June 2015).

- TTRENT launched its education roaming (eduroam) service to the education community at the Singapore Experience Symposium (June 2015).

- The Director, DLS presented a paper on Steel Ambassadors at the International Conference and Panorma (ICP) (August 2015).

- OFTEN facilitated discussions between the National Training Agency (NTA) and CARPHA on the centre approval process (August 2015).

- OFTEN collaborated with the Public Service Academy and the Diamond Division of the Ministry of Public Administration to develop and offer courses online.

## Eduroam

Eduroam (education roaming) is a secure, world-wide roaming access service developed for the international research and education community. Eduroam allows students, researchers and staff from participating institutions to obtain Internet connectivity across campus and when visiting other participating institutions by simply opening their laptop. The Eduroam service was launched by TTRENT in 2015.

## Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is the only intergovernmental organisation solely concerned with the promotion, development and sharing of open/distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL was established by Commonwealth Governments in 1988 to work with Commonwealth nations to improve access to quality education and training. COL's mission focuses on helping member states to use technology as a means of increasing the scope, scale, quality and impact of their education and training systems.

Trinidad and Tobago has a well-established working relationship with COL and has been actively involved in regional and pan-Commonwealth activities. The country is also a member of The Virtual University of Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC), which is coordinated by COL. VUSSC is designed to help small states develop programmes on skills related post-secondary subjects and to build capacity to offer online courses.

From March 2 to April 28, 2015 the DLS collaborated with VUSSC to offer a programmes called Developing and Teaching Online Courses (DTOC) to twenty-seven (27) instructors from two institutions, The Trinidad and Tobago Police Academy and the Caribbean Public Health Agency. DTOC was developed to support instructors in designing and implementing quality online and blended learning experiences. The focus of the online course was to engage participants in working together to plan, design and develop their own online course.

## 11.3    The Financial Assistance (Studies) Unit

The Financial Assistance (Studies) Unit was approved by Cabinet in May 2010, with the mandate to lend technical and administrative support to the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee is an intermediary body to the approval process. The Financial Assistance (Studies) programme was transferred from the Ministry of Community Development to the Office of the Prime Minister in July 2011 and then subsequently to the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training in September 2013.

## Strategic Objective

The Financial Assistance (Studies) Programme is designed to provide assistance to those students whose resources are not sufficient to meet the costs of post-secondary/undergraduate level education. It supports the disadvantaged students who are struggling to meet the cost associated with the pursuit of academic studies and/or encounter financial difficulties during their programme of study. These students are unable to meet the cost of studies even with assistance from, statutory or other sources of funding.
It should be noted that the Financial Assistance (Studies) Programme was specifically established to provide supplementary financial support in circumstances of need and was not intended to be a student's main source of funding.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The Financial Assistance (Studies) Unit achieved the following:-

• Cabinet approved assistance to eighty-four (84) applicants at the total cost of $2,899,220.00.

• Processed payments and issued contract agreements to eighty-four (84) new awardees as recommended by Cabinet.

- Processed payments and issued contract agreements to previous awardees that were due tranche payments for the 2014/2015 academic year. A total of fifty-three (53) awardees received tranches due for the 2014/2015 academic year.

  (a) Advertised the intake of applications during the period February 9th to March 20th 2015.

  (b) Received all applications, prepared and submitted files to the Financial Assistance Selection Committee for consideration.

  (c) Scheduled and arranged interviews of applicants as recommended by the Financial Assistance Selection Committee.

  (d) Ensured that applicants were updated on the status of their application.

  (e) Monitored and evaluated the programmer in order to:

    - Assess the overall impact of the programme.
    - Ensure that there is consistency and transparency in the delivery of the service.
    - Ensure that the opportunities for continuous improvements are maximsed.
    - Ensure that recipients of financial assistance are fulfilling their obligations to the country.
    - Submitted report on 2005-2007 applicants for Financial Assistance to the Integrity Commission.

## 11.4   The Funding and Grants Administration Division (FGAD)

The Funding and Grants Administration Division (FGAD) is responsible for all financial support mechanisms for tertiary education. As such, the FGAD currently administers the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) programme and the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP).

### Strategic Objectives

There are four (4) major strategic objectives of the Division:

- To develop its skills to execute the mandate of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) in securing and expanding the GATE Programme;
- To align the GATE Programme to the socio-economic developmental needs of the country;
- To improve the monitoring, compliance and evaluation of institutions and students through greater investigative work; and
- To improve its information technology platform to facilitate efficient processing of its programmes.

### GATE Programme

The GATE Programme, which was introduced in September 2004, is the main funding mechanism managed by the FGAD. The GATE Programme provides financial assistance towards the cost of tuition fees to eligible citizens pursuing approved tertiary level programmes at local and regional public and private institutions.

### The major objectives of the GATE Programme are as follows:

- To make tertiary education affordable to all, so that no citizen of Trinidad and Tobago would be denied tertiary education because of their inability to pay;
- To widen access to tertiary education that would support economic development and promote social equity; and
- To build and strengthen a national quality tertiary education sector through both public and private tertiary level institutions.

Student fills out a GATE application form

## The Standing Committee on the GATE Programme

In May 2011, Cabinet established the Standing Committee on the GATE Programme with the following terms of reference:

- Review applications for GATE funding by institutions and make recommendations to the Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training;
- Develop a more objective and comprehensive method for the determination of tuition fees for programmes delivered by private tertiary institutions;
- Continually develop and review strategies and agreements to increase the level of monitoring, compliance and auditing of GATE approved institutions; and
- Continually develop and review strategies to ensure that students fulfill their obligations in respect of the Student's Agreement.

## Membership of the Standing Committee on the GATE Programme

There are currently ten (10) members of the Standing Committee on the GATE Programme with representatives from the following Ministries and bodies:

- Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
- Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago
- National Training Agency
- Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development
- Ministry of Finance and the Economy
- Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry;
- Representation from the Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro-Enterprise Development is currently being sought.

## GATE e-Service Achievements

The Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training introduced an online application for GATE referred to as the GATE eService. Since the inception of this service, the Ministry has noted great benefits namely:

- Provision of end-to-end workflow that has enabled the FGAD to administer the GATE Programme more efficiently
- Reduced GATE Clearance and Application processing time and errors:
    - Faster responses on student eligibility for GATE
    - Faster turnover on GATE claims and payments
- Improvements in identity management for all registered students
- Rationalisation of GATE application processes (removal of duplications in process)

- Single form filling in the application of GATE Clearance and GATE funding
- 24/7 application convenience (apply for GATE anywhere anytime)
- Student ability to track application without involvement of FGAD or institution via the eService.

Most notably, amidst concerns for value for money and student abuse of the GATE Programme, the GATE eService has facilitated the immediate detection of student abuses. In the academic year 2014-2015, the total reimbursement of $14,894,615.76 has been reimbursed by students via the GATE eService.

## Customer service facility: '800-GATE' Hotline

Students represent the largest group of FGAD's stakeholders. From its inception to October 31, 2014, over four hundred and eighty thousand, one hundred and fifteen (480,115) students have received assistance via the GATE Programme and the HELP loan facility. The FGAD is required to address the increasing volume of queries and concerns received from students daily.

This increasing customer service demand has placed a severe strain on the current telephone system and human resources of the FGAD. Thus, in an effort to improve its customer service, the MTEST introduced an '800-GATE' hotline on January 13, 2014 through which all telephone queries regarding the GATE Programme and the HELP loan facility are being addressed. The '800-GATE' hotline is managed by a team of Customer Service Representatives from the FGAD and has impacted positively in addressing students' needs.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### Expenditure of the GATE Programme:

Expenditure under the GATE programme for fiscal year 2014/2015 was six hundred and ninety-nine million, eight hundred and eighty-four thousand, three hundred and ninety-three dollars and thirty-three cents ($699,884,393.33).

The number students accessing GATE funding for the period was forty-seven thousand, two hundred and thirty (47,230).

Eight (8) new Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes and nine (9) new academic programmes were approved.

## The Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)

Cabinet agreed on January 19, 2006, to the establishment and implementation of the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) within the FGAD. The HELP is a low interest loan facility which provides financial assistance toward tuition and non-tuition fees to students who have been accepted and enrolled in programmes approved for GATE funding. HELP loans are only available to students who are eligible to receive GATE funding.

### The major objectives of the HELP are:

- To provide financial assistance to citizens of Trinidad and Tobago pursuing tertiary education, thereby expanding equitable access to tertiary education;
- To provide a low interest loan facility, approved and disbursed effectively and efficiently and within a reasonable time frame to students in need;
- To assist in increasing the national participatory rate in tertiary education to sixty per cent (60%) by 2015; and
- To develop a well-educated, qualified cadre of citizens in identified areas of national development and in line with the industry labour requirements.

The total number of students receiving HELP loans for fiscal year 2014/2015 was 1,274 valued at thirty million, one hundred and eight thousand, four hundred and eleven dollars ($30,108,411).

## 11.5    Higher Education Services Division (HESD)

The Higher Education Services Division (HESD) is responsible for ensuring that a relevant, coherent and modernised tertiary education system is established.

The mission of the HESD is to support the development of quality higher education aligned to national socioeconomic needs through the creation of interconnected data management systems; dissemination of key data on higher education; benchmarking policies against regional and international higher education systems; inclusive and participatory consultation with key stakeholders; partnerships with local, regional and international donors and other agencies; and capacity building initiatives across the higher education sector.

## Achievements

**Monitoring of 9th European Development Fund (EDF) Programme** – Support to Non-University Tertiary Education - The institutions and agencies under the purview of the MTEST in receipt of funding under the 9th EDF Programme were monitored by the HESD through monthly meetings. Activities included coordination of meetings and collection of relevant status reports. A total of TT$10,000,000 was disbursed to the following EDF projects:



UWI students at graduation

| Implementing Agency | Project Title | Details | Proposed Allocation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Distance Learning Secretariat, MTEST | Trinidad and Tobago Research and Education Network (TTRENT) | TTRENT is a dedicated network that would connect all public post-secondary and tertiary level institutions including regulatory agencies. The UWI, UTT, COSTAATT and USC are connected to the network. | $2,000,000.00 |
| UWI | Methanol - Biofuel Diesel Blend Performance (MB-DS) | This project seeks to test the feasibility of converting existing diesel power generation facilities to use a blend of methanol and bio-fuels | $446,710.00 |
| UTT | UTT/MIT Fab Lab Proposals | This project aims to set up a Fabrication Laboratory (Fab Lab) comprised industrial grade fabrication and electronic tools. This will be in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)Fabrication Academy | $960,000.00 |
| **Implementing Agency** | **Project Title** | **Details** | **Proposed Allocation** |
| | | | |
| UTT | Fashion Incubator/ Accelerator | The UTT Caribbean Academy of Fashion and Design Incubator programme will train aspiring designers and managers in the art and business of fashion. The incubator will provide a springboard for budding fashion designers and businessmen to develop the Caribbean fashion industry. | $499,761.00 |
| UTT | Knowledge TT | To build awareness of and encourage the usage of the knowledge.tt education and learning platform. This will be done through the development of new local content and a marketing campaign to promote usage. | $498,000.00 |
| UTT | Sound Recording Studio Accelerator | This project seeks to acquire a state of the art sound recording studio to provide students of the Music Technology Programme with industry relevant training. | $980,000.00 |
| MIC | Instructional leadership training for managers, coordinators and senior instructors | The project aims to provide managers, coordinators and senior instructors with relevant training that would improve their pedagogical skills and overall programme delivery | $547,200.00 |
| ACTT | 2nd International Conference on Higher Education and Training | The ACTT adopted a leadership role in the promotion of quality assurance in Higher Education and Training in the region through this annual conference by providing networking opportunities to higher education practitioners and the opportunity to shape best practice in the field. | $1,000,000.00 |
| MTEST | Institutional Strengthening | As part of its initiative to transform the tertiary education and skills training sector to one that is accessible and responsive to labour market needs, the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training embarked on a portfolio of projects to upgrade and expand the existing infrastructure. This will provide a platform to introduce new programmes and strengthen the existing programmes. Against this background the Ministry aims to improve its project management, project implementation and project monitoring and evaluation capabilities for all Development Programme Projects funded by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) and the projects funded by the European Development Fund (EDF). | $3,068,329.00 |
| **TOTAL** | | | 10,000,000.00 |

**ANNUAL DATA COLLECTION EXERCISE** – Data was collected on students' enrolment and instituted via the Online Institutional Profile Database. Analysis of the data was done and a report complied in August 2015 and submitted internally for review. The data revealed that the total Tertiary Education Student Population for the 2013/2014 academic year was 60,901 and the participation rate was 58.23%.

The third edition of the Ministry's Statistical Digest is being produced and will subsequently be submitted for final approval and printing. Preparations have begun for a fourth cycle of the annual data collection.

**LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE LIFE SKILLS UNIT** - The Division had representation on both committees. The Curriculum Review Committee completed its task of curriculum update and began administering the revised curriculum in early 2013. The Life Skills Unit was re-established under the NTA to administer the newly upgraded curriculum and an Advisory Committee to the Life Skills Unit was established in June 2014. Members of staff of the Division continue to serve on this committee to ensure the progress of the National Life Skills programme.

## ST. AUGUSTINE EDUCATION CITY COMMITTEE
– The Education City Committee is supported by two (2) members of staff of the Division. During fiscal 2015, the committee undertook the following projects:-

**Awards for Academic Excellence**
In December of 2014, the St Augustine Education City Committee sought to highlight the quality of educational activity taking place within the wider St Augustine region by recognising the achievements of National Scholars and top performing SEA students in that academic year.

**Study Tour**
Three (3) members of the committee undertook a study tour of the Singapore academic model where higher education activity is clustered around the city center. During the tour, meetings were held with Singapore's national universities and technical institutes, as well as government agencies to identify the factors contributing to the success of their Education City Model.

**Policies re: St Augustine City**
The Spatial Development Strategy and Regulatory Framework was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development. This framework will guide spatial development and investment in the area, reflecting smart growth and green design principles. It will provide guidance on the appropriate land uses and the desired form of built development towards more sustainable development in the area, as well as encourage and guide prospective developers and investors.

The Education Model, the St. Augustine Education City Report highlighted the proposed approach to the development of the Education City with core recommendations, a development programme and a transformation framework. This included recommendations on immediate infrastructure requirements and an implementation plan.

## THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (NCHE)
The National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) was reconstituted in 2015. The Commission began its work by establishing sub-committees to treat with specific areas under the NCHE mandate. Relevant staffing positions were identified for the NCHE Secretariat and Job Descriptions were drafted. The Higher Education Research Fund (HERF), draft documents were reviewed, including: Operational Guidelines, Application Form, and Call for Proposal information sheet, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Contracts for Evaluators and Contacts for awardees of the Fund.

**INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS AND GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES** –The Division continues to collaborate with international stakeholders and donors of Grant Funding for partnership opportunities in areas of research for Tertiary Education Institutions in the sector.

## 11.6  General Administration Unit

The General Administration Unit is responsible for maintenance and upgrade of the Ministry's facilities namely, the Head Office located on Levels 16 to 18, Tower C, International Waterfront Center, Funding and Grants Administration Division, St. Augustine, the Schools of Nursing in Port of Spain and San Fernando, and storage space at Trade Zone, El Socorro . The Unit also provides support services related to records management, procurement, courier and office management.

## Achievements

### Head Office

- Arranged/provided security, janitorial, hygiene and messenger/chauffeur service for staff of the Ministry.
- Procurement of office supplies, equipment and machines.

### Funding and Grants Administrative Division
- Installation of electrical wall plugs for Network connections.
- Conducted repairs and maintenance to plumbing, air condition and lighting systems..

### Registry Department
- Ongoing training and coaching in Registry Procedures.
- Operationalised the Electronic Database Management System.
- Continued review of the Registry System.

## 11.7  Information Technology (IT) Unit

The main function of the IT Unit is to support the efficient use of information technology facilities and systems so that they will be responsive to the needs of clients and staff of the Ministry's internal and external units.
The mission of the IT Unit is to provide feasible information and communication technology solutions through the use of cutting edge technology, coupled with practical approaches and best practices delivered by a highly trained and dedicated team of Information, Technology and Communication professionals.

The Unit provides the following services to staff of the Ministry :-

### Help Desk Services
- Procurement and support for computer systems.
- Printing support services (printer maintenance).

### Network Services
- Wi-Fi access to computer networks as well as open Wi-Fi internet access.
- File Server storage and backup.
- Email services.

### Database Services
- Staff intranet for collaboration and communication.
- Web application development for internal projects.
- Technical support for the Ministry's website and public facing web projects.
- Consultation on application design and implementation.

## Achievements

### MTEST Edu-ID
Description: A student management system aimed at tracking students' progress throughout tertiary level institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. The system was designed to monitor and produce statistics on students' progress

through the compilation of aggregate data sorted by academic field of study and constituency.

STATUS: Project launched in July 2015 to the UTT student population as part of a phased roll out with other institutions to be included at a later date.

## Migration to New MTEST Administrative Complex, Chaguanas

DESCRIPTION: Planning and installation of all networking equipment were completed for the relocation of IT network and all IT related peripherals for the MTEST Administrative Complex, Chaguanas.

STATUS: Project halted since the Administrative Complex was re-assigned to the Ministry of Agriculture.

## Biometric Solution for new MTEST Administrative Complex, Chaguanas

DESCRIPTION: This project entails the deployment of Biometric access controls solution for the new MTEST Administrative Complex to allow for access, egress and timekeeping. This allows for secure and monitored access to the main building, as well as other areas identified as requiring additional security. The System allows entry upon the user provided an authenticated fingerprint at an access panel located at the entrance way.

STATUS: Planning and installation of all equipment were completed.

## File Server Backup and Storage Solution

DESCRIPTION: Storage and backup solution to accommodate the Ministry's needs, as well as for future expansion.
STATUS: Procurement completed and awaiting rollout to government data center.

## Ministry Website Upgrade and Redesign

Description: Remodeled and redesign of new website for dissemination of information about the Ministry to the public.

STATUS: The website design and layout was completed internally and the new site was transferred to the Fujitsu datacenter where the website is hosted.

## Financial Assistance (Studies) Programme (FASP) Grant Management Solution

DESCRIPTION: This software system seeks to automate many of the steps in FASP's scholarships granting process. The system uses optical character recognition (OCR) technology to read applicant forms and digitise them. Once the data has been correctly converted to a digital format, it is securely process by FASP Unit and allows students to be notified as their applications proceed through the various stages of processing.

STATUS: The system has been installed and tested, however changes were required as the product did not meet the requirements of the FASP Division. Currently the vendor is attempting to implement these changes and other bugs.

## Eduroam Website Design and Implementation

DESCRIPTION: The ICT Unit and Distance Learning Secretariat collaborated to create a website for their Eduroam Project. This website features information regarding the various Eduroam sites available within Trinidad and Tobago.

STATUS: Website design and layout was completed in May 2015 and launched in June 2015.

## Higher Education Services Division and the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago Institutional Profile Database

DESCRIPTION: The Institutional Profile Database is a custom solution developed internally by the Ministry that allows Tertiary Level Institutions to upload aggregate data on their students and teaching staff. This information gathering tool allows the Higher Education Services Division and the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago to use the data for their processing and producing of the statistical digest.

STATUS: Upgrading Institutional Profile Database system to include reporting and new functionality as requested by

the Higher Education Services Division was completed and deployed.

## 11.8   Finance and Accounts Unit

The Finance and Accounts Unit is involved in all the accounting functions related to the Ministry. This includes the acquisition of funding from the Ministry of Finance and the Economy and meeting all the expenses incurred by the Ministry. The Accounts are reconciled with the Treasury Division and the Appropriation Accounts of the monies expended are submitted to the Auditor General on an annual basis.

### ACHIEVEMENTS
- Payments of salaries to monthly and daily paid staff.
- Payment of GATE funding to educational institutions.
- Payments of subventions to Agencies.
- Preparation of Annual Recurrent Estimates.
- Payments to suppliers.
- Processing of Public Sector Investment Programme payments to agencies under the purview of the Ministry.

### Other statutory requirements successfully completed include
- Publication of unpaid cheques.
- Preparation of Appropriation Accounts.
- Preparation of Statement of Receipts and Disbursements.
- Preparation of monthly expenditure statements.
- Preparation of Arrears of Revenue statements.
- Filing and safe keeping of documents.
- Reconciliation Statement.
- Daily abstract.
- Preparation of Virements as required.
- Transfer of Funds as required.
- Monitoring of Funds.

## 11.9   Human Resource Division

The Human Resource Division (HRD) provides overall policy direction on human resource issues. HRD is responsible for recruitment, administration, management and training of all employees to ensure the successful attainment of the strategic direction of the Ministry goals.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recruited and selected approximately forty-two (42) persons on contract. Fifty-three (53) positions were advertised.

- Trained and developed staff at all levels – managerial, supervisory, technical and general. The specific areas of training were:

- 2nd International Conference on Higher Education and Training
- Emotional Intelligence Workshop

- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Supervisory Management

- Increments and P&L Management
- Forensics of Credential and CV Fraud

- Developing E-Government Strategies
- Supervisory Management

- Difficult People, Difficult Conversations
- Performance Management and Appraisal System

- Development through Leadership with Integrity
- Inventory Management
- Office Etiquette for Administrative Support
- Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property
- Leadership Essentials
- Training of Trainers
- Talent Management
- Leadership Change and Transition
- Records Management

- Financial Management for Non- Accounting persons
- Practical Mediation Skills
- Practical use of new FIDIC 1999 – Conditions of Contract
- Conducting Effective Performance Appraisals
- Applied ADR
- Mentoring/Coaching
- Staffing and Succession Planning/Recruitment and Selection
- Time Management

- Processed Pension and Leave for approximately one hundred and ninety-six (196) members of staff and submitted same to the Comptroller of Accounts;

- Processed gratuity payments for approximately thirty (30) persons on contract;

- Processed and submitted retirement benefits for all members of staff due to retire by February 2016;

- Processed Terms and Conditions of employment for persons on contract;

- Executed nineteen (19) standardised and twenty-eight (28) non standardised contracts;

- Processed leave applications for all categories of staff (contract and public officers)

Employees in business attire

## 11.10 Internal Audit Unit

The Internal Audit Unit assists the Ministry's operations by examining and evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the Ministry's system of internal control and where necessary, makes recommendations for improvement. The Unit ensures that there is proper accountability, efficiency and transparency in the financial operations of the Ministry in accordance to the Financial Regulations and the Exchequer and Audit Act Chap 69:01.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Satisfied Auditor's General Department and Comptroller of Accounts work schedules/programmes under the purview of the Ministry.

- Produced specific and timely audit reports with recommendations.

- Accomplished work schedules/ assignments approved by the Permanent Secretary on a monthly basis.

## 11.11 LEGAL SERVICES UNIT

The Legal Services Unit continues to exercise the following key functions within the MTEST inter alia:

- Provide quality legal advisory services primarily to the Honourable Minister, Permanent Secretary, Heads of Divisions, Officers and Agencies of the MTEST;

- Safeguard the legal interest of the Ministry;

- Ensure that there is compliance with all necessary legal requirements; accurately draft and review legal documents and correspondence;

- Ensure that the Ministry's draft legislation is finalised and approved in preparation for placement on the Legislative Agenda and onward submission to Parliament;

- Provide sufficient instructions to the Office of the Attorney General and the Chief Personnel Officer in relation to potential or actual litigation;

- Seek to ensure that contentious matters are settled in the best interests of the Ministry via negotiations and mediation (alternative dispute resolution);

- Properly represent the Ministry at Court matters, where necessary; uphold the Rule of Law and exercise ethical values at all times;

- Represent the Ministry on Ministerial and/or Cabinet appointed committees and other external meetings/ conferences in a professional manner; and

- Facilitate applications through the Freedom of Information Act [Ch.22:02].

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The Legal Services Unit played a key role in the review/ drafting of several Agreements for the fiscal year October 2014 – September 2015, namely:

## AGREEMENTS/OTHER

- Prepared and executed Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) Agreements with several private Tertiary Level Institutions;

- Reviewed the Education Act [Chapter 39:01] – submitted to the MOE at a meeting in March, 2015;

- Reviewed the Car Park Lease for the NTA [ October, 2014];

- Reviewed the Maintenance Agreement for MTEST and IDA International, Singapore, and resolved an Intellectual Property Rights issue arising therein;

- Vetted several contracts in collaboration with the Information Technology Unit for the GATE eService;

- Reviewed the draft lease for the San Fernando Nursing School;

- Reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the NTA, Bakers Association and the National Flour Mills Sector Advisory Committee for the coordination of activities related to Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Human Resource Development in Trinidad and Tobago with specific emphasis on the baking sub-sector;

- Reviewed the MOU between the NTA and iGoVTT/TTConnect-Kiosk, Gulf City;

- Prepared and executed the MOU between NTA and the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) for the Apprenticeship Programme (signed on 26th May, 2015);

- Prepared the MOU – MTEST, NESC, NTA, MIC-IT, YTEPP, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industry Association and Peake Technologies Limited for an Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Apprenticeship Programme (executed June 2015);

- Prepared and executed MOU between the NTA and the Couva Point Lisas Chamber of Commerce for the Apprenticeship Programme (signed 25th July, 2015);

- Prepared and executed the MOU between NTA and the Chaguanas Chamber of Commerce for the Apprenticeship Programme (signed 29th July, 2015);

- Draft the Amendment to the MOU with regard to the formation of a National Research and Education Network for Trinidad and Tobago (TTRENT) to include the University of the Southern Caribbean as a party (executed);

- Reviewed the MOU among MTEST, UTT and MASSY Technologies INFOCOM (Trinidad) Ltd. – "Classroom of the Future";

- Vetted Cabinet Notes (from Research, Planning and Technical Services Department);

- Prepared Legal Opinions/Advice: eg. - Intellectual Property, NTA's former Corporate Secretary eg. status of NTA and Human Resources (eg. maternity leave issue);

- Reviewed the Ministry's Freedom of Information statement;

- Vetted the Service Level Agreement with Fujitsu Caribbean (Trinidad) Limited for the use of certain information technology and computing infrastructure and related services on an 'as required' basis;

- Vetted Agreements/Student Contracts for the Financial Assistance (Studies) Programme (FASP);

- Vetted the draft MOU among MTEST, Ministry of Public Utilities and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment to promote the advancement in the quality of training delivered in Trinidad and Tobago through the Printing and Packaging Institute of Trinidad and Tobago (PPITT), which was established at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) John S Donaldson Creativity Campus;

- Reviewed the draft MOU between the National Energy Skills Center (NESC) and National Gas Company Ltd. for the establishment of the CNG Maintenance Technician Training Programme;

- Reviewed the MOU – among the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, NTA and the MTEST for the Cluster

Mapping and Value Chain Analysis of Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Sector (executed 2nd July, 2015).

## 11.12 Nursing Education Unit
### Strategic Objectives

- To continue training of registered general and psychiatric nursing students/pupil midwives and enrolled nursing assistant trainees to bolster the health sector.

- To commence the process of a seamless transition of patient care assistants to become enrolled nursing assistants and for enrolled nursing assistants to become registered nurses.

- To increase the proportion of nursing personnel into the health sector by 30% by the year 2016.

- To utilise rural health facilities as placement areas for the training of nursing personnel.

- To incorporate the Caribbean Certified Diabetes Educator Programme in Trinidad and Tobago via the School of Community Health and Post Basic Nursing Education.

- To fill all vacant positions of Principals, Nursing and Clinical Educators in the MTEST Schools of Nursing and Midwifery.

- To obtain proper security of tenure (contracts) for Nursing Education Staff at the MTEST Schools of Nursing and Midwifery.

- To dialogue with other nurse training institutions (Universities and Colleges) to rationalise nursing education in Trinidad and Tobago.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued training of Registered General and Psychiatric Nursing students/Pupil Midwives and Enrolled Nursing Assistant Trainees as follows:-

  - General Nursing students-180 (Final year)
  - General Nursing students-100 (First year)
  - Psychiatric Nursing Students-56 (Final)
  - Psychiatric Nursing students -55 (First year)
  - Nursing Assistant Trainees-183 (all successful at their Final Exams and now employed with the RHA's)
  - Nursing Assistant Trainees-98 (First year)
  - Post Basic Nursing Education Programme
    - Trauma and Emergency Care Nursing-20
    - Operating Theatre/Scrub Technician Programme-20
    - Renal Nursing Programme-20
    - Nurse Preceptor Nursing Education Programme-16
    - Registered Nurse Midwifery Programme-80 successful students
    - Direct Entry Midwifery students -30 (approaching Final Examinations)

- Commenced the process of a seamless transition from Patient Care Assistants to become Enrolled Nursing Assistants and Enrolled Nursing Assistants to become Registered Nurses.

- Increased the proportion of nursing personnel in the health sector by 25%.

- Utilised rural health facilities as placement areas for the training of nursing personnel, to avoid overcrowding in the General facilities.

- Incorporated the Caribbean Certified Diabetes Educator Programme in Trinidad and Tobago via the School of Community Health and Post Basic Nursing Education. Fifteen (15) students were in training for the first time in Trinidad and Tobago.

- Obtained a level of security of tenure (one year contracts) for Nursing Education Staff at the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery.

- Conducted meetings with other Nurse Training Institutions (Universities and Colleges) in order to rationalise Nursing Education in Trinidad and Tobago. A Draft Report was completed.

## 11.13 Programme and Project Management Unit

The Programme and Projects Management (PPM) Unit provides project management services for the implementation of programmes and projects under the Ministry's Development Programme to ensure that they are aligned to the strategic goals of the Ministry. This involves the management of every aspect of each project life cycle to ensure that the project phases are completed within time and approved budget, and to users' specifications.

The PPM Unit prepared the following Reports/Documents on the Ministry's projects, in accordance with the Ministry of Finance and the Economy established guidelines for the fiscal year 2015:

- 2016 Draft Budget Estimates supported by Implementation Schedules and Projections.
- Revised project Implementation and Expenditure Schedules based on 2015 Budget allocation.
- Monthly Status Reports on Public Sector Investment Projects (PSIP).
- Mid-Term Report (Comprehensive Status Report of Projects).
- Project Achievement Reports.
- Reports on Priority Projects.
- Annual and Quarterly Expenditure Forecast.
- Cabinet Notes, Minister's Notes and Briefs on programmes/projects/plans.
- Reports on contracts awarded.
- Requests for transfers and virements.

For the financial year 2015 the Ministry's Development Programme was allocated a total of $507,360,000 as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Consolidated Fund | – | $385,360,000 |
| Infrastructure Development Fund | – | $122,000,000 |

Expenditure under the Development Programme was $495,813,448, which is 97.7% as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Consolidated Fund | – | $373,813,448 |
| Infrastructure Development Fund | – | $122,000,000 |

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Facilitated 'Budget Guidance' Workshop for Agencies under the purview of the Ministry.
- Facilitated working sessions on preparation of project documents with Agencies
- Reviewed Budget Documents submitted by Agencies for inclusion into the 2016 Development Programme Budget Estimates.
- Prepared the Ministry's 2016 Development Programme Budget Estimates.
- Prepared Cabinet Notes for PSIP Projects
- Facilitated project meetings and site visits with the implementing agency, NIPDEC and the main stakeholder COSTAATT for the Project - Establishment of a Main Campus for COSTAATT–Phase I in Chaguanas.
- Facilitated meetings with the design consultants, contractor and project management agency and the main stakeholders, MTEST, NTA, YTEPP, ACTT for the Project - Establishment of the Ministry of Tertiary

Education and Skills Training Administration Complex at Narsaloo Ramaya Marg Road, Chaguanas.
* Facilitated project meetings and site visits for the Establishment of the UTT Aviation Campus at Camden Base Road, Couva.
* Facilitated meetings with the design consultants and the main stakeholders, UWI Open Campus for the Project-Construction of an Open Campus Facility Phase I, Chaguanas.
* Facilitated project meetings and site visits for the Establishment of UWI South Campus Phase I in Debe.
* Reviewed project documents and process payments for the project funded by the Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF) – UTT Main Campus, Tamana.
* Facilitated disbursement of funds under the Consolidated Fund for implementation of projects.

## Major projects facilitated and monitored:

* Implementation of COSTAATT Main Campus – Phase I.
* Implementation of YTEPP facilities at the Woodford Lodge Integrated Training Centre – Culinary Arts Building, Training Centre and Administration Building.
* Implementation of UWI South Campus – 77% complete.
* Facilitated the Construction of a Servol Life Centre in Point Fortin.
* Completion of the MTEST Complex Phase I which comprised of design, construction and outfitting of a 3-storey building (65,000 sq. ft. of usable space)
* Completion of NESC Hall of Residence, Ste. Madeline.
* Completion of the UWI Seismic Research Centre.
* Completion of Upgrade and Expansion of Student Residences at the Canada Hall South Block and commencement of works on the North Block.
* Completion of YTEPP Diego Martin Training Enterprise Academy.
* Completion of Infrastructure Works – UWI Open Campus Facility Phase I, Chaguanas.
* Implementation of the UTT Aviation Campus Phase I.
* Implementation of the UTT Main Campus Tamana – Phase I.
* Upgrade of NESC technology centres.
* Upgrade of MIC-IT technology centres.
* Upgrade of UTT Campuses.
* Commencement of the Expansion of the School of Dentistry.
* Acquisition of Equipment / Vehicles for YTEPP and MIC-IT.

## 11.14 Research, Planning and Technical Services (RPTS)

The Research, Planning and Technical Services (RPTS) Division provided support to the Ministry in respect of the delivery of its mandate. The responsibilities of the RPTS Division include:
* formulating and implementing policies relating to the Ministry's mandate;
* coordinating strategies and plans of the various divisions, institutions and agencies under the Ministry's purview to ensure synergy, optimal use of resources and adherence to policy objectives; and
* monitoring and evaluating programmes under the Ministry.

The RPTS Division is responsible for performing the following activities:-

* Preparation of Cabinet Notes, Minister Notes and Briefs on programmes, plans and matters relating to the various divisions, departments and agencies under the Ministry's purview;
* Preparation of responses to Parliamentary Questions;
* Submission of Audited Financial Statements of Portfolio Agencies ;
* Preparation of MTEST Strategic Planning Framework;
* Representation on Ministerial and Cabinet- appointed Committees, Boards and UWI Committees.
* Preparation of the following reports:-
    - Listing of Ministry's priorities annually
    - Achievement Reports of the Ministry and the Agencies under its purview
    - Medium Term Policy Framework Update

- Budget Statements and Budget Measures Reports
- Ministry's Annual Administrative Report
- Social Sector Investment Programme – End of Year, Target and Half Yearly Reports
- Quarterly Report of the Strategic Action Plan
- Freedom of Information Statement
- Implementation of Cabinet decisions of the Ministry;

• Represented the Ministry on the following Cabinet appointed committees:

- Social Policy; Mentorship; UNESCO; Trinidad and Tobago Printing and Packing Institute; Point Lisas Industrial Apprenticeship Programme; United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago; and Implementation of the Women's City Programme of Trinidad and Tobago.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The RPTS Division finalised the following Reports during the period October 2014 and September 2015:-

• Status of Policy Measures and Strategy for 2011/2015.
• Proposed Policy Measures and Strategies for Fiscal Year 2015/2016.
• Report on Cabinet Decisions taken 2014/2015.
• Cabinet Decisions Implementation Report 2010/2014.
• Report of the Meeting of the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus Technical Advisory Committee for the UWI Biennium 2015/16 and 2016/17.
• Report of the Meetings of the UWI Campus and University Grants Committees for the UWI Biennium 2015/16 and 2016/17.
• Strategic Plans for National Performance Framework Bi-Annual Report, October 2014 – March 2015.
• Social Sector Investment Programme (SSIP) End-of-Year Report for 2013/2014.
• Auditor General's Department Entity Profile 2014.

The Division submitted the following Reports to Parliament:-

• MTEST Administrative Report 2012/2013
• ACTT Administrative Report 2012/2013
• COSTAATT Administrative Report 2012/2013
• MIC-IT Administrative Report 2012/2013
• NESC Administrative Report 2012/2013
• NTA Administrative Report 2012/2013
• UTT Administrative Report 2012/2013
• UWI Administrative Report 2012/2013
• YTEPP Administrative Report 2012/2013
• MTEST Administrative Report 2013/2014
• ACTT Administrative Report 2013/2014
• MIC-IT Administrative Report 2013/2014
• UTT Administrative Report 2013/2014
• UWI Administrative Report 2013/2014
• YTEPP Administrative Report 2013/2014

Reports in progress:

- Auditor General's Department Entity Profile 2015.
- Strategic Plans Biannual Report, April – September 2015.
- COSTAATT Administrative Report 2013/2014.
- NESC Administrative Report 2013/2014.
- NTA Administrative Report 2013/2014.

- Social Sector Investment Programme (SSIP) End-of-Year Report for 2014/2015.
- Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

Other:

- Prepared Ministerial Brief on Ministry for new Administration.
- Commenced the MTEST Statistical Digest on the performance of the Agencies under the purview 2011-2015.
- Reviewed Board Minutes and Financial Statements of Agencies under the Ministry's purview.
- Responded to queries under the FOIA.
- Prepared responses to questions posed in Parliament.

## 11.15  TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING DIVISION:

The Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Division is responsible for planning, organising and co-ordinating TVET programmes at the post-secondary and tertiary levels in collaboration with the relevant agencies and providers, in keeping with government's national planning policy framework. The Ministry developed a National Policy on Tertiary Education, TVET and Lifelong Learning in Trinidad and Tobago and engaged in a number of strategies to rationalise and coordinate the TVET Sector. The TVET Division plans to develop and implement Apprenticeship Programmes throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The main objectives of the Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Division are to:

• Develop Apprenticeship Programmes for nationals of Trinidad and Tobago between the ages of sixteen (16) and thirty-five (35) years.
• Monitor the development of Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ's) for all technical areas.
• Monitor Apprenticeship Programmes in Trinidad and Tobago.

## 11.16 NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL:

The National Examinations Council (NEC) was established in 1965 for examinations, certification and related activities, in respect of Technical, Vocational Education and Training at the sub-professional level. In addition to its regular cycle of activities, the Council discharged its functions and introduced systems that would enhance its operational efficiency, professional standards and public image.

NEC conducted the following services:-
• Processing of candidates entries including the allocation and issuing of candidate examination numbers, the preparation of files for every subject of every course for every group of candidates of individual institutions and the researching of the status of all repeat candidates for entry into the said files.
• Production and distribution of course time-tables, daily time-tables and marking schedules for the entire examinations.
• Reproduction, packaging and distribution of the examination question papers for all subjects for each centre.
• Conduct of the examinations at approximately thirty (30) centres in Trinidad and Tobago.
• Receipt of all candidates' scripts and related documents, the issuing of these to marking centres, the conduct of marking exercises, the receipt of marked scripts and results from moderators and the documentation involved at all stages of these processes.
• Processing, including the collating of previous year's performance of repeat candidates and publication of results for all courses within the maximum acceptable time period of two (2) months.
• Processing of numerous requests for review of results.
• Preparation and issuance, on request, of statements and transcripts in respect of examination results of all years of the Council's history.
• Grading of results and the processing, documentation and issuing of diplomas and certificates.
• Analysis of Examinations and Moderators' Reports, Examination Centre's Reports and Spot Checkers' Report and the determination and initiation of appropriate action.
• Processing of fee claims for all functionaries.

- Preparation of statistical reports on examination performance by course, institution and category of candidate.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### CERTIFICATION

For the period October 2014 – September 2015 seven thousand three hundred and sixty-three certificates (7,363) were issued as follows:
- Level II Candidates – 1,842
- Level I Candidates – 86
- Servol – 365
- Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) – 3,021
- Adult Education Centres – 1,965
- Trade Centres – 84

### EXTERNAL FUNCTIONARIES

Approximately one hundred and sixty (160) External Functionaries (Moderators, Compiling Moderators, Examiners, Markers, Validators and Invigilators) were appointed at the National Examinations Council.

The functionaries carried the following duties:
- Preparation of examination papers and the submission of solutions/answer guides
- Collection and distribution of examination papers and other examination materials
- Arranging for security of the examination papers and scripts
- Supervision of examinations
- Marking of examination scripts
- Submission of marks and relevant reports to the Secretary, NEC.

## 11.17 The Secretariat for the Implementation of Spanish (SIS)

SIS as the implementing body for the Spanish as the First Foreign Language (SAFFL) initiative of Trinidad and Tobago is responsible for ensuring the development of a new learning environment in which Spanish can be part of the country's sustained economic expansion and avenues for citizen education and skill development. Many other benefits which are derived from learning Spanish also include enhanced job pathways and creation, fiscal, social, cultural growth and awareness

Some of SIS' programmes are preparatory to serve as strategic foundational developmental programmes and or projects. These assist in building Spanish language awareness and capacity within citizens of Trinidad and Tobago through their various growth stages and age groups. These programmes/projects will thus provide the structure necessary to act as feeder systems to knowledge and skill base scoped programmes to enrich the nation's economic and human resource development.
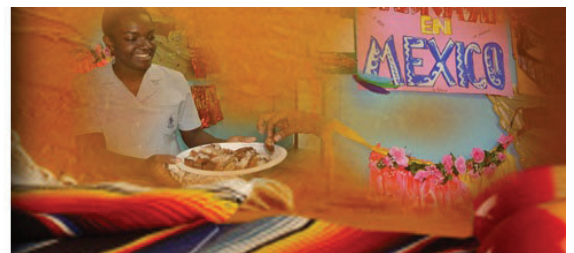


## ACHIEVEMENTS

SIS successfully completed Spanish classes at the following Institutions:-

| INSTITUTION / MINISTRY | NUMBER OF MATRICULATED STUDENTS |
| --- | --- |
| Ministry of Gender | 18 |
| Ministry of Sport | 24 |
| Ministry of Trade and Investment | 30 |
| Ministry of Labour | 25 |
| Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago | 40 |
| InvesTT | 11 |
| Ministry of Education | 25 |
| Total | 173 |

THE DISSEMINATION OF LEARNING MATERIAL: The Secretariat continued to provide Spanish learning material to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Spanish phrase booklets and activity booklets were distributed to both the private and public sectors. Booklets were distributed to: Fatima College, Holy Name Convent, Malabar Secondary, the Immigration Detention Centre, InvesTT, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Sport, Ministry of Trade Industry and Investment, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Labour and the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago.

CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS AND SEMINARS: The SIS in conjunction with Embassies of Spain, Costa Rica and Cuba hosted cultural awareness seminars throughout the year. The vast majority of these presentations were held at secondary schools. Over the past fiscal year, presentations were held at the following schools:

• Guiaco Secondary
• Siparia East Secondary
• Bishops Anstey East
• Mucurapo West Secondary
• University of the Southern Caribbean

TRANSLATION SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The SIS translated several documents for the Ministry of National Security, (Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard) the Costa Rican Embassy and InvesTT.

OUTREACH

SIS continued its role as resource provider, advocate and advisor for the implementation of Spanish by meeting with representatives of Ministries, organisations and individuals. In this regard, the department embarked upon a series of outreach programmes which included:

• THE SPANISH OPEN MIC DURING THE 2015 NGC BOCAS LIT FEST: This event was held at the National Library on May 2, 2015 and for the first time was centered on the theme of translation. Members of the general public were invited to present their original works of poetry, song, etc. in Spanish.

• EXPRESIONES ESTUDIANTILES EN ESPAÑOL: A Spanish talent show for secondary school students to showcase their talent in dance, music, poetry song and drama was held at the Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre and included the participation of fourteen (14) secondary schools. Students were afforded the opportunity to display their language skills while simultaneously having fun and interacting with other students. They received Certificates of Participation, as well as promotional items and Spanish phrase booklets.

• TRIBUTE TO GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ: To commemorate Spanish Language Day which is celebrated in April each year, the Secretariat pays tribute to an iconic literary figure from the

Spanish speaking world. In 2015, the figure chosen was the Colombian Nobel Prize winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The SIS, in conjunction with the Embassy of Colombia, organised a tribute to "Gabo" as he is affectionately called. Speeches were delivered by His Excellency Ambassador Jaime Acosta and lecturers from The UWI.

- **CULTURAL PRESENTATION:** The SIS provided a cultural presentation to primary school children during an Easter vacation camp on the influence of Spanish in the culture of Trinidad and Tobago. The children were able to learn about Spanish places, names and surnames in Trinidad, in addition to other popular elements which have been in corporated into our society as a result of our Spanish heritage.

## 12.0 Conclusion

In fiscal 2014/2015, the Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills achieved increased access to tertiary education, by opening new advanced training centres across the country. In fiscal 2015/2016, as a result of re- alignment of Government Ministries, the former Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training is now a Division of the Ministry of Education and is guided by the strategic direction of the Twelve Month Action Plan 2015-2016 of the Ministry of Education whose major major goals are:

- To ensure access to quality education and training by all citizens
- To advance Curriculm Planning and Development
- To advance Curriculm service delivery
- Continuous Teacher Training
- To provide quality Infrastructural and other Educational Facilities
- To effectively govern and administrate the education system.