RIC Chairman Delivers
Feature Address at CARILEC Conference

The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) in conjunction with the Caribbean Electricity Utility Services Corporation (CARILEC) hosted the 2006 Engineer Conference on Monday 24th July 2006 at the Trinidad Hilton Hotel. The theme for the 2006 Conference was "Deregulation and the Future of the Electric Utility Industry in the Caribbean." The following is the Abstract of the paper "Deregulation and the Future of the Electric Utility Industry in the Caribbean - An Independent Regulatory Perspective" presented by Mr. Dennis Pantin, Chairman of the Regulated Industries Commission.

In addressing the conference, Mr. Pantin highlighted four key issues that are crucial to any discussions on "Deregulation and the Future of the Electric Utility Industry in the Caribbean." First, there is the historical and institutional context within which the debate and policy changes have been ongoing on 'de-regulation.' The empirical evidence of the impact of such policy changes in the rest of the world is another crucial element. A significant third issue is that of the impact on the Caribbean, and finally the implications for the process of deriving future policy.
**RIC CHAIRMAN delivers Feature Address at CARILEC Conference**

Historically, electricity has been viewed as a national strategic asset, best provided by a vertically integrated monopoly, usually owned and directly controlled by the State. However, there has long been the existence of arms-length regulation in metropolitan countries. De-regulation began in the telecommunications industry to encourage competition when this became technologically feasible. Later, such de-regulation began to be applied to the water and electricity sectors. In 1982 Chile began reforming its electricity sector.

This was followed by the United Kingdom, which began reforming and privatizing electricity in 1990. Likewise, in the United States, the passage of the US Energy Policy Act of 1992 also paved the way for reforms in that country. The European Union also started pressing for electricity liberalization in its member states, and its Electricity Directive required open access and liberalized markets commencing in 1998. During this time, market-oriented electricity reform also swept across developing and transition economies in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

In crafting a course for the future, it is essential to review the main models of deregulation or reform, examine the experience with deregulation in Trinidad and Tobago and propose possible future reform for the sector in Trinidad and Tobago and other parts of the Caribbean. An integral part of this process is a consideration of various arguments and concepts, which have gained prominence in the on-going debate of the reform of the power sector that has traditionally been deemed a natural monopoly.

The focus should be on the question of whether and to what extent the reform policies/models followed elsewhere are applicable to the electric utility industry in the Caribbean. Institutional reforms are urgently needed since ill-conceived changes in the regulatory framework driven by "deregulation" and or "privatization" strategies may be as harmful as the current public sector constraints. The emphasis should be on a regulatory framework ("re-regulation" or "real regulation"), which provides the power sector with incentives and scope for more efficient performance and at the same time maintains/facilitates an efficient industry structure.

**RIC participates in Advanced Ratemaking Course in Jamaica**

Regulators from across the Caribbean recently participated in a programme of advanced training in Utility Ratemaking and Analysis: An Advanced Course in Regulation. The comprehensive five-day course was held from July 17th - 21st, 2006 at the Sunset Jamaica Grande Resort and Spa in Ocho Rios, Jamaica and was co-sponsored by the Organization of Caribbean Utility Regulators (OOCUR) and the Public Utility Research Center (PURC). It is an initiative that is designed to create greater understanding of issues confronting regulatory agencies and the resources available to address these issues and was attended by representatives from the Bahamas, Jamaica and the University of Florida. Using the recently concluded Rate Review Process for the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) as a case study, Carol Balkaran, Tariff Analyst with the RIC, presented on the theme "Further techniques for using Benchmarking in Incentive Regulation and Applications in the Caribbean." The best practices of the RIC’s Public Consultation process was also the focus of the course, with Claude Byer, Tariff Analyst, developing the theme, "Public Consultation in the Caribbean." An amalgam of presentations, moderated discussions, small group exercises, and case studies were all utilized in an effort to edify programme attendees and provide them with an ideal educational opportunity.
NEW RIC-ruits - Appointments

The RIC welcomes three new RICruits to the Commission, all of whom are eager to adopt the superior work ethic and dedication that the RIC values.

Connel Mottley - RESILIENT
Connel is a graduate of the University of the West Indies and holds a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering. He began his career with the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard and was assigned to its Engineering Section from 1994 to 1997. He then moved on to the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission, where during the period 1997 to 2006 he was assigned to the Distribution Areas of Tobago and East. He is currently a member of the Board of Engineering of Trinidad and Tobago. A Resilient and competent engineer that the RIC is proud to have as part of its team.

Denise Caesar - INDUSTRIOUS
As the new Corporate Communications Coordinator, Denise has undergone specialized training in Strategic Marketing Management. She is a graduate of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (UK) and holds a postgraduate diploma in Marketing from the same institution. She also holds a Master of Science degree in Marketing from the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business at the University of the West Indies, with an elective emphasis in Corporate Communications and Public Relations. Denise brings to the RIC an extensive corporate background that includes positions such as Acting Corporate Communications Manager at the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Marketing and Business Development Officer at the University of Trinidad and Tobago. An industrious individual, Denise is poised to make a valuable contribution to the RIC.

Gerard Emmanuel-Rodriguez - CHARISMATIC
As the recipient of the President’s Medal 2000, this former teacher has amassed a wealth of teaching experience in the areas of Micro-Economics and Mathematics at UWI, Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (TTHTI) and several of the nation’s public schools. Gerard is the holder of a BSc in Economics and Mathematics as well as a Teacher’s Diploma. Perhaps the best word that describes Gerard, a Tariff Analyst with the RIC, is Charismatic. Having received numerous academic accolades, the Charismatic Gerard Emmanuel-Rodriguez stands as an exemplar in perseverance. The RIC welcomes Gerard and warmly embraces this type of tenacity among its employees.

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EVENT NOTIFICATION & RESPONSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

LOG ON TO www.eric.org.tt

The news of a tragic explosion at Penal recently captured the hearts and attention of many. Situations like these, and others that result in the disruption of service to customers necessitate action. On September 21st 2005, the RIC launched its Event Notification and Response Management Plan (ENRMP). The objective of the ENRMP is to ensure the timely release of information to the public regarding any incident(s), which may have occurred in a public utility, which falls under the purview of the RIC and may affect the utility’s ability to provide efficient service. By way of information, a flow diagram of the steps in the process once an incident has occurred, can be accessed on the RIC’s website.

www.eric.org.tt
TAP in to this...

1 Bucket = 10 Litres

At times, we are all guilty of wasting water. By making a few small changes to your habits, you can help save water.

WATER SAVING TIPS:

- **WASHING MACHINE** - On a normal cycle a washing machine uses approximately 80 litres of water. Wait until you have a FULL load of clothes before doing the washing, or use the half load feature on your washing machine. You save water, electricity and detergent.

- **WASHING YOUR CAR** - Running a hose for 1 minute uses approximately 30 litres of water. Wash the car with a bucket rather than a hose – it’s just as effective and uses less water.

- **BASINS / SINKS** - A dripping tap can lose up to 4 litres of water a day. Check all taps on face basins and sinks for drips and replace washers as necessary.

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**Making the CONNECTION**

Small businesses suffer from many of the same problems, as do domestic customers and when they complain they sometimes find that the service provider is apathetic to their plight. The RIC however, makes no distinction and ensures that our customer services department is equally responsive to the needs of all customer class. Issues of appropriate customer classification, and inaccurate meter reading are some of the most common problems faced by small businesses. The RIC provides information to help small businesses resolve their complaint with their service provider or, if that fails, we are here to investigate the failure to obtain redress and facilitate relief where necessary. The Customer Service Department can be reached at 800-4RIC (4742).

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**Word List**

WATT U NEED TO KNOW

There is a lot of truth to the phrase ‘Knowledge is Power,’ and as informed consumers, you should be aware of the approximate number of kilowatt-hours (kWh) consumed in two months by some common appliances that you use. Remember, these are just averages but this guide can assist you in adjusting your consumption and usage accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLIANCE</th>
<th>Est. kWh Consumed</th>
<th>Bi-Monthly Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blender</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toaster – 2 slice</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microwave Oven 0.6 Cubic ft</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing Machine – (6 kg)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fan - (circulating 16&quot;)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>$7.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television – CRT (19&quot;)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>$8.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing Machine</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$2.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE:
1. The bi-monthly cost excludes VAT and customer charge.
2. The bi-monthly cost is calculated based on the new prices at the lowest tier of 27 cents per kWh (Kilowatt-hour).

TIPical Consumer

RECORD THE DATES AND TIMES OF SERVICE DISRUPTIONS.

SPOTLIGHT ON:
TRINITY POWER LIMITED

Among the service providers under the purview of the RIC is Trinity Power Limited, a name synonymous with and derived from the three prominent peaks of Trinidad and Tobago - the Trinity Hills. Trinity Power purchased the power plant once owned by INNCOSGEN and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Carib Power. Trinity Power commenced operations in September 1999 and supplies electricity under a long term contract to Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC), the government entity responsible for the transmission, distribution and administration of electricity network of Trinidad and Tobago. Trinity Power sees as its primary focus the providing of consistent, low-cost and environmentally friendly power, while simultaneously maintaining sound business practices and continued strong performance in the future.

Quirks

You are making progress if each mistake is a new one.

FAST FACTS

The RIC in collaboration with T&TEC and WASA launched the Event Notification & Response Management Plan (ENRMP). The plan was created to ensure the timely release of information to the public regarding any incident(s), which may have occurred at a public utility, and which may affect the utility’s ability to provide efficient service.
5 Questions?
WITH A STANDARDS ENGINEER
GORDON WYKE

1. What exactly is a Standards Engineer?
The Standards Engineer is actually unique to the RIC. It is a technical officer who is charged with setting standards for the water and electricity sectors, a mandate outlined in the RIC Act which says that the RIC is to prescribe standards for services of the service provider. The individual is required to be an engineer by profession, preferably civil, electrical or mechanical versed in the business of one or both sectors.

2. What specific role does a Standards Engineer have at the RIC?
The Standards Engineer as stated above sets the standards for the service provider. This includes research, writing up the standards, getting internal feedback, responding to public comment and producing a final document. The Standards Engineer is also the resident authority on technical matters regarding water and electricity and is called upon from time to time to give advice and also to visit with the Customer Service Reps to check on situations affecting customers/complainants.

3. How does a Standards Engineer go about gaining and maintaining the confidence and cooperation of those contacted during the course of work?
This would apply to internal and external contacts. There are several ways:
• Being able to listen – when one does that, he is able to incorporate good advice from other individuals who have to comment on his work;
• A genial attitude – working with other individuals of different temperaments can be a challenge and it is helpful to have an attitude that is conducive to cooperation and harmony in the workplace;
• Able to be a team player – many tasks here require multi disciplinary teams and one has to work with other fields and learn new ideas and approaches;
• Keeping your word – we have a responsibility to customers to help meet their needs. Customer service is for all employees not just the CSRs and we must respond positively as well. Customer service in general in T&T is awful but at the RIC the Customer Service Department does an impressive job and we have to support that as well;
• Trust – we must be seen as persons to be trusted and can be relied upon to get the job done, give advice and be responsive to situations.

4. What three main attributes and/or competencies does a Standards Engineer need in order to be efficient?
I think the three main things are:
• Analytical thinking – a regulatory body is very research oriented and requires a logical approach to sifting information and reproducing for output;
• Experience – this is necessary to understand the work environment and respond to issues arising;
• Patience – Things can take time to happen in a regulatory environment and so the Engineer has to patient with the responsible groups and individuals that are involved.

5. What is your personal credo and how does it strengthen your role and responsibility here at the RIC?
My personal credo is, that “hard work never killed anyone” and for me ensuring that I get the job done and getting it done well and to a high standard is vitally important. I believe this gives the RIC strength and credibility, as it will be perceived in the eyes of the public as a serious and committed organization.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

Quirks
Be bold in what you stand for and careful what you fall for.

RIC NEWS

Peer Review
The Regulated Industries Commission hosted a team of regulators from the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) Jamaica during the period September 11-15, 2006. Mr. David Geddes, Director - Consumer and Public Affairs of the OUR headed the team that visited as part of a Peer Review. The primary objective of the Peer Review was to effectively identify ways of evaluating, demonstrating and refocusing improvement efforts, as it pertained to the OUR's responsibility to its consumers.

RIC UPCOMING EVENTS !!!!!

4th OOUCUR Annual Conference November 8-10, 2006, at The Grenadian by Rex Resorts of Grenada. The theme of this year's conference is "The Challenge to Public Utilities in a Regulatory Environment".

www.ric.org.tt
Let’s RICOncile: - CASE STUDY

The word ‘Reconcile’ - by definition refers to settling or resolving a dispute and this is exactly what this feature of the newsletter is intended to do. The "RICONCILE" case study presents an actual scenario and discloses the steps taken by the RIC to resolve the issue. The names of all parties involved have been omitted to respect confidentiality. This is the first of an ongoing series that will highlight the RIC’s role as a responsible regulator in protecting consumer interests.

CASE: The residents of St Croix Road and environs had been complaining to WASA about the lack of an adequate pipe-borne water supply in their area. The situation was so terrible that their taps were dry for three (3) months and out of frustration, their complaint escalated into a protest. The RIC became involved because of the complaints received from the President of the St. Croix Road Village Council and other residents from the area. The RIC visited WASA’s facilities as well as residents from the affected area to have a better appreciation of the problem. Additionally, the RIC arranged a joint meeting between WASA and the residents to provide an opportunity for improved communication.

SOLUTION: After talks with WASA, it was determined that the problem could be resolved by increasing the pressure and duration of supply on the transmission mains from Navet Treatment Plant to the Malgratoute Booster Station (MBS), so that the distribution mains from MBS could have the required pressures to service the affected areas. However, owing to the decrepit state of this 25 Km long transmission main, there were very few feasible options.

RESULTS: The RIC was able to persuade WASA to agree on an immediate improvement in the truck-borne supply to bring some relief. Further, WASA reconfigured their system and provided a pump to service the affected areas. While this measure was short term it brought immediate results to the residents although on a limited basis.

LESSONS LEARNED: The lessons learned from this case are clear:
- Active community involvement can have significant impact on service delivery;
- Utility companies must improve their communication with their customers;
- Sometimes solutions can be found but it requires thinking outside of the box.

TIPical Consumer + ALWAYS ENSURE THAT YOU READ YOUR UTILITY BILLS CAREFULLY.

This column provides an opportunity for you to get all your legal questions answered by a qualified attorney-at-law attached to the RIC. If you have a question, it can be directed to us at ricoffice@ric.org.tt and the answer would be featured in future issues of this newsletter.

WHAT IS A LICENSE?
Licenses are forms of agreements that provide an individual or a body with the legal authority to either carry out an act or provide a service. The license document or certificate provides the evidence that such permission is granted.

WHAT IS AN AGREEMENT?
An agreement is formed when one party accepts the offer of another. There must be a mutual understanding between two or more parties about their rights and duties, for the future and in the past.

The service providers who fall under the RIC’s purview are deemed licensed until official licenses are granted, under the RIC Act No. 26 of 1997. In the interim these service providers have the legal right to operate through either the Acts of Parliament or the licenses that were created for the provision of services they deliver.

www.ric.org.tt
COMPLAINTS CORNER

Who do I contact first if I have a complaint against T&TEC or WASA?
Consumers have a right to receive a high quality of service from the utility companies. If consumers have complaints, they must first make contact with the Service Provider and give them the opportunity to resolve the problem. However, if the consumer fails to obtain redress or is dissatisfied with the decision of the Service Provider, the consumer can then file a complaint with the RIC. This column is part of an ongoing series on the proper complaint process that consumers should follow.

How do I sort out problems with the Service Provider?
You must first contact your Service Provider and explain that you wish to make a complaint. You can do this in a number of ways:

- IN WRITING
- BY TELEPHONE
- IN PERSON
- BY EMAIL

ALL SERVICE PROVIDERS HAVE CLEAR PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AND YOU SHOULD FOLLOW THESE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

And the 2 shall become one...

These all too familiar words were taken to heart by two RIC employees, Joanne Wendy De Merieux and Peter Mootoosingh, who both married their respective mates on the 12th August 2006.

The RIC family takes this opportunity to wish them great happiness as they begin their respective journeys. "Coming together is a beginning; staying together is progress; working together is success."

TIPical Consumer

KEEP COPIES OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE SENT AND RECEIVED FROM THE UTILITY CONCERNING YOUR COMPLAINT.

RIC NEWS WELCOMES YOUR VIEWS & COMMENTS.
Contact: Ms. Denise Caesar - Corporate Communications Coordinator
E-mail: caesard@ric.org.tt