



# COMPLAINTS CORNER



## 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**
- **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.

## 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](http://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.

## Protecting YOUR Interests



PG2. • RAISING THE BAR on Quality of Service Standards

PG3. • International Women's Day Awardees  
• World Consumer Rights Day

PG4. • Home Safety Initiative – Launched  
• Carnival Lime Photos

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

### ANSWERS:

- Blow-drying hair near water while standing in water.
- Aerosol can on top of the stove.
- Metal pot in the microwave.
- Hair dryer use in the kitchen and the cord is in water.
- Water on the floor.
- Poison/household chemicals on the floor.

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION **R** The Kitchen



**HOME**  
SAFETY INITIATIVE



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



### REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

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RIC NEWS WELCOMES YOUR VIEWS & COMMENTS.

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# Raising the Bar

## on Quality of Service Standards

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 consistency, 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 (GES) 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.

## Giving You a LOUDER VOICE

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 relations, since our remit is to "investigate complaints by consumers of their failure to obtain redress from service providers in respect rates, billings and unsatisfactory service and facilitate relief where necessary." The outreach programmes were held on 20th April in Tunapuna, 25th April in Penal and in Tobago on 22nd May in Scarborough and 23rd May in Parlatuvier. These sessions will continue to be a permanent feature of the RIC's operations.

## RIC BUZZ WORDS

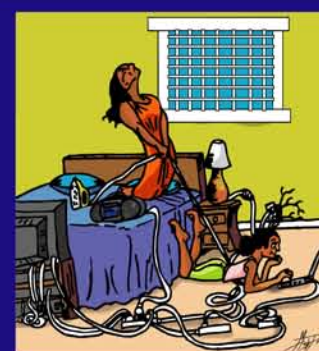
### Overall Standards

The Overall Standards form part of the Quality of Service Standards (QSS) for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector and generally relate to the reliability of service affecting a group of customers and are intended to ensure a minimum level of service for customers as well as to encourage the Service Provider to achieve higher levels of performance. The OES include standards such as billing punctuality, prior notice of planned outages, frequency of meter testing, and correction of Low/High voltage complaints.

## MEET THE TRIPPIN' FAMILY



THE BATHROOM



THE BEDROOM



THE LIVING ROOM



THE KITCHEN

Allow me to introduce you to the Trippin' family, a unique and somewhat quirky family. The Trippins 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 Trippin'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 Trippin' family are guilty of not practicing Home Safety. For instance, Frank Trippin', 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 Trippin', 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 plugs in the TV, the computer, his videogame, and charges his cell phone, unconcerned about overloading circuits. He can always be found harassing and trying to 'show 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 breaker when the circuits were tripping one night at home.

While his elder sister, Liesel Trippin' a teenager, is often hustling to get ready to go out with her friends, she can always be found traversing from her bedroom to the bathroom. Liesel is often in need of an extension cord when she is trying to blow dry her hair after having a shower. Never remembering where last she leaves this appliance, nor the extension cord, so she always has to ask her mother to help her find it. This can sometimes be frustrating for her mother, especially if she is busy in the kitchen. One time due to an immature decision to use the blow dryer while in the shower, she shocks the entire family with a new look for her hair, as well as herself.

Margaret Trippin' 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. Trippin' longs 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. Trippin' 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 on 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 Trippin'.



## BACKCHAT!

We welcome BACKCHAT at the RIC! Visit the website at [www.ric.org.tt](http://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.

# UP CLOSE

## & PERSONAL WITH



CAMILLE ROLINGSON  
Compliance Analyst

– CAMILLE ROLINGSON

**3. 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.

**4. 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.

**5. 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

### new RICcruit

Educated in four countries by age 13, Nadia graduated from the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill, Barbados) and the Sir Hugh Wooding Law School in 1999 and 2001 respectively. She was called to the Bar of Trinidad and Tobago in 2001. Her previous workplaces include Angostura Limited and Hyatali and Company, where she gained a firm grounding in several diverse areas of civil law. She has also been a part time tutor in French and Spanish and a free-lance writer for the Vox and Sunday Mix magazines. On a personal note, she is the granddaughter of the man who was referred to by his peers as the "Dean of Caribbean Journalism", the late journalist George John. Nadia is the Legal/Corporate Secretary at the RIC.



After all is said and done,  
more is said than done.



Carol Balkaran accepts her award.

## International Women's Day Awardees

Interestingly it was a man who said "The secret that has led me to my goal: my strength lies solely in my tenacity". However, these words seem more appropriately matched with two women at the RIC, Diahann Abraham and Carol Balkaran. In March, the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment (MPUE) hosted an awards function at Crowne Plaza Hotel to celebrate International Women's Day, at which Diahann and Carol were both recipients of awards. Diahann (Customer Service Representative) received an award in the 'Outstanding Performance in a specific area of work in the sector' category and Carol (Tariff Analyst) in the category for 'Significant contributions to the development of the sector'.

In considering the criteria for awarding women at the agencies of the MPUE, the focus was on recognizing "Women in the Utilities Sector" who have demonstrated: Outstanding performance in their areas of work in the sector, made significant contributions to the development of the sector or who have broken new ground in the sector. We warmly congratulate our two recipients, as this speaks to the work ethic adopted here 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 took 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 Programmes in Tobago, the RIC Mohan Chadee 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.



RIC Brochures being distributed to curious visitors



### FAST FACTS

The RIC has a CUSTOMER SERVICES DEPARTMENT, which responds to consumer complaints and concerns. The RIC also offers consumers the added convenience of a Toll Free Number 800-4RIC (4742) with which they can contact Customer Services Representatives and have their complaints investigated and resolved. This is supplemented by Customer Services Outreach Programmes where CSR's meet with community residents to obtain their complaints with the intention of resolving them. These services are provided free of charge and are available to the general public.

# HOME SAFETY INITIATIVE

CONNECTING YOU TO LIFE

"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 theme "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.



## HOME SAFETY INITIATIVE

### Upcoming Theatre Workshops

The HSI Caravan rolls on as Theatre Workshops are planned for primary school students in the areas detailed below between 10:00am – 12noon.

- **Thursday 13th September 2007**  
- AV Room NALIS  
- National Library Building, Hart & Abercromby Streets, Port of Spain;
- **Wednesday 26th September 2007**  
- San Fernando Lions Civic Centre,  
Cor. Mc Gillvary and Circular Roads,  
San Fernando;
- **Thursday 18th October 2007**  
- St. Michaels Hall, Wendy Fitzwilliam Boulevard  
Diamond Vale, Diego Martin

See you there!

# CARNIVAL LIME

The RIC together with the other tenants in the Furness Building hosted its 4th Annual Carnival lime on Wednesday 7th February 2007. They were not to be outdone though by the other guest artistes who included the RIC's own Lady Jub Jub – Camille Rolingson, CMMB's Chenko, Harvard Harps Steel Orchestra, and Vibes Engine Room. Specially invited guests included Rikki Jai, Sanell Dempster and Reigning Soca Monarch Neil 'Iwer' George. Master of Ceremonies Tommy Joseph had the crowd in stitches...

