



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Public Administration

Address by Senator, the Hon. Allyson West
Minister of Public Administration

Launch of the Ministry of Public Administration's PRES D Portal
Queen's Hall, St Ann's
Wednesday 14th December
10-11 am

Good morning,

It's truly a pleasure to be here today at the launch of the Property and Real Estate Services Division's Portal. This landmark initiative will bring enhanced customer service to our sister ministries, divisions and agencies in respect to their accommodation needs.

The Ministry's new convenient, Property Management Information System will significantly improve the ability to provide affordable accommodation for ministries, divisions and agencies. One of the first in a series of digitalisation services being rolled-out by the Ministry of Public Administration, the new PRES D Portal will make the process seamless.

At the Ministry of Public Administration, our focus is on co-creation; strategically partnering with other government Ministries to improve the quality of service delivery to all citizens. This portal is the first of our new offerings to be launched and it has become a reality thanks to our very dedicated and hardworking team. And at this point I would like, especially, to point out the Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary, the head of our project management unit, the head of our digitalisation team, Shurman Raphael and Michelle Carrington, in that order, other members of the digitalisation team and PRES D team.

Even during the most challenging times, all of these team members came together, auditing, scanning, digitising and training staff on the new platform.

Two years ago, we audited 'where we were', reviewing performance and strategically planning for 'where we want to be'. We enjoyed working alongside partner Ministries, co-creating the

Portal with our colleagues in various Ministries, Divisions and Agencies with whom we interact to provide accommodation to Ministries, Divisions and Agencies. These agencies, with whom we interact to provide accommodation, include: the Ministry of Finance, Valuation Division, Ministry of Works, Chief Civil Engineer, Ministry of Labour, Occupational Health and Safety Unit, Ministry of National Security, Trinidad and Tobago Fire Services; and there are other agencies that we work with in terms of maintenance services like UDeCOTT and so on. So, it really is a whole-of-government effort that we need to engage in to provide proper accommodation, not only to public servants, but to the clientele that they serve. So, we rely on them in seeking to place agencies in suitable accommodation for the safety and comfort of the staff, as I said, and their clientele.

It was a relentless process - think Morocco vs Portugal in the World Cup – but laser-focused precision and team work ultimately led to our success.

This online platform is the first in a series of digitised initiatives that will propel the delivery of key services for all citizens. Aligned with the Government's National Development Strategy 2030 for sustainable development, we know what needs to be done and we are proceeding to get it done.

In the New Year, the Ministry will be delivering on several initiatives in our revitalised drive to provide adequate and appropriate accommodation for ministries, departments and agencies and in turn enhanced customer service.

We've begun refurbishment works at the Tunapuna and Siparia Administrative Complexes to restore proper accommodation at these facilities for staff and the general public.

We are also establishing service hubs in strategic locations, through the expansion of our network of administrative complexes; And have begun the process of the establishment of these complexes in Point Fortin and Arima.

Consistently mindful that citizens expect and deserve more and better services from the government, we've begun the process of developing a Citizen Feedback System which will make it easy to share your views on the ways in which we can improve service delivery across the Public Service.

Another facet of ensuring that the public service functions effectively is collaboration among the various agencies which together manage the entity that is known as the public service.

Recognising this, we have re-established the Strategic Human Resource Management Council with participation from the Ministry of Public Administration, the Personnel Department led by the Chief Personnel Officer and the Service Commissions Department.

In 2023, we expect to see significant advancement in public service delivery as a result of the work being undertaken by the Council.

The world is shifting age-old paradigms of work, with the pandemic revealing that fundamental review is needed. To this end, we're working steadfastly on the development of a Remote-Work Policy, commonly referred to as the Work-from-Home Policy (but we are moving away from that nomenclature and moving to Remote Work) across the Public Service. We recognise that this is intimately interwoven with the digital transformation of the Public Service, which is why we are working hand-in-hand to ensure that both of these initiatives progress simultaneously. For this reason, the development of this policy will be characterised by key stakeholder consultations, fit-for-purpose considerations and results-oriented design; because we are determined to ensure that the Work-From-Home Policy does not negatively impact the service provided to the citizenry.

The MPA's strategic planning exercises in 2022 would have laid the foundation for roll-out in 2023 to ensure we achieve our goals. There have been interactive staff townhalls, stakeholder workshops and change management strategic planning sessions. 2023 is going to be a year of hard work, engagement and the delivery of key programmes and projects towards the achievement of excellence in public service delivery.

In this season, and I'm not talking about about Christmas here but World Cup, allow me to quote the words of Pele, the great footballer: "...success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do." We should all internalise these words.

And through our commitment and passion for excellence we know we will continue to improve our offerings.

Launching this portal before the end of 2022 was on my Christmas wish list and my team has delivered. And again, I thank the team for their dedication in getting us here and I urge the PRES D unit of the Ministry and other stakeholders to make full use of the portal to allow for more efficient delivery of appropriate and affordable accommodation to our clientele. And in particular, Mr Edghill thank you for being here, I urge property owners and their agents, across the country, to register on the system and list your properties for rent or sale to the State. This is a key element in ensuring the success of our platform.

As I close let me wish all present today and the rest of T&T all the best for the season and a 2023 filled with peace, promise and prosperity.