

**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Public Statement of The Ministry of Public Administration**  
**and Information**  
**In compliance with sections 7, 8 and 9 of**  
**The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 1999**

In accordance with Sections 7, 8 and 9 of the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 (FOIA) the Ministry of Public Administration and Information is required by law to publish the following statements which list the documents and information generally available to the public. The following information is published with the approval of the Minister of Public Administration and Information.

The Freedom of Information Act gives members of the public:

- (1) A legal right for each person to access information held by the Ministry of Public Administration and Information.
- (2) A legal right for each person to have official information relating to him/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- (3) A legal right to obtain reasons for adverse decisions made regarding an applicant's request for information under the FOIA
- (4) A legal right to complain to the Ombudsman and to apply to the High Court for Judicial Review to challenge adverse decisions made under the FOIA.

### **Section 7 Statements**

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#### **Section 7 (1) (a) (i)**

##### **Function and structure of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information**

The mission of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information is to facilitate the development of the capacity of the public service to deliver quality goods and services in an effective, sustainable and equitable manner and the implementation of the national connectivity agenda which is designed to move Trinidad and Tobago to a prominent position in the global information society.

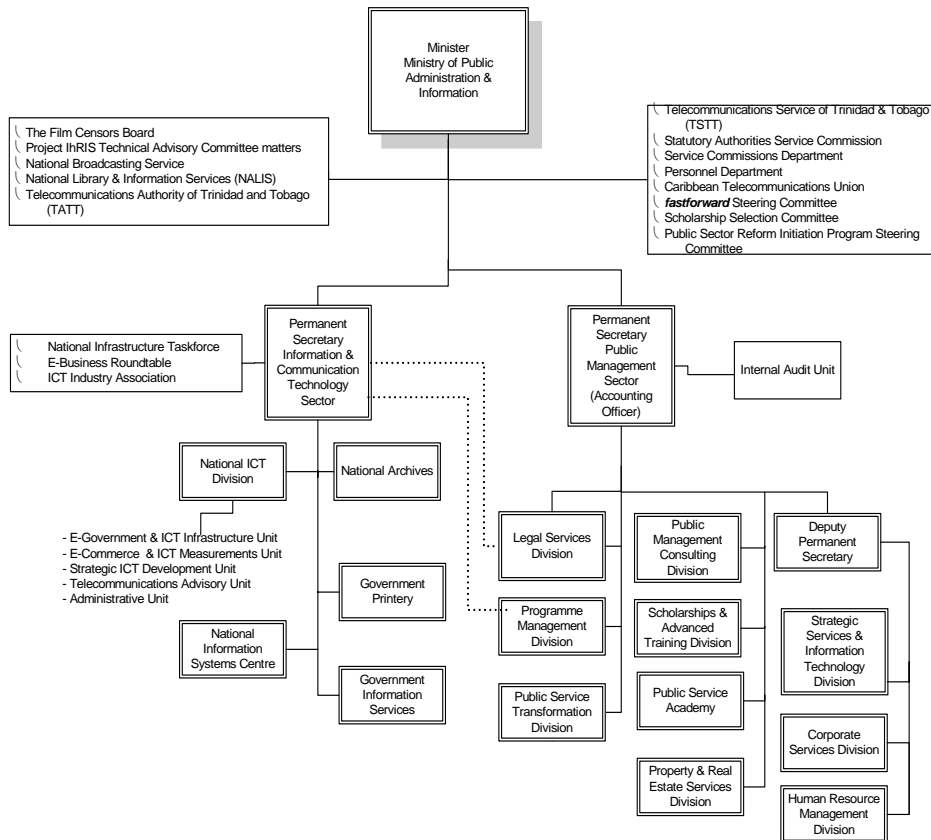
The Ministry's Head Office is located at Levels 5-7, National Library Building, Corner Hart and Abercromby Streets, Port of Spain.

The Ministry of Public Administration and Information is comprised of the following Divisions:

- *Corporate Services Division* \*
- *Human Resources Management Division* \*
- *Legal Services Division* \*
- *Programme Management Division* \*
- *Property and Real Estate Services Division*
- *Public Service Academy* \*
- *Public Service Transformation Division* \*
- *Public Management Consulting Division*
- *Scholarships and Advanced Training Division* \*
- *Strategic Services and Information Technology Division* \*
- *Government Information Services*
- *Government Printery*
- *Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division*
- *National Archives*
- *National Information Systems Centre*

\* For the purposes of this statement, these Divisions are grouped under the designation “Head Office”.

**Organisational Structure of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information**



## Section 7 (1) (a) (i)

### **Functions of the Divisions of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information**

**The Corporate Services Division** provides a range of administrative and internal support services (financial, office management, registry, corporate communications etc.) that support the business goals and contribute to the efficiency of the ministry, as well as specifically provides procurement and facilities management services.

**The Human Resource Management Division** aims to enhance the ministry's effectiveness and capability to provide excellent client and customer services by building and retaining a human resource skills/knowledge/behaviour base which supports the Ministry's focus as the facilitating agency for public sector transformation and the national connectivity agenda.

**The Legal Services Division** renders legal advice to the Ministry. The Division performs general legal work within the scope of the Ministry and on behalf of Departments, Divisions and other agencies which fall under the umbrella of the parent Ministry.

**The Programme Management Division's** role is to effectively promote public sector transformation through efficient management, development and implementation of innovative Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) projects for the Ministry and externally funded loans.

**The Property and Real Estate Services Division** manages the stock of Government properties utilized for its operations in a manner which ensures maximum utilization and economic returns from these assets. It also ensures the provision of appropriately designed and configured workplaces and facilities that are consistent with the needs of contemporary organizations.

**The Public Management Consulting Division** provides management consulting services to the Cabinet, Ministries/Departments and associated agencies to enhance the Public Service contribution to National Development.

**The Public Service Academy's** mandate is to ensure that public officers are adequately trained to meet the demands of an evolving society. It aims to maximize the human potential for excellence and high performance through the provision of flexible learning opportunities in collaboration with strategic partners.

**The Public Service Transformation Division** guides and provides operational support for and monitors and evaluates transformation initiatives of the public service of Trinidad and Tobago. The Division also carries out the functions of the former *Freedom of Information Unit*, which are as follows:

1. **Support to Public Authorities** - provision of assistance to public authorities in understanding and putting in place arrangements for their compliance with the FOIA through the provision of advice on compliance with the Act, training seminars and sensitization sessions.
2. **Public Awareness** - Educating members of the public about their rights and responsibilities under the FOIA.

3. **Monitoring and Reporting** - the collation of material provided by individual public authorities on the operation of the FOIA and the preparation of the annual report that must be laid before Parliament.

A list of designated officers (as defined in Section 4 of the Act) of public authorities is maintained at PSTD.

The Division assists with queries pertaining to the following:

- ❖ Interpretation and application of the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 ( FOIA)
- ❖ Contact information for designated officers/public authorities under the FOIA
- ❖ Operation of the FOIA
- ❖ Procedure for making a request for access to official documents under the FOIA

**The Scholarships and Advanced Training Division** administers scholarships and long-term technical assistance awards offered by/through the Government of Trinidad and Tobago

**The Strategic Services and Information Technology Division** coordinates and provides operational support for internal Information and Communications Technology projects and systems and strategic planning activities in the Ministry of Public Administration and Information.

**The Government Information Service Division** is mandated to develop a deeper understanding and definition of what is called government Information and to record, transmit and preserve this information for the development of Trinidad and Tobago.

**The Board of Film Censors** falls under the purview of the Information Division and is appointed by the Minister responsible for Information, for the purpose of censoring cinematograph films, trailers and posters. The Secretary, who is appointed by the Minister in consultation with the Chairman, is stationed at the Offices of the Information Division, Park Plaza, St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain. Telephone no. 623-6060

The Board is governed by The Cinematograph Act Chapter 20:10, Section 13. Cinema operators or exhibitors are mandated, in accordance with the Cinematograph Act Chapter 20:10 Section 20, to submit to the Board all films, trailers and posters for approval on form A in the Schedule- Regulations 32.

Members of the public can communicate with the Board via the Secretary to discuss any matter pertaining to the rating of films. Persons making enquiries should expect a response within twenty-four (24) hours of making a request.

**The Government Printery** facilitates efficient and effective communication and information systems by providing reliable printing, binding and related services for the Government and the public.

**The Information Communication Technology Division** was established by Cabinet Minute No. 2466 dated September, 2004 to effectively implement *fastforward*, the National Information Communications Technology Plan and to champion the cause of electronic governance as a way of effecting meaningful change in the provision of government services to all stakeholders and for the benefit of all citizens.

**The National Archives** acquires and preserves the documentary heritage of the nation (on all formats) and makes it accessible to the public through reference and research services. The National Archives comprises the Repository and Record Centre. The Repository, located at 105, St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain keeps all records of archival value to the nation and makes them accessible through the Search Room. The Record Centre, at Chaguaramas, keeps semi-active records of Government Ministries/Departments/Agencies.

The National Archives holdings consist of thousands of documents, mainly official records dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to present. While the Records are mainly available on paper, some are accessible on microfilm.

**The National Information Systems Centre** contributes to the development of a more efficient productive and effective Public Service by providing quality Information Technology (IT) consultancy services and training, and to establish policies and standards with respect to the use of IT processing techniques and equipment in the Public Service.

#### **Section 7 (1) (a) (ii)**

#### **Categories of Documents which are common to all Divisions in the Ministry of Public Administration and Information**

1. Files dealing with administrative support and General Administrative documents for the operations of the Ministry
2. Personnel files, which detail all staff appointments, job applications, job specifications, promotions, transfers, resignations, deaths, retirements, leave, vacation etc
3. Files dealing with the accounting and financial management function of the Ministry
4. Financial Records (cheques, vouchers, receipts, journals etc)
5. Cabinet Documents.
6. Policy and Procedure Documents.
7. Internal and External correspondence files.
8. Customer files.
9. Documents relating to strategic review of the Ministry its divisions and units
10. Legislation and Legal Instruments ( available at the Government Printery)
11. Files dealing with matters relating to the procurement of supplies, services and equipment
12. Legal Opinions and related matters.
13. Minutes/Agenda of meetings.
14. Files dealing with Circulars, memoranda, notices, bulletins
15. Files dealing with official functions, conferences and events hosted and attended by the Public Authority.
16. Complaint/suggestion files
17. News releases, speeches
18. Periodicals and publications
19. Videotapes

20. Report on Training Programmes
21. Guidelines on Training Plan Preparation

**Categories of Documents in the possession of the Public Service Transformation Division**

1. Administrative files relating to the former FOI Unit
2. FOI posters
3. FOI 1999 *Request for Access to Official Documents* forms

**Categories of Documents in the possession of the Government Information Service Division**

1. A list of video material.
2. Photographs and contact sheets of assignments of the President, Prime Minister and Government Ministers.

**Categories of Documents in the possession of the National Archives**

1. Gazette
2. Ordinances and laws of Trinidad and Tobago
3. Census Reports
4. Newspaper Collection (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century)
5. Council papers
6. Blue Books
7. Hansard Reports
8. Immigration Records
9. Assessment Rolls
10. Records of Colonial Administration
11. Government Press Releases
12. Journals
13. Rare book collection
14. Reference Collection
15. Maps
16. Photographs

**Section 7 (1) (a) (iii)**  
**Material prepared for publication or inspection**

The public may inspect and/or obtain copies of certain material between the hours of **8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** on normal working days as follows:

1. Materials listed in the "Catalogue/Index of Information" available in the Ministry's Library located at:

Ministry of Public Administration and Information  
Level 5  
National Library Building  
Cor. Abercromby and Hart Street  
Port of Spain  
Tel: 625-8578 ext 2035

2. Material relating to the FOIA listed below at:

National Library Building  
Level 7,  
Corner Hart and Abercromby Streets,  
Port of Spain  
Tel: 623-7197 (FOI Help Line)  
625-8578 ext 2230  
Fax: 623-6027  
E-mail: [info@foia.gov.tt](mailto:info@foia.gov.tt)  
Website: [www.foia.gov.tt](http://www.foia.gov.tt)

- Publications prepared by the Communications Committee
- Opinion Leaders News
- The Freedom of Information Act, 1999
- The Freedom Information( Amendment) Act, 2000
- The Freedom of Information( Amendment) Act, 2003
- Legal Notices Nos. 7 and 21 of 2003
- Judicial Review Act, 2000
- The Freedom of Information Act pamphlet
- Information Sheets on the Freedom of Information Act
- Request for Access to Official Documents Forms
- Directory of Designated Officers in Public Authorities
- Copies of Published Section 7, 8 and 9 statements of Public Authorities

The public may obtain copies of the following material:

- FOIA, 1999 *Request for Access to Official Documents* Forms
- The Freedom of Information Act pamphlet
- Information Sheets on the Freedom of Information Act

3. Materials listed below at the Government Printery at:

2-4, Victoria Avenue  
Port of Spain  
Tel: 625-4139  
Fax: 625-5973  
Email: [govprintery@tstt.net.tt](mailto:govprintery@tstt.net.tt)

- Bills/Acts of Parliament
- Legal Notices
- Trinidad and Tobago Gazette

4. Materials relating to the National ICT Plan- **fastforward** listed below at:

Level 5, National Library Building  
Corner Hart and Abercromby Streets, Port of Spain  
Tel: 800-NICT  
Fax: 623-8636  
E-mail: [mpai@tstt.net.tt](mailto:mpai@tstt.net.tt)  
Website: [www.fastforward.tt](http://www.fastforward.tt)

- National ICT Plan- **fastforward**
- E Readiness assessment report on Trinidad and Tobago
- Benchmarking report on Trinidad and Tobago
- E-commerce essay competition video 2002 & 2003
- E-commerce essay competition launch 2002 & 2003
- E-commerce survey ( household) 2003
- E-commerce survey (business) 2001 & 2003

Certain information may be readily accessed our website address:  
[www.fastforward.tt](http://www.fastforward.tt)

**Section 7 (1) (a) (iv)**  
**Literature available by subscription**

There is no literature available by subscription from the Ministry of Public Administration and Information.

**Section 7 (1) (a) (v)**  
**Procedure to be followed when accessing a document from the Ministry of Public Administration and Information.**

How to Request Information:

▪ *General Procedure*

Our policy is to answer all requests, both oral and written, for information. However, in order to have the rights given to you by the FOIA (for example the right to challenge a decision if your request for information is refused), you must make your request in writing. The applicant must, therefore, complete the appropriate form (*Request for Access to Official Documents*) available in our **Library and Reception/Lobby area**, for information that is not readily available to the public.

- *Addressing Requests*

To facilitate prompt handling of your request, please address it to the Designated Officer of the respective Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information (**see Section 7 (1) (a) (vi)**). Please note that the following Divisions/Agencies have appointed their own designated officers:

- National Archives ( see following Section)
- Government Printery ( see following Section)
- Public Management Consulting Division ( see following Section)

- *Details in the Request.*

You should provide details that will allow for ready identification and location of the records that are being requested. If insufficient information is provided clarification will be sought from you. If you are not sure how to write your request or what details to include, communicate with our Designated Officer.

- *Special Procedure*

The films stored by the Repository, National Archives are in negative form in the British Film Institute in London and special permission must be obtained from the Permanent Secretary responsible for Information Division for this material to be viewed.

#### Requests not handled under the FOIA

- A request under the FOIA will not be processed to the extent that it asks for information, which is readily available to the public, either from this public authority or from another public authority, for example brochures , pamphlets, reports etc.

#### Responding to your Request

- *Retrieving Documents*

The public authority is required to furnish copies of documents only when they are in our possession or we can retrieve them from storage. Information stored in the National Archives or another storage center, will be retrieved in order to process your request.

Prior to the commencement of the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 old records may have been destroyed. The granting of a request for such documents may, therefore be impossible. Various laws, regulations and manuals give the time periods for keeping records before they may be destroyed. For example, The Exchequer and Audit Act, Chap. 69:01

It should be noted that some documents **at the National Archives** may not be available to individuals due to the following reasons:

- Further use would be detrimental to the preservation of the document
- The document is undergoing repair or restoration in the Conservation Unit
- The document is stored at the Record Centre and can only be accessed by the creating agency or public authority

- *Furnishing Documents*

An applicant is entitled to copies of information we have in our possession, custody or power. We are required to furnish only one copy of a document. If we cannot make a legible copy of a document to be released, we may not attempt to reconstruct it. Instead, we will furnish the best copy possible and note its quality in our reply.

Please note we are not compelled to do the following:

- (a) Create new documents. For example, we are not required to write a new program so that a computer will print information in the format you prefer.
- (b) Perform research for you.

#### Time Limits

- *General*

The FOIA sets a time limit of thirty (30) calendar days for determination of your request for access to documents. If we fail to meet this deadline, the FOIA gives you the right to proceed as though your request has been denied. We will try diligently to comply with the time limit. If it appears that processing your request may take longer than the statutory limit, we will acknowledge your request and advise you of its status. Since there is a possibility that requests may be incorrectly addressed or misdirected, you may wish to call or write to confirm that we have received the request and to ascertain its status.

- *Time Allowed*

We will determine whether to grant your request for access to information as soon as practicable but no later than 30 days as required by Section 15 of the FOIA. If a decision is taken to grant access to the information requested, you will be permitted to inspect the documents and/or be provided with copies.

#### **Section 7 (1) (a) (vi)**

##### **Officers in the Ministry responsible for:**

- (1) The initial receipt of and action upon notices under section 10,
- (2) Requests for access to documents under section 13 and
- (3) Applications for correction of personal information under section 36 of the FOIA

##### **The Designated Officers for the Ministry are:**

##### **Head Office**

Ms. Gemma Marcus  
Director, Corporate Services  
Ministry of Public Administration and Information  
Level 6  
National Library Building  
Cor. Abercromby and Hart Street  
Port of Spain

Tel: 625-6724 ext 2131

## **Public Management Consulting Division**

Mrs Lynette Charles  
Administrative Officer II  
20, Abercromby Street,  
Port of Spain

Tel: 624-9973/6  
Fax: 625-3154

E-mail: [ipdiv@tstt.net.tt](mailto:ipdiv@tstt.net.tt)

### **Alternate Officer**

Mrs. Marva Ashby-Williams  
Administrative Officer II  
20, Abercromby Street, POS

Tel: 624-9973/6  
Fax: 625-3154

## **Government Printery**

Mr. Ian Gibson  
Assistant Government Printer  
Tel: 625-3834  
Email: [govprintery@tstt.net.tt](mailto:govprintery@tstt.net.tt)

### **Alternate Officer**

Ms. Pearl Joseph  
Administrative Officer 11  
Tel: 625-3974

## **National Archives**

Mrs. Helena Leonce  
Government Archivist (Ag.)  
National Archives  
105 St. Vincent Street  
Port of Spain  
Tel:

## **Section 7 (1) (a)(vii)**

**Advisory Boards, Councils, Committees, and other bodies (Where meetings/minutes are open to the public)**

At present time, there are no bodies that fall within the meaning of this section.

**Section 7 (1) (a) (viii)**  
**Library/Reading Room Facilities**

Certain information may be readily accessed in our libraries /reading rooms located at the Head Office, the Public Management Division, the Government Printery and the National Archives. These facilities are open to the public from Monday to Fridays between the hours 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. You may make general enquiries by calling the Designated Officers listed under Section 7 (1) (a) (vi).

Certain information may be readily accessed at Information Division, Park Plaza, St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain. Telephone # 625-8676.

**Policy of the Public Authority for provision of copies of documents that are readily available to the public**

**Examples:**

- Charge for Photocopies is \$0.20 cents per page however if you provide your own paper no fee (*optional*) will be charged.
- Provision of documents may be subject to a charge to cover administrative costs. An Index of prices is available in the Library.

**Section 8 Statements**

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**Section 8 (1) (a) (i)**  
**Documents containing interpretations or particulars of written laws or schemes administered by the public authority, not being particulars contained in another written law**

- Freedom of Information Act, 1999 as amended by Act No. 92 of 2000 and Act No. 14 of 2003
- Gazettes Nos. 21 and 59 of 2003
- Legal Notices Nos 7 and 21 of 2003
- FOIA Pamphlet
- FOI Fact Sheets
- Judicial Review Act
- Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- Central Tenders Board Ordinance as amended
- Gazette material (At the Government Printery)

**Section 8 (1) (a) (ii)**  
**Manuals, rules of procedure, statements of policy, records of decisions, letters of advice to persons outside the public authority, or similar documents containing rules, policies, guidelines, practices or precedents.**

- Freedom of Information Unit Electronic Manual, Freedom of Information Act 1999: A Guide to Implementation and Practical Application published in January 2002.
- Policies and procedures documents
- Handbooks, manuals

- Internal directives
- Strategic Plans

**Section 8 (1) (b)**

**In enforcing written laws and schemes administered by the public authority where a member of the public might be directly affected by that enforcement, being documents containing information on the procedures to be employed or the objectives to be pursued in the enforcement of the written laws or schemes.**

- Freedom of Information Unit Electronic Manual, Freedom of Information Act 1999: A Guide to Implementation and Practical Application published in January 2002.

**Section 9 Statements**

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**Section 9 (1) (a), (c), (g) and (i)-(m)**

There are no statements to be published under these subsections at this time.

**Section 9 (1) (b);**

**A report, or a statement containing the advice or recommendations, (1) of a body or entity established outside the public authority by or under a written law, (2) or by a Minister of Government or other public authority for the purpose of submitting a report or reports, providing advice or making recommendations to the public authority or to the responsible Minister of that public authority.**

- A National Information and Communication Strategic Plan for Trinidad and Tobago- *fastforward*

**Section 9 (1) (d)**

**A report, or a statement containing the advice or recommendations, of a committee established within the public authority to submit a report, provide advice or make recommendations to the responsible Minister of that public authority or to another officer of the public authority who is not a member of the committee.**

- Advice provided by the Technical Advisory Committee of the Ihris Steering Committee to the Steering Committee

**Section 9 (1) (e)**

**A report (including a report concerning the results of studies, surveys or tests) prepared for the public authority by a scientific or technical expert, whether employed within the public authority or not, including a report expressing the opinion of such an expert on scientific or technical matters.**

- Market and Opinion Research International- Opinion Leaders' Panel 2002- Baseline Report
- Market and Opinion Research International- Opinion Leaders' Panel 2003 Wave 11 Report June-July 2003

- Reports and memoranda on technical assessment and analysis of large ICT projects in the public service, including Ihris, communications backbone, payroll projects.

**Section 9 (1) (f)**

**A report prepared for the public authority by a consultant who was paid for preparing the report.**

- Readiness assessment of Trinidad and Tobago
- Benchmarking Report on Trinidad and Tobago

**Section 9 (1) (h)**

**A report on the performance or efficiency of the public authority, or of an office, division or branch of the public authority, whether the report is of a general nature or concerns a particular policy, programme or project administered by the public authority.**

- Strategic Intent of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information-2003
- Ministry of Public Administration and Information – Annual Report October 2003 to September 2004
- Ministry of Public Administration and Information – Annual Report January 2002 – September 2003
- Trinidad and Tobago National Information Communication Technology Strategy – September 2003
- Cabinet Minute 301 dated January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004: Review of the Organizational Structure and Staffing of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information
- Socio-Economic Policy Research and Planning Division Report 2004
- Cabinet Minute No. 515 - Staffing of the Information Communication Technology Division