



REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

RIC NEWS

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RIC ONLINE

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REGULATED
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COMMISSION



Protecting YOUR Interests



RIC SECURES OVER \$1.2 MILLION in Rebates for Customers

The **Regulated Industries Commission (RIC)** has successfully secured **\$1,265,387.00** in rebates for utility customers during the period **January 2013 to December 2013**. These rebates were credited to the accounts of the **Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA)** and **Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC)** customers after investigations into individual complaints.

During this same period, the **RIC resolved 89.4% (2176) of the 2,469 complaints received against WASA and T&TEC from members of the public**. These complaints would have included situations where the bills were incorrectly calculated resulting from billing classification errors, inappropriate retroactive billing adjustments and claims for damage to appliance/equipment/property etc.

Consumers have a right to receive a high quality of service from the service providers and to complain if this is not the case. 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.

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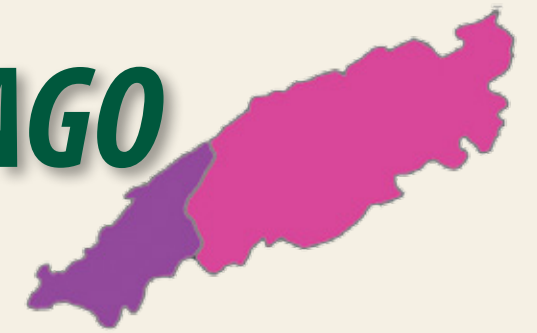
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FOCUS ON TOBAGO



In an effort to strengthen ties between the RIC and utility consumers in Tobago, and to ensure that these consumers are receiving a high quality of utility services, the RIC's Customer Service Department hosted a number of outreach programs with the aim of investigating and responding to consumer complaints in Tobago. The RIC also utilized several advertising mediums to promote these outreach sessions, however despite these efforts attendance at the sessions were extremely low.

In light of this, the RIC's Customer Service Manager, Mr. Mohan Chadee and Corporate Communications Manager, Driselle Ramjohn met with representatives of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA), Ms. Agnes Winchester, Administrator in the Division of Infrastructure and Public Utilities, as well as, Ms. Karen Ottley, Administrator in the Division of Community Development and Culture on Thursday 5th September, 2013. The meeting, which took place at the Division of Infrastructure and Public Utilities, Old Government Farm Road, Shaw Park, Tobago, was held to discuss all possible avenues that could be taken to collaborate with the THA to promote the RIC's customer service and community engagement programs.

At the meeting the parties discussed a way forward and how the RIC could foster greater relationships with stakeholders in Tobago and better represent their interests by investigating and addressing matters that concern consumers.

The RIC, at the meeting, requested a comprehensive and updated list of all the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) in Tobago from the Administrator in the Division of Community Development and Culture. These groups were added to the RIC's database and will be contacted as part of the upcoming Community Engagement/Outreach Programmes.

One of the ideas put forward at the meeting was the possible partnering of the RIC with the various Divisions of the THA when they are conducting their individual outreach programmes. This would ensure a wider, 'ready-made' audience for the RIC. The THA representatives also suggested the opening of a RIC office in Tobago. These submissions, as well as others discussed, are currently under consideration. ■

SCHEDULE OF OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR THE CUSTOMER SERVICES DEPARTMENT

MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
OP Penal/Debe Regional Corporation	OP Princes Town Regional Corporation	OP Arima Borough Corporation	OP Myaro/Rio Regional Corporation	OP Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation	OP Sangre Grande Regional Corporation	OP Point Fortin Borough Corporation	
	OP Tobago		OP Tobago		OP Tobago		

* OP scheduled for 3rd Thursday bi-monthly at OMB Tobago Office.

Port of Spain City Corporation, Diego Martin Regional Corporation, San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation & Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation not included in the CSD's Outreach Programme due to accessibility to the RIC's office.

Remember, the RIC is here to protect your interests!



RIC ONLINE

We live in a technological age where a range of information is accessible at your fingertips in a matter of seconds. With this in mind the Regulated Industries Commission

recently undertook a venture to upgrade its digital and online presence to provide real-time information to the public in an easy to access and easy to use format.

As part of this effort, the RIC launched its new interactive website. The website was redesigned to create a dynamic and user-friendly online environment. It also boasts improved functionality, usability and appeal. The new online platform is 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 website features the RIC's Discussion Forum which demonstrates 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.

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. Additionally the website features live links to the RIC's Social Media Networking pages, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

The rise in popularity of social media networking sites in Trinidad and Tobago - like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter - has led to a hyper-connected society which expects to receive their information in real-time from their computers, laptops and mobile devices including tablets and the very popular smart phones.

In this regard, the RIC also recently upgraded its presence on Facebook and Twitter to include pertinent information updates from the utility providers, WASA and T&TEC as they happen, as well as other useful information to utility consumers. The RIC's YouTube account is a repository for videos of RIC events, presentations and television commercials which can be accessed by the public at any time. All of the RIC Social Media pages are designed to encourage feedback from customers and to provide a platform where customers can also get real-time responses to their queries.

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. ■



Quarterly Complaints Report

Consumer Complaints Get Resolved

RIC's Complaints Report for 4rd Quarter 2013

Status	Oct '13	Nov '13	Dec '13	Total
Number of complaints received	188	183	189	560
Number of complaints resolved	104	91	137	332
Number of complaints unresolved	82	90	50	222
Number of complaints withdrawn	2	2	2	6
Resolution rate for complaints received	56%	50%	73%	60%
No. of outstanding complaints resolved	137	52	122	311
Total number of complaints resolved	241	143	259	643

REBATE/COMPENSATION AWARDED TO CUSTOMERS BETWEEN OCT-DEC 2013 **\$218,796.00**

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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RIC HEALTH SCREENING SESSION

Nadia Joseph from the Customer Service Department is all smiles as she gets ready to test her cholesterol and blood sugar levels.



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.

The Health and Safety Committee in conjunction with the Corporate Communications Department recently hosted a Health Screening Session for all members of staff at the RIC. The session was conducted by nurses of the Ministry of Health Public Education Department and included blood pressure testing, cholesterol testing, diabetes testing as well as calculations for Body Mass Index. Male staff members were also screened for prostate cancer.

Members of staff who displayed above average readings for any of the tests were given a 'Healthy Lifestyle' lecture by the nurses as well as informational brochures on healthy eating and exercise habits. ■



A nurse from the Ministry of Health explains the test results to RIC Library Assistant Nadia Joseph.



RIC Health and Safety Committee chairman Rishi Maharaj gets his blood pressure tested at the recently held Health Screening session.



The hardworking, knowledgeable and helpful staff of the Ministry of Health Public Education Division.

RIC's ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND STAFF LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2013

The Regulated Industries Commission hosted its Annual Christmas Luncheon and Staff Long Service Awards on Friday 20th December, 2013 at Botticelli's Restaurant, City of Grand Bazaar, Valsayn. The function was held to

celebrate the end of another successful year working together at the Regulated Industries Commission and also to honour staff/colleagues who have given 10 years of dedicated service to the RIC. ■



- (1) Ms. Jenelle Crosby is presented with her award from Senator the Honourable Emmanuel George
- (2) Mr. Shameel Khan is presented with his award from Senator the Honourable Emmanuel George
- (3) Ms. Indrani Maraj receives her award from Executive Director- Mr. Harjinder S. Atwal
- (4) Ms. Roszan Maharaj receives her award from Chairman of the RIC's Board of Commissioners- Dr. Anne-Marie Mohammed

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