

**Response of the Personnel Department to Recommendations/Comments of the:**  
**First Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Examination of the Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the Financial Years 2014 and 2015 with specific reference to the Auditor General's Department.**

1. This paper is being submitted in accordance with Standing Orders 100(6) and 110(6) of the Senate and House of Representatives respectively, which require the Minister with responsibility for the Ministry/Body reported on by a Joint Select Committee to present to each House, a paper responding to the recommendations/comments contained in the Report.
  
2. In the report, there are four recommendations made in which the Personnel Department has been identified as a body which is required to take action, as follows:
  - a. "The Public Service Commission and the CPO should also look at the frequent changes of the Accounting Officers and put measures in place to ensure that this becomes a more stable position with rotations/promotions in 3 year cycles. This can be made attractive by incentives for post holders."
  
  - b. "The Minister of Finance, the Public Service Commission and the CPO should revisit the payment plans for more skilled auditors including more competitive wages to attract them to the AGD."
  
  - c. "The Chief Personnel Officer can help speed up the process for the acquisition of adequate accounting staff and training throughout the Public Service"; and
  
  - d. "The Chief Personnel Officer can also assist in the introduction of performance indicators and implement ways to monitor and report on these performance indicators, which would better assist with the production of value for money type special audits. This will be done to show whether Ministries and Departments are achieving what they set out to achieve with the funds that they have received from Parliament."

*"Examining the frequent changes of the Accounting Officers and putting measures in place to ensure that this becomes a more stable position with rotations/promotions in 3 year cycles. This can be made attractive by incentives for post holders."*

3. The Personnel Department recommends that there should be greater attention paid to succession planning within Ministries and Departments, in collaboration with the Public Service Commission and is of the view that such action will assist in reducing the amount of change at the level of the Accounting Officers. Additionally, the Department is of the view that the matter of incentives for post holders should be considered in the context of a performance management system which measures organization performance and the performance of top managers.

*Revisiting the payment plans for more skilled auditors including more competitive wages to attract them to the AGD*

4. The compensation package is one of a number of factors which influence prospective employees to seek employment in a particular organization. Others include: opportunities to gain valuable learning and experience; psychologically rewarding work; and opportunities for advancement. In reviewing the matter, the Personnel Department will seek information from the relevant organizations regarding the relative importance of these factors to the specific case.

*Speeding up the process for the acquisition of adequate accounting staff and training throughout the Public Service*

5. The Chief Personnel Officer reviewed the Committee's recommendation with the aim of determining how and to what extent the Personnel Department could provide assistance in speeding up the process for the acquisition of adequate accounting staff and training throughout the Public Service. In this regard, the Personnel Department recognises the need to adequately staff the Public Service at all levels with qualified personnel to ensure effective service delivery. However, it was acknowledged that the power to appoint persons to offices on the permanent establishment of Ministries and Departments is vested in the Public Service Commission. Similarly, the responsibility for public service wide training of public officers currently rests with the Public Service Academy of the Ministry of Public Administration and that for the training of Accounting and Internal Audit staff rests with the Treasury Division, Ministry of Finance. The Department is willing to collaborate with these agencies to provide assistance and support in the conceptualisation and development of such programmes as may be necessary.

*Assisting in the introduction of performance indicators and implementing ways to monitor and report on these performance indicators*

6. The Personnel Department can provide assistance in matters pertaining to the management of employee performance to complement systems which need to be developed for the management of organizational performance. In this regard, the Department will support such initiatives as are launched by the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications and other agencies such as the Treasury Division, Ministry of Finance. The latter organization had been responsible, previously, for introducing the concept of output management, in which the performance of organizations was to have been assessed on the basis of outputs produced.

**Personnel Department**  
**April 11, 2017**