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### Consumer Complaints Get Resolved

#### RIC’s Complaints Report for 1st Quarter 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Jan ’14</th>
<th>Feb’14</th>
<th>Mar ’14</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of complaints received</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of complaints resolved</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>303</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of complaints unresolved</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of complaints withdrawn</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resolution rate for complaints received</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of outstanding complaints resolved</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>149</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of complaints resolved</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>452</td>
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**REBATE/COMPENSATION AWARDED TO CUSTOMERS BETWEEN JAN-MAR 2014**: $2,040,657.00

**Our Customer Service Promise to You - The RIC will:**

- Conduct an investigation to obtain all the necessary facts both from you and the Service Provider.
- (Copies of all relevant information that would assist us in understanding the complaint should be provided.)
- Respond to your written, telephone and email complaints within ten (10) working days of receipt.
- Forward our response to your complaint to the Service Provider and then provide written confirmation of action taken.
- Keep you up-to-date on the progress of our investigation of your complaint and its resolution.
- Ensure that you are attended to by a Customer Service Representative within ten (10) minutes of your appointment time.

If you have a complaint, you must first make contact with the service providers (i.e. WASA and T&TEC) and give them the opportunity to resolve the problem.

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### SCHEDULE OF OUTREACH PROGRAMME 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Corporation 1</th>
<th>Corporation 2</th>
<th>Corporation 3</th>
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*OP schedules for Tobago quarterly

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A new Board of Commissioners was sworn in on 30th September, 2013 when they were officially presented with their Instruments of Appointment by Permanent Secretary Ms. Margaret Farray at the Ministry of Public Utilities on behalf of the Minister of Public Utilities Nizam Baksh.

In keeping with the RIC’s mission, the board will continue to ensure the promotion of the highest quality of utility services at fair and reasonable rates while building a credible regulatory regime that responds adequately to stakeholders’ concerns.

With their varied interests and expertise, the Board of Commissioners is well-positioned to take on their new roles and create synergies to improve the efficiency of the sectors under the purview of the RIC.

The new members of the RIC board, which took effect from October 8, 2013, are Liana Ramshahai new Deputy Chairman, Debra Singh-Khan and Mark Dolsingh. The two returning commissioners are Sunita Ganpat and Niegel Subiah. Dr. Anne Marie Mohammed was reappointed Chairman of the RIC Board.

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Remember, the RIC is here to protect your interests!
**Tackling High Electricity Connection Costs:**

The World Bank 2014 Ease of Doing Business Report saw Trinidad and Tobago moving three spots up in the rankings from 69 out of 185 countries last year, to 66 out of 189. This country was also chosen as a case study on Electricity Regulation.

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO’S NEW APPROACH – CASE STUDY**

As with any new policy, there was some resistance from the party administering the changes. T&TEC initially found it difficult to get its staff to support the new policy. Workers considered reimbursement the most burdensome issue because it required keeping records of the first client and subsequent ones, along with the works completed for each. The task is tedious, as a detailed break-down of the works and associated costs is needed to identify future parts that benefit customers connected later. T&TEC upgraded its system to track new connections with the required details and provided training to implement the policy. The RIC also extensively publicised the new policy in major newspapers and met repeatedly with T&TEC leadership and distribution staff.

By 2013 T&TEC had implemented the regulator’s recommendations. When installing new connections, the electricity company’s engineers clearly mark the installed equipment and materials and link them with the customer’s records in the utility’s database. If new customers request connections, the utility personnel inspect the capital costs of connecting to the network, and connection costs are still relative to the company’s turnover.

The Capital Contribution Working Group adopted a comprehensive approach that examined procedures and acts regulating capital contributions and looked into what utilities in other economies were doing. Their research focused on whether there was a clear, formal capital contribution policy the issues addressed whether there was a capital contribution. The group found that globally, service providers give users different ways to connect to electricity networks. One involves customers paying the total costs incurred as a result of connecting a new load to the system, including the costs of network reinforcement. Another involves customers paying only for the assets required to connect to a system, excluding the costs of extending and reinforcing the distribution system. A third option followed by a few service providers, where the costs of assets for a new connection are deemed part of the general system and so are recoverable from all users through tariffs or system charges.

The group also made three main recommendations for Trinidad and Tobago that have been implemented:

- **Introducing a reimbursement scheme.** To ensure that connection costs are more widely spread across different users, assets eventually shared by customers connecting later must be reimbursed to initial customers by T&TEC.

The average cost to connect to electricity varies by region

- **Setting connection costs with revenue from electricity supply.** T&TEC is required to show that a connection is not commercially viable without a capital contribution and that it should be no more than what it would cost to be commercially viable. This approach allows a balanced allocation of costs because a new connection is also a source of future revenue. But large industrial customers still bear the full capital costs of connecting to the network, and connection costs are still relative to the company’s turnover.

- **Involving the private sector.** Customers can use T&TEC employees or contractors for conducting connection works. But T&TEC should prepare a list of prequalified contractors for customers, specify technical criteria and inform customers about the average costs of works in various areas. Many economies have opened their electricity markets to prequalified contractors — offering more options to customers and helping utilities meet the demand for new connections in a timely, cost-effective way.

The following is an extract of the World Bank’s report on “Tackling High Electricity Connection Costs: Trinidad and Tobago’s New Approach”: Trinidad and Tobago’s approach to lowering electricity connection costs focused on finding a fair scheme to allocate costs between new and future customers.

Customers paid for extensions (less the offset of revenues from the connection in the third year) required to connect to the system. If another customer sought a connection the new customer would be able to use the assets funded by the first, resulting in free-rider problem. There was no mechanism to reimburse customers that had funded connection assets shared by others whose emergence was not anticipated at the time of original application.

The legal basis for the capital contribution imposed by T&TEC arose from the T&TEC Act, Chapter 54:70, which states that clients had to pay for new electricity connections if they were more than 60 feet away from the existing grid. T&TEC presented individual quotes to customers who had no basis to contest them should they want to. A customer requesting a new connection of 140 kVA for a warehouse located 150 metres away from the existing network had to pay more than $8,000 in Port of Spain in 2009.

The RIC recognised that the capital contribution was contentious because the calculation of connection costs was complex and somewhat subjective. In 2006 the RIC established a working group to review capital contributions. The group was comprised of representatives from nongovernmental organisations, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Bureau of Standards, Ministry of Legal Affairs, Electricity Commission and the RIC.

The task is tedious, as a detailed break-down of the works and associated costs is needed to identify future parts that benefit customers connected later. T&TEC upgraded its system to track new connections with the required details and provided training to implement the policy. The RIC also extensively publicised the new policy in major newspapers and met repeatedly with T&TEC leadership and distribution staff.

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By 2013 T&TEC had implemented the regulator’s recommendations. When installing new connections, the electricity company’s engineers clearly mark the installed equipment and materials and link them with the customer’s records in the utility’s database. If new customers request connections, the utility personnel inspect the location and verify if the surrounding network has been marked earlier. Based on this information, T&TEC staff calculates how much should be reimbursed to previous customers. This reform has allowed for a broader distribution of connection costs in Trinidad and Tobago. It has also lowered the cost for connecting a standardised warehouse as measured by the getting electricity indicator. After the reform the cost of a connection for a small warehouse dropped by more than eight times, to less than $1,000 in 2013.

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Health and Safety in the workplace is a top priority for the RIC. The organisation has a fully functional Health and Safety Committee which has been charged with the responsibility of coordinating and administering all the Health and Safety activities at the RIC. The Committee is also responsible for ensuring that the RIC is in full compliance with all the regulations outlined in the Trinidad and Tobago Occupational Health and Safety Act.

As part of the RIC’s “Employee Health and Wellness Initiative” aimed at fostering the promotion of good health and the prevention of chronic illnesses among members of staff, the Corporate Communications Department, on behalf of the Health and Safety Committee, facilitated a Mental Health session which included three lectures on Stress, Anxiety and Interpersonal Relationships on Tuesday 18th March, 2014.

The proposed outcomes of the interactive session were:

- To provide individuals with the knowledge of a variety of mental health conditions,
- To present practical guidance on how best to manage someone who is experiencing mental distress,
- To show how to sensitively signpost,
- To show ways to cope and unwind after a challenging experience, and
- To show how to build resilience and make the most of one’s potential.

This session was conducted by the employees of the North West Regional Health Authority (NWRHA) in collaboration with the Psycho Social Rehabilitation Unit of the St. Ann’s Psychiatric Hospital.

Staff indicated that they found the sessions to be very informative and useful and they are looking forward to future sessions.
The Regulated Industries Commission hosted its Annual Carnival Lime — ‘Masquerade’ on Thursday 20th February, 2014 at Capital Plaza Hotel – 360 Degrees Restaurant, Wrightson Road, Port of Spain.

Staff and invited guests were treated to exceptional performances from Soca artiste Destra Garcia and Tripolians Steel Orchestra.

Members of staff also got into the action with a monologue performed by Daniel Ramsepaul and a dramatic reading done by Nadia Joseph.