



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Ministry of Public Utilities**

**November 18, 2022**

Ms. Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel  
Clerk of the House  
Office of the Parliament  
Parliamentary Complex  
Cabildo Building  
St. Vincent Street,  
**Port of Spain.**

Dear Ms. Sampson-Meiguel,

**RE: Sixth Report of the Joint Select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities (including the THA) on an inquiry into the Operational Efficiency of the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Service Corporation and the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on its Service Delivery**

Reference is made to your letter dated September 29, 2022, Parl: 14/3/48 Vol IV, regarding the captioned subject matter.

Enclosed for your consideration are responses to the recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Joint select Committee on Local Authorities, Service Commissions and Statutory Authorities (including the THA).

In accordance with your request, an electronic copy of the response is enclosed for your consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

**Nicolette Duke**  
**Permanent Secretary**  
**Ministry of Public Utilities**

# Responses to Findings and Recommendations of the Sixth Report of the Joint Select Committee (JSC)

## Objective 1: Assess the Operational Efficiency of TTPost

The Ministry of Public Utilities (MPU) has noted with gratitude and appreciation the Committee's findings. In this regard the Ministry remains steadfast in its mission to action the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee (JSC).

### Recommendation

- i. **Whilst the TTPost's maintained its staff complement during the pandemic, the global move towards digitalisation and e-commerce should prompt the TTPost to revise its operations with a view to aligning them with the changing realities of the postal sector which were prompted in part by the Covid-19 pandemic.**

### **Response:**

In an effort to improve overall efficiency, customer services and to capitalize on market opportunities, TTPost is in the process of moving towards greater digitization and making e-commerce more significant in its overall operations. Some of the measures introduced or in progress include:

- Contract with IGoVTT to introduce four (4) ERP Modules over a two (2) year period, including Finance, Human Resources, Records Management and Customer Service.
- Introduced "Track and Trace" for customers to better track their products on the local market.
- In discussions with Caribbean Postal Union (CPU)/Universal Postal Union (UPU) to make TTPost the model corporation for e-commerce in the Caribbean region.

### Recommendation

- ii. **The MPU must play a leading role in revising the existing postal rates, as this is critical for enhancing the financial viability of TTPost. The MPU should provide a status update**

**on the commencement of the rate review exercise for the postal service in its response to this report.**

**Response:**

The MPU is cognisant of its role in the improvement of TTPost's financial viability. As such, the MPU will initiate the necessary steps to begin the process for the commencement of the rate review exercise for the postal service. The Ministry intends to bring the issue of TTPost's rate review to the attention of the Board and the Steering Committee at TTPost to determine a way forward with the rate review process.

**Recommendation**

- iii. TTPost should work with alacrity to complete its strategic planning process. However, given that the environmental factors (e.g. technological and economic) are rapidly evolving, the corporation may find that planning for a 3-year period may be more useful than forecasting for a longer period. E.g. 5 years.**

**Response:**

TTPost is currently in the process of evaluating the Tenders received for the hiring of a consultant to undertake its strategic planning process over the next five years. It is expected that a consultant will be on board by December 2022 and the Plan is anticipated to be completed by April 2023.

**Recommendation**

- iv. TTPost should formulate clear guidelines that should be published for the establishment of community mailboxes in public and private housing developments.**

**Response:**

TTPost will pursue implementing this recommendation by January 2023.

**Recommendation**

- v. TTPost is encouraged to conduct periodic pre-qualification exercises to ensure that qualified independent contractors are hired to augment its delivery/courier services.**

**Response:**

The pre-qualification of independent contractors are undertaken by TTPost on an ongoing basis. Another round of prequalification exercises will be undertaken in the second half of 2022-2023.

**Recommendation**

- vi. The MPU should evaluate its existing processes for scrutinising financial statements and other reporting documents submitted by entities under its purview with the aim of making the process more efficient. Additionally, key components of this review exercise must include:**
- a) The identification of issues or discrepancies flagged by auditors; and**
  - b) Engaging the entity with a view to assisting with resolving the discrepancies identified.**

**Response:**

The Ministry of Public Utilities has already initiated this recommendation and is satisfied with the response from TTPost thus far. The MPU is in continuous dialogue with TTPost in the event that any issues or discrepancies are identified. It should also be noted that, as part of its compliance reporting, TTPost is expected to submit to the MPU, *inter alia*, Annual Reports, Audited Financial Statements, Quarterly Financial Reports and Quarterly Cash Flow Statements, .

## Objective 2: Evaluate the Performance of TTPost's International and Local Courier Service

The Ministry has noted with gratitude and appreciation the Committee's finding in this area and has no objection to the points raised. Further, the Ministry would like to apprise the Committee and Parliament of the improvements made since the hearing:

- The physical space that facilitates the processing of packages has increased by 25%; and
- Staff in the processing area has also been increased by 40%.

Additionally, the re-evaluation of DHL's role in facilitating international shipping will be completed by March 2023, in order to accommodate the implementation of changes (if recommended), in time for inclusion in the Business Plan for 2023-2024.

### Recommendation:

- i. Notwithstanding the analysis conducted utilizing the KPIs provided, TTPost must strive to continuously modify its services to meet the increasing public demand and expectation for an efficient, timely and seamless courier service experience amid growing competition in the courier market.**

### **Response:**

In an effort to continuously modify its services and meet the increasing public demand and expectation, TTPost has initiated outreach programs to meet with the public at Beach Shows, Mall Crawls, Trade Shows and Community events. These outreach programs are scheduled to continue throughout Fiscal 2023. Feedback from these events, as well as regular customer encounters are used as a guide to modify some of the ways TTPost has managed this area of business.

### Recommendation:

- ii. The absence of current and accurate market data highlights the need for precise and continuous record keeping within this sector, which is necessary for conducting accurate market research.**

### **Response:**

The Ministry had noted that the absence of market data continues to pose a challenge for the management of TTPost. In light of the foregoing, during the third quarter of this fiscal, TTPost will be seeking to engage a reputable Marketing Research Institution with the aim of executing a Terms of Reference (TOR). In the interim, and as recommended by the Committee, TTPost will continue to keep precise and continuous records of performance in the sector.

**Recommendation:**

- iii. Given the Corporation's challenges with revenue generation, TTPost should strive to incorporate additional innovative strategies in the delivery of its services in a rapidly growing digitalised environment.**

**Response:**

The introduction of "Track and Trace" and the use of "Track Paks" have significantly influenced strategies for the efficient delivery of packages at TTPost. The planned restructuring of the Courier and Delivery Departments during fiscal 2023 is also expected to positively influence efficiencies in the delivery of letters and packages. Additionally, the introduction of a customer relationship management module within our ERP project will lead to better service delivery.

Objective 3: Assess the Current Strategies Utilised by the TTPost to Modernize its Current Services and Counteract the Negative Effects of COVID-19

The Ministry has noted with gratitude and appreciation the Committee's findings in this area and wishes to update the Committee / Parliament of the following:

- The Tracking system is now fully operational; and
- The Increase in allocation of resources to treat with increasing volumes has been implemented in the following areas – psychical space, manpower and marketing support expenditure

**Recommendation**

- i. TTPost must create and maintain more deliberate and robust customer interfaces. This may include a database comprising customers to facilitate the communication of updates and targeted offers.**

**Response:**

Deliberate customer interfaces are detailed in the prior section of this report dealing with outreach programs. In addition to the above, the TTPost database is currently being used to facilitate the communication of updates, marketing offers and general information.

**Recommendation**

- ii. Given that mobile phone marketing is an essential method of engaging customers, TTPost should develop and launch a mobile app that facilitates all package tracking features for the benefit of its customers.**

**Response:**

The Ministry is in agreement with the Committee's recommendation to engage mobile phone marketing and develop a mobile app that facilitates all package tracking features. TTPost has advised that this will form one of the new Marketing initiatives during fiscal 2023. It is anticipated that commencement of this particular initiative will begin during the second quarter of fiscal 2023.

### **Recommendation**

- iii. The Corporation must move with alacrity as it pertains to the finalization of its Strategic Plan in order to better align its operations with specific objectives/benchmarks.**

### **Response:**

The Ministry notes the Committee's recommendation as it pertains to the finalization of the Strategic Plan for TTPost. The committee is advised that the Corporation, is moving with alacrity to finalize its Strategic Plan, while embracing due process at all stages. The Plan is scheduled to be completed by April 2023.

### **Recommendation**

- iv. The transition of services to online platforms including the TTPost's website was an important strategic move that the Corporation must continue to capitalise upon, as it aims to further diversify its service offerings.**

### **Response:**

The Ministry is committed to continuing to work with TTPost in the transition of its services to online platforms.

### **Recommendation**

- v. The digitization of the Corporation's files is an essential prerequisite for enhancing its overall records management systems. This investment will translate into the more efficient storage, organising and retrieval of records.**

### **Response:**

The opening of the Tacarigua Data Centre, which is scheduled for the first quarter of fiscal 2023, is the main initiative that will lead to the actualization of the Corporations' digitalization thrust. This initiative is expected to deliver significantly improved efficiency in this area. Additionally, the introduction of a Records Management Module in our ERP Project will also enhance efficiencies.

### **Recommendation**

- vi. The Corporation must provide the Parliament with a status update on the delivery app that is set to accompany the implementation of the Nationwide Zip Code system. Further collaboration should be done with relevant entities to ensure that an accurate Geographic Information System (GIS) is utilised in determining addresses. The Corporation should engage a consultant or another suitable source of technical expertise to assist with the successful execution of this project, if this has not already been done.**

### **Response:**

Cabinet has set up a Committee to review and advise on Phase III of the Address Management System. The delivery app is part of Phase III and we await the Committee's report and Cabinet's instructions, following its submission on the overall direction of Phase III and individual recommendations therein on proceeding.

### **Recommendation**

- vii. Connectivity challenges is an important matter for consideration as part of a wider national Digital Transformation Initiative. We encourage TTPOST to make representation to the said Ministry with a view to placing the unique issues and challenges related to the delivery of national postal services on the Ministry's policy agenda.**

### **Response:**

The Ministry is cognisant of the Committee's recommendations regarding the treatment of connectivity challenges. The appropriate representation to the required Ministries will be initiated by TTpost during the second quarter of Fiscal2023.

### **Recommendation**

- viii. The Corporation, must as a priority, submit its legislative amendments with a view to commencing discussions and revisions with its line Ministry and the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs.**

**Response:**

The Ministry accepts the Committee's recommendation regarding the necessary legal amendments. It should be noted that Ministry will begin discussions with TTPost on this item by year end 2022.

#### Objective 4: Examine the Potential Viability of the Auxiliary Services Facilitated by TTPost

The Ministry has noted with gratitude and appreciation the Committee's findings in this area of the report. We wish to advise the Committee / Parliament that renewed efforts have been taken to reduce the gap between the realities experienced by customers compared to their expectations and to enhance customer confidence in the corporation. Some of these include:

- Restructuring the delivery network.
- Research customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction with TTPost's service.
- Restructuring the response process to issues raised on social media.
- Robust customer training.

The addition of measures to ameliorate TTPost's customer service offering will continue in intensity in the short and medium term.

#### Recommendation:

- i. **That TTPost continue to engage in further discussions with entities with a view to expanding its provision of auxiliary services. E.g. Partnering with National Petroleum (NP) Quik Shoppes for use as mail collection hubs/centres.**

#### Response:

Discussions with commercial entities and TTPost to provide "auxiliary" services have been and continue to take place, including with National Petroleum. It should be noted that TTPost now has, forty-eight (48) franchise outlets performing auxiliary roles in their network.

#### Recommendation:

- ii. **TTPost should move with alacrity as it pertains to the creation of specific regulations, which govern its operations within the financial services sector. These regulations must include a detailed verification process prior to cheque encashment and a complaints process for stolen and or misappropriated cheques facilitated through TTPost's cheque encashment service. Additional regulations may be necessary to treat with technological advancements within the financial sector such as the incorporation of financial technology payment methods.**

**Response:**

The Ministry wishes to inform the Committee that TTPost has already begun the process of analysing all the relevant regulations for operation in the financial sector and is currently in the process of developing a report for submission to the Corporation's Committees and Board of Directors by the end of the second quarter.