

For Immediate Release

<p>RIC LAUNCHES NEW INTERACTIVE WEBSITE</p>
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Water, Wastewater and Electricity regulator, the Regulated Industries Commission has today announced the launch of its new website, which features a unique interactive feature. The website was redesigned to create a dynamic and user-friendly online environment and now includes an interactive **Discussion Forum**, which was added to improve the functionality, usability and appeal of the website. In extolling the value of the new website, Mr. Harjinder Atwal, Executive Director, described the forum as “yet another channel to encourage public participation in the regulatory decision-making process.” The new website can be viewed at <http://www.ric.org.tt>.

The moderated forum was included to demonstrate the RIC’s commitment to open dialogue around key public issues that require public consultation, particularly as they relate to the service providers T&TEC and WASA. This discussion forum, which lends itself to an extended timeframe (24/7 access), is an appropriate context to spark debate and solicit feedback, particularly in light of the upcoming review of the Water and Wastewater Sector.

The RIC’s new website design was defined by its role and function, with particular attention being paid to the layout, ease of navigation, content, and presentation of the site. While more accessible to users, the RIC’s new website still contains all publications such as Public Consultation documents, Policy documents and the Quality of Service Standards. In addition to providing information, the site also serves as a repository and is a helpful tool. The RIC invites all users to join the discussion forum and be among the many sharing in the regulatory decision-making process, and contributing to any discussion at hand.

The new website is easier to navigate and more accessible to users and provides another avenue for stakeholders to have a louder voice on issues affecting them. The RIC’s forum is yet another innovative initiative in the drive to increase stakeholder participation in the regulatory and decision-making process, by making it easier for them to do so. As an independent regulator, the RIC is governed by principles of transparency, fairness and equity, with the ultimate goal of protecting the interests of its stakeholders.

End of Release

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Notes to Editors:

Rules of Engagement for the RIC's online Discussion Forum

If a user wishes to join the RIC's **discussion forum**, he will need to sign in and register to obtain a personal identification (ID) which he will use to login on future occasions. Once signed in and his email address has been verified, the user is free to share his opinion and post messages/comments. In the RIC's discussion forum, all contributors are required to display the courtesy necessary for constructive debate and are informed that as moderator, the RIC will screen all messages and reserves the right to refuse the publication of messages that do not conform to the rules of engagement as outlined on the website. The categories included on the forum are:

- Complaints;
- Public Consultations;
- WASA - Rate Review;
- T&TEC - Rate Review;
- PowerGen;
- Trinity Power;
- **Open Spaces** - Share your viewpoint on any issue affecting you as it relates to the utilities - water and electricity;
- Suggestion Box.

It is hoped that these new features will improve the functionality and enhance the online experience for all visitors to the RIC's website.