COMPLAINTS CORNER

How do I sort out problems with the Service Provider?
You must first contact your Service Provider and explain why you wish
for a complaint. You can do this in a number of ways:
- IN WRITING
- IN PERSON
- BY TELEPHONE
- BY EMAIL

If you are complaining by letter or email or
via the internet:
- Call your service provider and find out who you should address your
complaint to;
- Ensure you explain the problem fully in your letter including key
dates and times of the incidents;
- Enclose copies of evidence that support your complaint, such as
receipts, letters, bills and photos, if possible;
- Include your name, address and account number in your letter, so that
your service provider can respond to you; and
- Include a telephone number, if possible, so that your Service Provider
can contact you for further information if required.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

RAISING THE BAR on Quality of Service Standards
- International Women’s Day Awards
- World Consumer Rights Day
- Home Safety Initiative – Launched
- Carnival Lime Photos

RIC NEWS WELCOMES YOUR VIEWS & COMMENTS.
Contact: Ms. Denise Caner - Corporate Communications Coordinator
E-Mail: ganesan@ric.org.tt

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION
The Kitchen

CAN YOU SPOT THE ELECTRICAL AND OTHER HAZARDS IN THIS ROOM?

ANSWERS:

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION
1st & 3rd Floors, Fawkes House, Cor. Wrightson Road & Independence Square, Port-of-Spain, P.O. Box 1001
Website: www.ric.org.tt • Email: ricinfo@ric.org.tt • Tel: 800-480-4725 / 627-7500 / 627-0021
Fax: 627-0344 / 627-0503

Quirks
If you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

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Just a click away
SHARING YOUR OPINION ON REGULATORY ISSUES ...... JUST GOT EASIER!
The Regulated Industries Commission’s newly redesigned
website offers a dynamic, user-friendly environment and now
includes an Interactive Discussion Forum, created to improve
the functionality, usability and appeal of the website.

Launched on 15th May ’07 the website is updated weekly
and provides greater accessibility to users and still contains
all publications such as Public Consultation documents,
Policy documents and the Quality of Service Standards.
The moderated forum demonstrates the RIC’s commitment
to open dialogue around key regulatory issues that require
public consultation and is yet another innovative initiative in
the drive to increase stakeholder participation in the
regulatory and decision-making process.

Visit the website at www.ric.org.tt and join the discussion forum today!!
It’s the ideal place to spark debate, solicit feedback or to simply post a comment.
The Regulated Industries Commission is raising the bar on quality service delivered to consumers by reviewing the Quality of Service Standards (QSS) with a view to further improving the level of service. The QSS, which was launched in April 2004, is a major initiative of the RIC and seeks to ensure that consumer expectations of consistencies, reliability, and accountability from the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission continue to be met and exceeded. It was at the launch of the QSS that the RIC stated its intention to review the QSS in three (3) years. Under its legislative framework, the RIC has the power to establish the service standards as well as impose sanctions in instances of non-compliance.

The QSS stipulates that the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) be assessed annually on its performance based on two broad dimensions: Guaranteed Standards (GSS) and Overall Standards (OES). There are currently fifteen (15) individual standards (six (6) Guaranteed and nine (9) Overall) on which T&TEC is evaluated. The Overall Standards evaluate T&TEC's performance in areas such as billing punctuality, frequency of meter testing and meter reading, prior notices of planned outages and correction of low/high voltage complaints. While the Guaranteed Standards set service levels in the provision of service levels to each individual consumer and includes standards such as response and restoration time after unplanned (forced) outages on the distribution system and reconnection after payment of overdue amounts or agreement on payment schedule.

Through its usual consultative process the RIC hopes to invite comments from diverse stakeholder groups including T&TEC, NGOs, Businesses, Professionals/Academics and the general public on the existing standards as well as performance targets. Additionally, it is anticipated that consultation would allow for consensus on the standards. All consumers have the responsibility to play an active part by monitoring services and ensuring that T&TEC complies with the existing QSS, and any additional standards that may be proposed. The RIC continues to be committed to giving consumers a greater voice on regulatory issues, which affect them.

Like all the RIC's Customer Outreach Programmes, the outreach sessions held recently in Tobago, Tunapuna, and Penal gave consumers the opportunity to meet with an RIC representative face-to-face, to lodge complaints on issues affecting them. To the RIC, these interactive sessions are important aspects of good customer relation, since our remit is to investigate complaints by consumers of their failure to obtain redress from service providers in respect rates, billing and unsatisfactory service and facilitate relief where necessary.

The outreach programmes were held on 5th April in Tunapuna, 5th April in Penal and in Tobago on 29th May in Scarborough and 3rd May in Penal. These sessions will continue to be a permanent feature of the RIC’s operations.

Allow me to introduce you to the Tripkin family, a unique and somewhat quirky family. The Tripkins are the featured family as part of the RIC’s Home Safety Initiative Theatre Workshops. These informative, yet fun workshops are being presented to primary schools across T&T to reinforce safe home practices. As hilarious as the Tripkin’s lives seem, there are important lessons to be learned. Pay attention, and try to pick up on these important lessons.

All members of the Tripkin family are guilty of not practising Home Safety. For instance, Frank Tripkin, neglects all responsibilities of fixing things in the home that seem to not function. He is not interested in taking up the ‘Mr Fix-it’ man role and if he does, due to the unbearable complaints made to him by Margaret his wife, he insists on using cheap and dangerous repair methods. He is convinced that masking tape and a piece of cloth wrapped around whatever the object is, will fix any electrical problem and tries to indoctrinate this belief into the minds of the rest of this family.

Junior Tripkin, his ten-year-old son, religiously occupies himself with a host of electrical gadgets every afternoon when he returns from school. In one extension cord he plays in the TV, the computer, his videogame, and charges his cell phone, unconcerned about overloading circuits. He can always be found having fun and trying to ‘shock off’ in front of his sister, Liesel. He gets himself involved in things that he knows nothing about, which is sometimes dangerous, such as one time when he tried to fix the broken when the circuit was tripping one night at home.

Margaret Tripkin is a very frustrated housewife, especially since her cries to her husband to repair things in the house such as, the cord on the blender that keeps sparking, the leaking pipe in the kitchen that is wasting the little water supply that they have, falls on deaf ears. Mrs. Tripkin knows badly to get a ‘real’ professional electrician to come and assess and repair all the safety hazards that exist within their home and get the home inspected, but she faces a great battle every time in persuading Mr. Tripkin otherwise. She eventually reaches her last straw when she unintentionally forgets a cloth on the burner in the kitchen, which causes a fire to ignite on the stove, causing panic within the entire household.

Nobody in this household knows any emergency numbers, so as to call the fire brigade, nor where the keys are located to open the locks of the burglar proofing, so as to get out of the house. Quick escape seems impossible since no escape route/plan was ever worked out and there is no fire extinguisher near by. Therefore panic and mayhem ensue as all members of this family, especially Margaret starts Tripping!

We welcome BACKCHAT at the RIC! Visit the website at www.ric.org.tt and enter the OPEN SPACES area of the discussion forum today! It’s the ideal place to spark debate, solicit feedback or to simply post a comment about the quality of service you receive from the Utility Service Providers.

www.ric.org.tt
UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH

-CAMILLE ROLINGSON

What are three main attributes and/or competencies a Compliance Analyst needs in order to be efficient?

THE THREE MAIN COMPETENCIES REQUIRED ARE:
- Good mathematical skills and knowledge of statistical techniques and tools;
- Excellent research and report writing skills; and
- Excellent interpersonal skills.

What is your most significant accomplishment thus far as a Compliance Analyst?

My most significant accomplishment has been to assist in the development and monitoring of the Quality of Service Standards for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector and the Water Sector.

What is your personal credo and how does it strengthen your role and responsibility here at the RIC?

My personal credo is to ‘pray first.’ At times the work of the RIC is challenging and sometimes there seems to be no easy solution to problems. However, when I pray everything gets easier, and I am able to handle tasks more readily and ultimately, I am able to perform better.

Nadia John
Legal & Corporate Secretary

International Women’s Day Award

International Women’s Day Award Recipients at the RIC

At this year’s WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY celebrations on 15th March, the RIC’s information booth was most prominent amidst the rhythmic music of the steelpan and the daring antics of the Moko Jumbies, all part of the day’s festivities. The RIC thrived with the opportunity to educate consumers. The RIC’s display, set up on the Brian Lara Promenade, was constantly abuzz with activity as many consumers took the opportunity to ask questions and obtain clarification on pressing issues. An array of printed publications was on hand to guide consumers through the complaints process and to offer information on how to save money on their next electricity bill.

Exploring Opportunities

Meeting with Tobago House of Assembly

In an effort to achieve support for the Customer Outreach Programme in Tobago, the RIC’s Mohan Choodie, Customer Service Manager (standing left), recently met with Secretary Whitney Alfred, Secretary - Infrastructure & Public Utilities of the Division of Infrastructure and Public Utilities and the Consumer Affairs Division.

The talks were held in an effort to strengthen relations with many of the consumer interests groups in Tobago, so that improvements in the complaints resolution process can be made.
“Although ‘home’ is usually regarded as a place where one feels safe and secure, it is unfortunately also the place where one is most likely to have accidents, often posing grave danger to life and limb.” This was the assessment made by the Honourable Minister Penelope Beckles, at the launch of the RIC’s Home Safety Initiative (HSI) on Friday 18th May 2007 at Crowne Plaza. The initiative, appropriately themed “Connecting You to Life” is the socially responsible initiative being championed by the RIC.

In being a socially responsible corporate citizen, the RIC settled on this particular project since it addresses an issue that is important to all households in the country. Additionally, Home Safety is a concern that is under-represented in terms of socially responsible activities of other organizations and this HSI is one that facilitates collaboration with the Service Providers without involving any conflict of interest in terms of the RIC’s independent regulatory functions.

The HSI initiative commences with theatre workshops involving primary school students across Trinidad and Tobago, with the list of schools, dates and venues, being available on the website. The important message of Home Safety will be promoted by encouraging Safety Audits in the home, by the distribution of HSI posters to workplaces where the helpful tips can be visible to all.

The “Connecting You to Life” message will also be publicized in the form of articles, public service announcements on the radio and a Poster Competition that will be staged for Secondary Schools Students. As the initiative evolves, it is the RIC’s intention to educate the adult population on the importance of Home Safety since electrical hazards are a major cause of fires, with aged wiring, overloaded circuits and worn outlets being among the electrical hazards that can start fires and cause electrical shock.

Minister Beckles was in high praise of the commission’s efforts and commended the RIC “for this Home Safety Initiative... since a responsibility of the Commission is to educate the public on safety issues in respect of the utilities for which it has regulatory responsibility.” The opportunity to improve the quality of life of consumers, families and local communities is a core value of the RIC and we are committed to this on a long-term basis.

Upcoming Theatre Workshops
The HSI Carnival Workshops are planned for primary school students in the areas detailed below between 10:00am – 12noon.
- Thursday 13th September 2007
  - At Room NA15
  - National Library Building, Hart & Abercromby Streets, Port of Spain;
- Wednesday 26th September 2007
  - San Fernando Lions Civic Centre,
  - Cor, Mc Elroy and Circular Roads, San Fernando;
- Thursday 18th October 2007
  - St. Michael’s Hall, 78 Festival Boulevard
  - Diamond Vale, Diego Martin

See you there!