



Report on the
Deliberations of the
Standing Finance
Committee

TO EXAMINE THE DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR

2019

Appointed by
The House of Assembly
of the Virgin Islands

Office of the Clerk

Report on the Deliberations of the

STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE

Appointed by the

House of Assembly of the Virgin Islands

To Examine the Draft Estimates for the Year 2019



Held at the Office of the House of Assembly in

Road Town

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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

REPORT ON THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TO EXAMINE THE DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR 2019

**HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY IN ROAD TOWN
FROM 5TH, 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH APRIL, 2019**

Honourable Julian Willock	- Speaker and Chairman of the Standing Finance Committee
Hon. Andrew A. Fahie	- Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District
Dr. the Honourable Natalio D. Wheatley	- Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District
Honourable Kye M. Rymer	- Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District
Honourable Vincent O. Wheatley	- Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District
Honourable Carvin Malone	- Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member
Hon. Shereen D. Flax-Charles	- Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member
Hon. Sharie B. de Castro	- Junior Minister for Trade and Economic Development and Territorial Member
Hon. Neville A. Smith	- Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Finance Committee and Territorial Member
Honourable Baba Aziz	- Attorney General
Honourable Marlon A. Penn	- Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District

Honourable Julian Fraser, RA	- Member for the Third District
Honourable Alvera Maduro-Caines	- Member for the Sixth District
Honourable Melvin M. Turnbull	- Member for the Second District
Mrs. Phyllis Evans	- Secretary of the Standing Finance Committee

OFFICERS FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Mr. Glenroy Forbes	-	Financial Secretary
Ms. Alva MCcall	-	Deputy Financial Secretary
Mr. Ronald Emmanuel	-	Budget Coordinator
Ms. Tiffany Todman	-	Budget Analyst
Ms. Rhonda Glasgow	-	Budget Officer II
Ms. Tuneisha Johnson	-	Budget Officer I
Mrs. Dawn Alexander Joseph	-	Policy Analyst
Mrs. Michele Richmond-Phillips	-	Head, Macro Fiscal Unit/Policy Analyst
Ms. Sandra Brewley	-	Financial Analyst
Mrs. Maria Smith-Thomas	-	Finance and Planning Officer

ATTENDING SECRETARIES

Ms. Khauesten Industrious	-	Acting Deputy Clerk, House of Assembly
Mrs. Myrna Lennard-Penn	-	Senior Executive Officer, House of Assembly
Ms. Danika Blyden	-	Executive Officer, House of Assembly (on rotation to Disaster Management)
Ms. Asha Stoutt	-	Secretary I, House of Assembly
Mrs. Letaye Garrin	-	Human Resources Manager, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture
Mrs. Symone Penn	-	Acting Human Resources Manager, Premier's Office
Ms. Michelle Bhajan	-	Acting Private Secretary, Ministry

Ms. Abbarah Brown

-

of Natural Resources, Labour and
Immigration
Personal Assistant to the Deputy
Governor

ATTENDING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

- Mrs. Phyllis Evans - Clerk, House of Assembly (the Clerk)
- Ms. Sharona Pickering - Finance Office, House of Assembly (FO)

CABINET OFFICE

- Ms. Sandra Ward - Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Office (CS)
- Mrs. Vicki Samuel-Lettsome - Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Office (DCS)

PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

- Ms. Kim Hollis, QC - Director, Public Prosecutions, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)
- Mrs. Tiffany R. Scatliffe-Esprit - Principal Crown Counsel, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (PCC)

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

- Mrs. Sheila Brathwaite - Complaints Commissioner, Complaints Commission (CC)
- Mr. Herbert E. Potter - Acting Assistant Complaints Commissioner (Ag. Asst. CC)

OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

- Ms. Sonia Webster - Auditor General (AudGen)

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR'S / DEPUTY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

- Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe - Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)

Mrs. Helen Seymour	- Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	- Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)
Mrs. Arliene T. Penn	- Executive Private Secretary, Governor's Office (ExPrvtSecGO)
Ms. Tamica Hodge	- Accounts Officer II (AcctOII)
Mrs. Michelle Donovan-Stevens	- Director of Human Resources (DHR)
Mrs. Jacquelin Henry	- Accounts Manager, Human Resources (AMHR)
Ms. Sharleen Dabreo	- Director of Disaster Management (DDM)
Mrs. Erica Smith-Penn	- Registrar, High Court (the Registrar)
Mrs. Anessa Moses-Tobin	- Senior Court Administrator, High Court (SCAHC)
Mrs. Stephanie Benn	- Registrar General, Civil Registry and Passport Office (RG)
Ms. Toya Fahie	- Office Manager, Civil Registry and Passport Office (OM)
Mrs. Annette Williams-Sylvester	- Court Manager, Magistracy (CM)
Ms. Kisha Donovan	- Deputy Court Manager, Magistracy (DCM)
Honourable Baba Aziz	- Attorney General (AG)
Mr. Michael B. Matthews	- Commissioner of Police (CoP)
Mr. Alcedo Fahie	- Interim Acting Director, Financial Investigation Agency (Interim Ag.DFIA)
Mr. Jeremy Vanterpool	- Chief Operating Officer, Financial Investigation Agency (COOFIA)

PREMIER'S POLICY PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	- Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office
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(Ag.PSPO)

Mr. Jamal Jones	- Finance and Planning Officer , Premier's Office (FPOPO)
Ms. Desiree Smith	- Chief Information Officer, Department of Information and Public Relations (CInfo)
Mr. Anantharaman Balasubramanian	- Acting Director, BVI Shipping Registry (Ag.DBVISR)
Ms. Barbara Smith	- Senior Administrative Officer, BVI Shipping Registry (SAOBVISR)
Mr. Raymond Phillips	- Director, Central Statistics Office (DCSO)
Mr. Gregory Adams	- Chief Planner, Town and Country Planning Department (CP)
Mrs. Karia Christopher	- Director, Trade, Investment Promotion and Consumer Affairs (DTCA)
Ms. Najan Christopher	- Acting Director International Affairs Secretariat (Ag.DIAS)
Ms. Elise Donovan	- Chief Executive Officer, BVI Finance Ltd.(CEO)
Mrs. Sharon Flax-Brutus	- Director, BVI Tourist Board (DBVITB)
Mr. Denniston Frazer	- Managing Director, BVI Airport Authority (MDBVIAA)
Mr. Coy Levons	- Director of Operations, BVI Airport Authority (DOO)
Ms. Sharifa Smith	- Director of Finance, BVI Airport Authority (DOF)
Mr. Japheta Stevens	- Deputy CFO, British Virgin Islands Ports Authority
Mr. Lenius Lendor	- Managing Director, British Virgin Islands Ports Authority (MDBVIPA)

FINANCE POLICY PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Glenroy Forbes	- Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. M. Alva McCall	- Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Maria Smith-Thomas	- Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)
Mr. Ronald Emanuel	- Budget Coordinator, Ministry of Finance (BC)
Ms. Tiffany Todman	- Budget Analyst, Ministry of Finance (BA)
Mrs. Michelle Phillips	- Department Head; Fiscal Unit / Policy Analyst, Ministry of Finance (Public Debt)
Mrs. Dawn Joseph	- Policy Analyst, Ministry of Finance
Ms. Sandra Brewley	- Financial Analyst, Ministry of Finance (Public Debt)
Ms. Tuneisha Johnson	- Budget Officer I, Ministry of Finance (BOI)
Ms. Rhonda Glasgow	- Budget Officer II, Ministry of Finance (BOII)
Mr. Leslie Lettsome	- Acting Comptroller of Customs, Customs (Ag.COC)
Ms. Marietta Isles	- Senior Administrative Officer, Customs
Mr. Shawn Newton	- Finance Officer, Customs (FO)
Ms. Tashima Martin	- Senior Officer, Customs
Mr. Orris Thomas	- Deputy Commissioner, Inland Revenue Department (DC)
Ms. Dorea Corea	- Director, Internal Audit (DDIA)
Mr. Simba Todman	- Deputy Director, Internal Audit (DDIA)
Ms. Pascha Stoutt	- Post Master General (PMG)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Mrs. Tamara Taylor | - Financial Accountant, Treasury Dept. |
| Mrs. Lucia Donovan | Deputy Director, DoIT (DDDoIT) |
| Mrs. Kisheba Sprauve-Callwood | - Senior Admin. Officer, DoIT (SAODoIT) |
| Ms. La Toya James | - Director, International Tax Authority(DITA) |
| Ms. Christilyn Benjamin | - Deputy Director, International Tax Authority (DDITA) |

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LABOUR AND IMMIGRATION

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. Ronald Smith-Berkeley | - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI) |
| Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott | - Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DSNRLI) |
| Ms. Louann Hodge | - Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.DSNRLI) |
| Mr. Norval Young | - Cadastral Information Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration |
| Ms. Linette Rabsatt | - Acting Human Resources Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.HRMNRLI) |
| Mrs. Janice Rhymer | - Labour Commissioner, Labour Department (LC) |
| Mrs. Michelle McLean | - Deputy Labour Commissioner, Labour Department (DLC) |
| Mr. Kelvin Dawson | - Registrar of Lands (RL) |
| Mr. Dwayne Nibbs | - Acting Chief Surveyor, Survey Department (Ag. CSur) |

Mr. Michael Potter	Acting Deputy Chief Surveyor, Survey Department (Ag.DCSur)
Ms. Rosemary Callwood	- Acting Chief Immigration Officer, Immigration Department (Ag.CIO)
Mrs. Germain Cline	- Senior Administrative Officer, Immigration Department (SAO)
Mr. Charles France	- Accounts Officer, Immigration Department (AcctO)
Ms. Lynda Varlack	- Acting Director, National Parks Trust (Ag.DNPT)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS, FISHERIES AND AGRICULTURE

Dr. Marcia Potter	- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSMEC)
Mrs. Connie George	- Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (Ag.CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	- Assistant Secretary, Department of Education and Culture (ASEC)
Mrs. C. Jovita Scatliffe	- Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture, (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	- Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctS)
Mrs. Suzanne Greenaway	- Chief Librarian, Library Services Department (CL)
Mr. Orlando Thomas	- Senior Accounts Officer, Library Services Department (SAcctOLS)

Mr. Stephen Payne	Executive Director, Recreation Trust
Mrs. Judith Vanterpool	- President, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (the President)
Ms. Italia Penn	- Bursar, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (the Bursar)
Ms. Anne Lennard	- Acting Director of Culture, Department of Culture
Mrs. Brenda Lettsome-Tye	- Director, Youth Affairs and Sports
Mr. Cernel Clyne	- Chairman, British Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee
Mr. Kelvin Penn	- Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
Mr. Lloyd Williams	- Manager, BVI Fishing Complex
Mrs. Tessa Smith-Claxton	- Senior Administrative Officer, Agriculture and Fisheries
Mr. Orville Clarke	- Acting Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer(Ag.DCAO)

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Petrona Davies	- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHSD)
Mrs. Natalie Smith	- Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	- Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Mr. Clayton O'Neal	- Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Miss Asha Romney	- Accounts Officer II, Ministry of Health and Social Development (AcctOII)
Dr. Irad Potter	- Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health and

Social Development (CMO)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. Shurn Baptiste | - Finance Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development(FOHSD) |
| Ms. Alisia T. Browne | - Assistant Secretary, Ministry Health and Social Development (ASHSD) |
| Mrs. Annie Malone-Frett | - Chief Social Development Officer, Social Development Department (CSDO) |
| Mrs. Stacie Stoutt-James | - Acting Deputy Chief Social Development Officer, Social Development Department (Ag. DCSDO) |
| Ms. Carmen Rabsatt | - Senior Administrative Officer, Social Development Department(SAO) |
| Mr. Greg Massicote | - Manager, Department of Waste Management (MDWM) |
| Mr. Neville Allen | - Acting Assistant Manager, Department of Waste Management(Ag.AMDWM) |
| Mr. Adhan Doward | - Waste Management Officer, Department of Waste Management(WMO) |
| Mr. Ronald Georges | - Chief Executive Officer, BVI Health Services Authority (CEOBVIHSA) |
| Ms. Antoniette Skelton | - Director, Social Security Board (DSSB) |
| Mrs. Jeanette Scatliffe-Boynes | - Deputy Director, Social Security Board |
| Ms. Michelle Georges | - Chief Operations Officer, Social Security Board |
| Mr. Ian S. Smith | - Chairman, Social Security Board |

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION, WORKS AND UTILITIES

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. Jeremy Hodge | - Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.PSTWU) |
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Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	- Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag. DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	- Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Arriel Donovan	- Manager, Facilities Management Unit (FM)
Mr. Zebalon McLean	- Chief Fire Officer, Fire and Rescue Services (CFO)
Mrs. Pearline Scatliffe-Leonard	- Director, Water and Sewerage Department (DWS)
Mr. Bernard Grant	- Deputy Director, Water and Sewerage Department (DDWSD)
Mr. Michael Davis	- Engineer, Water and Sewerage Department
Ms. Camille T. Merry	- Senior Assistant Human Resources Manager, Water and Sewerage Department (SAHRMWS)
Mr. Luton Leonard	- Accounts Supervisor, Water and Sewerage Department (AcctSup)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	- Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities
Mr. Clifford George	- Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities
Mrs. Bethsaida Smith-Hanley	- Acting Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, Department of Motor Vehicles (Ag.CMV)
Mrs. Joann Stoutt	- Acting Deputy Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, Department of Motor Vehicles (Ag.DCMV)

Mr. Navarro Donovan	- Acting Director, Public Works Department (Ag.DPWD)
Mr. Kurt Hodge	- Deputy Director, Public Works Department (DDPWD)
Mr. Elsworth Phillip	- Deputy Director, Public Works Department (DDPWD)
Ms. Judith Harrigan	- Accounts Supervisor II, Public Works Department (AcctSuP)
Mr. Reynell Turnbull	- Manager, Telephone Services Management Unit (MTSMU)
Ms. Symorne Penn	- Deputy Managing Director, British Virgin Islands Electricity Department
Mr. Damien Percival	- Director, Taxi and Livery Commission

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS FOR 2019 SFC

AMDHR	Accounts Manager, Department of Human Resources
AcctOII	Accounts Officer II
ACOC	Assistant Commissioner of Customs
AG	Attorney General
AgAcctOII	Acting Accounts Officer II
AgAcctGen	Acting Accountant General
AudGen	Auditor General
AgAsstSec	Acting Assistant Secretary
AgDIA	Acting Director of Internal Audit
AgCEO	Acting Chief Education Officer
AgCSur	Acting Chief Surveyor
AgDCEO	Acting Deputy Chief Education Officer
AgDVISR	Acting Director Virgin Islands Shipping Registry
Ag.DNPT	Acting Deputy National Park Trust
AgCIO	Acting Chief Immigration Officer
AgDSDGO	Acting Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office
AgPSPO	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office
AONRLi	Administrative Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration
BC	Budget Coordinator
BVIAA	B.V.I. Airports Authority
BVIHSA	B.V.I. Health Services Authority
BVIEC	B.V.I. Electricity Corporation
BVIFSC	B.V.I. Financial Services Commission
CAB	Central Administration Building
CAO	Chief Agricultural Officer
CC	Complaints Commissioner
CEHO	Chief Environmental Health Officer
CFO	Chief Fire Officer
CFD	Conservation and Fisheries Department
CInfo	Chief Information Officer
CL	Chief Librarian
CLRC	Chairman, Law Reform Commission
Clerk	Clerk, House of Assembly
CM	Court Manager, Magistracy
CMV	Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles
CMS	Chief of Medical Staff and Director for Medical Service
COP	Commissioner of Police, Royal Virgin Islands Police Force
CP	Chief Planner
CRL	Chief Registrar of Lands
CS	Cabinet Secretary
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organisation

CA	Court Administrator, Magistrate's Court
COC	Comptroller of Customs
CGA	Coordinator of Gender Affairs
DC	Director of Communications, Premier's Office
DOC	Director Of Culture
DIA	Director, Internal Audit
DCAO	Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer
DCP	Deputy Chief Planner
DCS	Deputy Cabinet Secretary
DCInfo	Deputy Chief Information Officer
DCIR	Deputy Commissioner, Inland Revenue
DCSur	Deputy Chief Surveyor
DCRL	Deputy Chief Registrar of Lands
DCOP	Deputy Commissioner of Police, Royal Virgin Islands Police Force
DDDM	Deputy Director of Disaster Management
DDIT	Deputy Director of Information Technology
DDIA	Deputy Director, Internal Audit
DDITA	Deputy Director, International Tax Authority
DDNPT	Deputy Director, National Parks Trust
DDoIT	Director of Information Technology
DCSO	Director, Central Statistics Office
DDWS	Deputy Director of Water and Sewerage
DeHR	Department of Human Resources
DDM	Director of Disaster Management
DIT	Director of Information and Technology
DITA	Director, International Tax Authority
DDITA	Deputy Director, International Tax Authority
DHR	Director of Human Resources
DFM	Director of Financial Management
DFS	Deputy Financial Secretary
DFSIU	Director, Financial Services Implementation Unit
DG	Deputy Governor
DGO	Deputy Governor's Office
DLC	Deputy Labour Commissioner
DOA	Department of Agriculture
DOE	Department of Education
DON	Director of Nursing, B.V.I. Health Services Authority
DoP	Director of Projects
DoIT	Department of Information Technology
DP	Deputy Postmaster
DPH	Director of Primary Healthcare
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DPrin	Deputy Principal, Elmore Stouitt High School
DPU	Development Planning Unit
DR	Deputy Registrar

DSTWU	Deputy Secretary, Transportation, Works and Utilities
DSPO	Deputy Secretary, Premier's Office
DSNRLi	Deputy Secretary, Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration
SDSGO	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office
DSHSD	Deputy Secretary, Health and Social Development
DTB	Director of the Tourist Board
DTCA	Director of Trade and Consumer Affairs
DTS	Director of Telecommunications Services
DTSM	Deputy Telephone Services Manager
DWS	Director of Water and Sewerage
DPW	Director of Public Works
EDBVIF	Executive Director, B.V.I. Finance
ExPrvSec	Executive Private Secretary, Governor's Office
FC	Financial Comptroller, BVI Tourist Board
FIA	Financial Investigation Agency
FM	Facilities Manager
FOHSD	Finance Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development
FPOTWU	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works, and Utilities
FPODGO	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office
FPOEC	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture
FPOHSD	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development
FPOMOF	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance
FPOPO	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office
FPOCED	Finance and Planning Officer, Constitutionally Established Departments
FS	Financial Secretary
GIS	Government Information Service
GO	Governor's Office
HHRC	Head, Human Rights Commission
HLSCC	H. Lavity Stoutt Community College
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
ID	Interim Director, B.V.I. Finance Ltd.
IAD	Internal Audit Department
IAIII	Internal Auditor III, Internal Auditor Department
JLSC	Judicial and Legal Services Commission
LC	Labour Commissioner
LD	Labour Department
LDCA	Land Development Control Authority
MADH	Manager, Adina Donovan Home
MBVIFC	Manager, B.V.I. Fishing Complex
MWMD	Manager, Waste Management Department
MTSMU	Manager, Telephone Services Management Unit

MTWU	Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities
MDBVIAA	Managing Director, BVI Airports Authority
MECYAFA	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture
MH&SD	Ministry of Health and Social Development
MNR&LI	Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MSHTC	Manager, Safe Haven Transitional Centre
MSWD	Manager, Solid Waste Department
MTSMU	Manager, Telephone Services Management Unit
MWCDA	Manager, Wickham's Cay Development Authority
NPT	National Parks Trust
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PG	Postmaster General
PO	Premier's Office
PSDGO	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office
PSMEC	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture
PSTWU	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities
PSHSD	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development
PSNRLI	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration
PCC	Principal Crown Council
PSC	Public Service Commission
PWD	Public Works Department
RC	Recreation Trust
RG	Registrar General, Civil Registry and Passport Office
RI	Registrar of Interests
RL	Registrar of Lands
RVIPF	Royal Virgin Islands Police Force
SAcctONRL	Senior Accounts Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour
SAOLRC	Senior Administrative Officer, Law Reform Commission
SCA	Senior Court Administrator
SecG	Secretary General
SG	Solicitor General
SFC	Standing Finance Committee
SM	Senior Magistrate
TB	Tourist Board
TCPD	Town and Country Planning Department
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
the Centre	Sir Rupert Briercliffe Cultural Centre
the Force	Royal Virgin Islands Police Force

the Registrar	Registrar, Supreme Court and Commercial Court
the	
Superintendent	Superintendent, Her Majesty's Prison
the	Commissioner of Inland Revenue
Commissioner	
TSMU	Telephone Services Management Unit
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman welcomed the Members of the Standing Finance Committee, the Financial Secretary and staff of the Ministry of Finance to review the 2019 Budget Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure. The Chairman thanked all the Members for attending and reminded them of the swift time frame that Standing Finance must be concluded.

REVENUE

Present:

Ms. Alva McCall	Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Dawn Alexander-Joseph	Policy Analyst – Macro Fiscal Unit, Ministry of Finance (PA)
Mrs. Michelle Richmond-Phillips	Policy Analyst – Macro Fiscal Unit, Ministry of Finance (PA)
Mr. Ronald Emmanuel	Budget Coordinator, Ministry of Finance (BC)
Ms. Tiffany Todman	Budget Analyst, Ministry of Finance (BA)
Ms. Tuneisha Johnson	Budget Officer I, Ministry of Finance (BOI)

2. The Chairman welcomed the Honourable Members to the Standing Finance Committee Meetings for 2019 in accordance with Standing Orders 67 (1,2,3 and 4). Prayer was said by the Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member, Mr. Carvin Malone.
3. The Chairman gave instructions regarding how the meetings were to proceed. He then welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for record.
4. The Deputy Financial Secretary (DFS) and Policy Analyst, Mrs. Alexander-Joseph, shared a brief power point presentation, for the benefit of the new members, on the economy and revenue and how the process worked. With regards to the Economic Review, the DFS stated that there was a 2.3% economic growth in 2018 which was mainly driven by positive performance in financial services, the construction industries due in part to the ongoing rebuilding following the natural disaster events of 2017, as well as the

rebounding of the tourism industry. She advised that \$311 Million was budgeted for revenue collection in 2018 and the unaudited figures showed that \$372 Million was collected. She stated that the variance of \$61 Million was, as mentioned earlier, from the out performance of the financial services industry, the increase in the construction industry and other areas of revenue. The DFS further stated that by October, 2018 they had cleared over \$2 Million in revenue collection for the first time, and surpassed previous collections for the past five years. She stated that from 2011 – 2015 more revenue was actually collected than the amount that was budgeted for in those years. A slight decrease occurred in 2016 and continued to decline through 2017, but rebounded in 2018, and outperformed the budgeted figures. The DFS anticipated that there would be at least a 2.2% growth in 2019, which would again be primarily driven by the growth in the construction industry, increase investments in public services and infrastructure, and continued recovery in the tourism sector. With regards to financial services, the DFS said they remain cautious as a result of international pressures being placed on the industry at the moment.

5. The DFS continued the presentation and explained how the revenue forecasts prepared by the Macro fiscal unit were linked to the budget presented by the Premier. She explained that the first step was to generate the revenue forecasts which was the dominant element in defining the budget envelop which would essentially predict the amount that would be collected in revenue to determine the expenditure for the year. She noted that the forecast numbers were always higher than the budget numbers to leave room for the spending plan.
6. The Member for the Third District inquired as to whether the revenue growth in 2018 resulted from expanded business or fee increases to which the DFS replied that it was a combination of both. She stated that in 2017 the FSC announced that fees would be increased in 2018, and that was implemented on 1st January, 2018. Additionally, there was an increase in new incorporations over 2017

which also contributed to the growth. The DFS would provide the figures for 2016 with regards to the decline in new incorporations that occurred that year.

7. The Policy Analyst from the Macroeconomic Unit continued the presentation and further explained that the revenue forecast sat the whole framework to lead into the budget process. She advised that after the projections were completed the revenue numbers set the envelope or the base for the expenditure ceiling. She further expounded on the goals for developing the budget ceiling which were to strengthen fiscal discipline and expenditure efficiency, to improve strategic allocation of public resources and to establish a baseline for future improvements.
8. The Policy Analyst advised that projections/forecasts for the medium term were done based on certain assumptions where they looked at the bigger picture to determine the possibilities of what could happen based on the trends of the economic peelers and historical patterns which sets the cap from which the budget numbers were derived. The Unit has projected revenue collection of \$375.4Million for 2019 of which \$345.1Million will be collected in taxes, \$12.3Millions in grants, and \$18Million from other revenue.
9. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired as to whether the figures took into consideration any negative impacts on the financial services sector.
10. The Policy Analyst confirmed that the figures included some impacts in the medium term figures which gave some indications of possible shocks that may occur in the financial industry and impact the overall figures for 2020 and beyond.

11. The Member for the Third District stated that he did not understand the rationale as to why the budgeted figure of \$342.4 Million for taxes was less than the forecasted figure of \$345 Million, and inquired as to how they decided on which numbers to use at the budget level.
12. The Policy Analyst stated that historically there were sound methodologies that show a variance between the forecasted figures and the budget figures which were always lower. She further advised that the collecting departments were also involved in the process to generate the figures. At the higher level, she said, taking into context the bigger picture, the macro assumptions that sets the frame for the forecast, therefore there was a difference in the numbers for the budget (what is likely to happen) and the forecast (what can happen) based on certain assumptions. She further explained that if the budget figures were too close to the forecasted figures and the assumptions of the international market changed it could create difficulties and challenges.
13. She added that linking it to the Medium Term Fiscal Frame (MTFF) began with the projections and the master frame that informed the Medium Term Fiscal Plan (MTFP). The MTFP is a strategic tool that links macroeconomic performance for example inflation and GDP to fiscal policy at the aggregate level. She further stated that in addition to what was presented they were mindful of the financial risks that could affect some of the revenue streams in particular the financial services which contribute about sixty percent of government revenue. Any shocks to the financial services, the resulting fiscal strategy would require about \$7.2 Million to bridge the gap.
14. The Policy Analyst further emphasised that it was important to continue to monitor revenue as it sets the framework for what would happen. She stated that they utilised a monitoring and reporting framework that helped track the

performance of revenues which provided an idea of what the end figures would be at any point in time.

15. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member asked the panel to explain how spending would be controlled to which the DFS advised that expenditure control was really based on Members putting the relevant policies in place to ensure spending was controlled. She stated the MoF has in the past made suggestions and advised on those measures, but at the end of the day it was the Honourable Members that made those decisions.
16. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District stated that under the Financial Management Act the Financial Secretary has the authority to stop/control what goes on. He mentioned areas such as procurement of services which had created more slippage, too much positions created under personal emoluments and recurrent expenses needed to be controlled.
17. The Member for the Second District inquired as to what was being done by the MoF to collect uncollected revenue. He noted that back in 2015 the uncollected revenue amounted to about \$50Million. He said that although projections were made for new income streams and new revenue earnings measures, the outstanding revenue continued to linger and grow. He mentioned that the Premier spoke about having a business type operation of how the public purse was handled and requested a report to show the total amount of uncollected revenue at the end of the years 2016, 2017 and 2018.
18. The Member for the Third District would also like the report to include outstanding debt to people for legal claims, and loans.
19. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District also requested a breakdown of revenue collected at the end of 2018 and the balances in all

accounts at the end of March 2019 and the expenditure between November 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019.

20. The Policy Analyst advised that no additional taxes were included in the budget and the focus was to improve efficiencies with the collection from revenue generating departments. The DFS added that each revenue generating department should submit reports to the Treasury Department on a regular basis, but some were delinquent in their reporting therefore the MoF's focus was to try to improve on that reporting which would provide them with a better understanding of what was outstanding. The DFS stated that she had taken note of the requests, but it may take some time to generate it given she had to discuss it with the FS and they still had a number of officers working under extreme conditions.
21. The DFS noted that some offices were accommodated back in the Complex but the renovations of the building were not an initiative of the MoF. She stated that a tender for the Complex was issued but a different direction had been taken.
22. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District recognised that in the course of ten years expenditure rose but for revenue to perform phenomenally Members would have to band together and not play politics, but appropriate funds in places in the private sector to provide jobs; E-Government will save lots of money, rents and other areas will save money so some tough decisions would have to be made.
23. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the MoF for their hard work and dedication with preparation of the budget. He stated that they did a little with the transitional budget but the additions and adjustments do not affect the MTFF so they want to manage expenditures.

24. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District also thanked the MOF for their work following Irma and the plans brought forward.
25. There were no further questions and the Chairman thanked the panel for their presentation and dismissed them from the meeting.

CONSTITUTIONALLY ESTABLISHED DEPARTMENTS

HEAD 1101 **HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

Present:

Mrs. Phyllis Evans Clerk, House of Assembly (the Clerk)

Ms. Sharona Pickering Finance Office, House of Assembly (FO)

26. The Chairman welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.
27. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District noted that there was a change in the District allocations from being spent quarterly to monthly, and inquired whether it would be reverted to quarterly intervals as Members needed to be informed.
28. The Clerk advised that MoF had instructed to spend on a month-to-month basis until the budget passed, but the allocations will revert to quarterly.
29. The Budget Coordinator confirmed that the spending plan was on a monthly basis but HoA had the option to make any changes through the spending plan.
30. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District inquired whether the \$30K allocated for the Leader of the Opposition was budgeted for in 2019. He also expressed that as LOP he would like to receive some administrative assistance.
31. The Clerk advised that the fund was not automatically placed in the budget, but the Premier and Member for the First District emphatically expressed that the funds needed to be in the budget.

32. The Budget Coordinator advised that a line item could not be made for the \$30K allocation and as such it was subsumed in various subheads under the HoA. He further advised that a programme could be created for the 2019 budget to distribute the funds. The DFS further confirmed that the allocation cannot have a separate line item given the way the budget was presented, and it was allocated under Subhead 528000 – Services.
33. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District recognised that the fund was placed in different subheads to pay bills.
34. The Member for the Second District noted that he had some difficulty with the system with the MoF and inquired what could be done to streamline the process.
35. The DFS noted that monies under mitigation fell under Capital, and requests were made by Members that would benefit private citizens and not Government Capital assets, and as such the requests could not be granted.
36. The Member for the Second District also noted that the staffing of the HoA needed to increase to allow for assistance to Members so that they would not lag behind in performing their duties.
37. The Chairman informed that he had spoken to the Clerk about the needs for Members but the key issues were funding and transportation.
38. The Member for the Second District inquired as to the readiness of the offices for the Members to occupy.
39. The Chairman requested that the Members provide a list to the Clerk regarding what they needed and they would strive to have the offices ready in the next two weeks.

40. There were no further questions and the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Ms. Sandra Ward

Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Office (CS)

Mrs. Vicki Samuel-Lettsome

Deputy Cabinet Secretary , Cabinet Office(DCS)

41. The Chairman welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for record.
42. The panel made a short presentation to the Members on behalf of the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Secretary (CS) advised that the Gazette Unit grossed \$462,650 in revenue in 2018 which was generated from Commercial notices, Gazette subscriptions and Gazette sales. She noted that the aforementioned figure represented a 16% decrease from 2017, and was the lowest gross revenue collected since 2015 when the revenue amounted to \$413,815. The CS informed that the Unit averaged an income of revenue of \$38,544 per month in 2018, and has collected \$113,489 up to the end of March, 2019.
43. The CS requested an additional \$58,595 in supplementary funding. She stated that the reason for the request was to comply with the Premier who made it clear upon taking office that his Government was one of inclusion and the funds will aid in covering the costs of Cabinet meetings which will be held on the various Sister Islands. In addition, the CS informed that they had commenced digital meetings at the Cabinet and included the costs for a new module for the National Security Council and training for about fifty-four Cabinet authorised Members.
44. In continuing the presentation, the DCS highlighted two other initiatives that the Cabinet Office would undertake, one of which was the Cabinet Records Preservation Project. She advised that the initiative dealt with the storage of

records at the R&R Malone Complex, some of the records were affected as a result of soot from a fire at the Complex and needed to be cleaned. The Archives Unit would assist with the project, and would cost \$5,664.98. The DCS informed that the second initiative was to bind the annual volumes of the Gazettes which involved binding all the issues of the Gazette in a particular year together. She noted that the Office was about four years behind in binding the Gazette and it would cost about \$12,770.70 to bind the issues for 2015 and 2016.

45. The CS noted that the Cabinet Office was displaced following the 2017 hurricanes, and their main challenge was accommodation and as a result they were still temporarily located on two floors of the Sebastian Building. In a report from the Environmental Health Unit, she stated they had to purchase humidifiers given the air quality in the building was quite challenging. She advised that the staffing was impacted given some officers could not return to work in the building. As a result, she informed that some readjustments had to be made in the allotment given under the provisional warrant totaling \$14,464.28. The CS stated that if they could find a suitable and permanent location to house everyone together it would be more effective in their output.
46. The Leader of the Opposition and Member of the Eighth District noted that there had been discussions regarding the possibility of utilising the same module used to host Cabinet meetings and inquired as to whether a similar module had been explored to use it for House of Assembly meetings.
47. The CS confirmed that discussions were held but the use of the module for House of Assembly Meetings was not budgeted for, and would be handled separately. She further advised that it was a component that could easily be implemented.

48. The Member for the Second District stated that he had an ongoing concern regarding his Chairmanship of the VI Cadet Corp which needed to be addressed as soon as possible, and inquired whether funding and accommodation was set aside for the programme. He noted that it was their tenth year as an enacted body of the Territory that had developed disciplined, empowered, young people to contribute to society and they should be supported.
49. The CS confirmed that funding of \$50,000 was allocated for the VI Cadet Corp Council and payments were disbursed on a quarterly basis. In terms of accommodation, the CS stated that she was not aware of any accommodation for the Council, but such a matter would be addressed by the Council when they convene their meetings. She further advised that there were three bodies funded through the Cabinet Office, namely the Cabinet Council, National Security Council, and the VI Cadet Corp Council which would comprise the Members of the NSC and the Minister for Education.
50. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the staff for the work they have done and would see whether they could get some of their issues addressed.
51. A number of Members also extended thanks to the CS for the brilliant idea of digitizing Cabinet, the efficiency of the system as well as the savings it brought through its implementation.
52. There were no further questions for the CS and the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Ms. Kim Hollis, QC

Director of Public Prosecution, Office of the
Director of Public Prospections (DPP)

Ms. Tiffany Scatliffe-Esprit

Principal Crown Council, Office of the Director
of Public Prosecutions (PCC)

53. The Chairman welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

54. The DPP made a presentation regarding the work of the ODPP since the 2017 Hurricanes, and the practical effects it had during the last quarter of 2018.

55. She emphasised that the statistics that were listed as key performance indicators in the 2019 budget needed to be substantially updated given they were collated and submitted in August 2018, prior to the full time resumption of the Criminal Courts in earnest. She said that they failed to reflect the correct position and contribution of the ODPP in particular in reducing the backlog of cases that had accumulated in the courts post hurricane due to the lack of suitable court facilities until the provision of the modular Magistrate's Court building in July 2018.

56. She presented the updated statistics as follows:

Year	2016	2017	2018
Number of Magistrates Complaints filed	611	486 presently stated to be 400)	617 (revised as states was 450 , this was prior to resumption of courts

			For the first quarter of 2019 157 (628 ??)
Number of Magistrates Court files disposed/closed	169	203	250 For the first quarter of 2019 – 22
Number of Indictments filed and cases committed to the High Court for Trial	21	28	42 (states 35) For the first quarter of 2019 – 15
Number of High Court cases outstanding		12	41 to 25/7/2018 by dec 2018 increased to 61
Numbers of High court cases closed.	18	9	15

57. The DPP stressed that it was important that Members appreciated that the ODPP was still struggling with a backlog of cases that was occasioned as a result of the Magistrate's Courts not being able to sit following the 2017 hurricanes and indeed as well as the gap that occurred when they did not have and were unable to have jury trials because there was no High Court Judge in the Virgin Islands.

58. She further advised that the number of juvenile cases had fallen quite considerably. The total number of juveniles involved in crimes was 35 in 2016, 32 in 2017 and 9 in 2018. The ODPP was of the view that the decrease in juvenile crime in 2018, was partly accountable as a result of the number of young persons that left the Territory following the Hurricanes in 2017.

59. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District noted that ESHS had a number of disturbances and he was advised by the Commissioner of Police that they allowed the schools to deal with the disturbances rather than logging them so as to not criminalize the young people. He inquired of the DPP whether or not she endorsed that approach and sought her advice as to whether they should be logged to provide a true picture of juvenile delinquency.
60. The DPP underscored that they should be logged, but just a record kept of the offenders to see whether or not they were repeat offenders. She stated that she also agreed with the approach of the Commissioner of Police which would prevent the juveniles from having criminal records in relation to their future. She continued her discourse by stating that at present the ODPP did not have the ability to caution first offenders but would support having legislation as far as juvenile offenders were concerned.
61. The Principal Crown Counsel further confirmed that in 2014 the ODPP drafted a caution policy with the assistance of the Crown Prosecution Services in the UK. She advised that the draft was forwarded to the DGO to be presented as a Cabinet Paper and considered to become legislation as a possible addendum or schedule to the Young People and Children's Act 2005. If it was approved by Cabinet it would then be sent forward to the AG for drafting, but nothing had been done to move it forward.
62. She reiterated the process which she said was clearly communicated to the former DPP in her presence, and they were instructed to send recommendations through the Ministry Head which was the DGO. She requested clarification through the AG to correct them if that was not the case, given they had a plethora of legislations, legislative proposals and amendments such as the outdated Criminal Code, the Drugs Act, and the Firearms Code , to move

forward. The DPP validated the statement made by Principal Crown Counsel regarding the process and advised that she had been instructed to follow the same process.

63. She also advised that she had followed up on the submission for the Young People and Children's Act 2005, as well as, the Witness and Anonymity Act on a number of occasions. She stated that the ODPP as well as the Commissioner of Police would like to have the Witness and Anonymity Act passed as a piece of legislation for the Territory as it would assist them in combating serious crimes. She further noted that it was even announced in the Governor's Speech from the Throne on the last occasion, but nothing had been done to advance it.
64. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District said that he would take the matter up with the Premier in Cabinet and with the National Security Council to which the DPP was grateful.
65. With regards to the 2019 budget for ODPP, the DPP said it was estimated at \$1,884,900. She advised that the ODPP had identified a number of central organisational priorities in pursuance of their overall objectives for 2019.
66. She emphasised the forthcoming mutual evaluation process that was to take place, and as a result at the top of their list were Proceeds of Crime, Forfeiture, Confiscation and Terrorist Financing matters; the improvement of the prosecutorial service by training; electronic efficiency and security; and identifying and prioritising potential areas of legislative reform.
67. With regards to Proceeds of Crime, Forfeiture and Confiscation, the DPP stated that the request for advancement as far as the ODPP was concerned in relation to that priority was in order to recruit a globally recognised specialist in all aspects

of the field of asset forfeiture with an in-depth knowledge of terrorist financing matters in order to ensure that the ODPP was sufficiently equipped in relation to the mutual evaluation as well as being future proofed, and thus enabling the department to be evaluated to pass the mutual evaluation.

68. The DPP further advised that since taking up office in 2016, she had worked consistently, to improve the forensic skills and performance of the Office along with the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force in this area, and indeed they had been responsible for raising awareness amongst the RVIPF officers on the ground with a series of mutual lectures.
69. As the constitutional prosecutor of the Virgin islands, the DPP advised that the Office currently receives case files for advice and court proceedings from a number of law enforcement agencies including the Commissioner of Police, Customs, Immigration, as well as Financial Investigation Authority. The ODPP therefore requires an overarching expert to advise and collate diverse sources of information from multiple Law Enforcement Agencies for maximum financial benefits.
70. Her request for advancement was to enable the ODPP to specifically recruit the experienced senior financial prosecutor prior to the Mutual Evaluation, offering a package of \$148,000 all inclusive of allowances and other benefits. She stated that this was reinforced by the fact that the Cayman Islands recently failed their Mutual Evaluation and it was no surprise that they had internationally advertised for the same type of expert to rectify their position.
71. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated that he appreciated the need for the recruitment of such talent, but inquired whether there were plans to develop the current talent for the purposes of succession planning.

72. The DPP said that the reason for recruitment of a specialist person would lead to cascading training to the present staff within the office as well as to other law enforcement agencies.
73. With regards to training and improvement of the prosecutorial service, the DPP noted that the training budget had been severely reduced to \$5000 for 2019, and requested that the budget be augmented to \$30,000. She advised that this was a specific requirement in relation to the ODPP in the National Risk Assessment in that training should be arranged and received on asset recovery, on a determined basis to keep the experience of prosecutorial staff current and relevant. She noted that in 2018, she was able to obtain a scholarship for one of the crown counsels to attend a highly regarded advanced forensic advocacy training course at Keble College Oxford in the UK.
74. The Member for the Third District noted that legislation was recently passed granting the Police the authority to retain a certain amount of the proceeds of crime and forfeiture, and inquired as to whether it was related to what she spoke about earlier.
75. The DPP confirmed that it was the same topic she had addressed earlier, but the ODPP received none of the proceeds. She said that the ODPP was not aware of the discussions that had taken place regarding the legislation, and although they worked with the Police in confiscating proceeds of crime and forfeiture they were left out of the collections. She said that they would like to be included, but understand that the Police Force was a much larger department and required more financing.
76. The Member for the Third District stated that he was under the impression that only the Police was involved, and felt that there should be a similar legislation authorising that some of the proceeds go to the ODPP.

77. In a follow-up question, the Member for the Third District asked the DPP to state what role the office played in regards to the excessive wait for prisoners on remand.
78. The DPP stated that the ODPP made representations to the court in relation to how cases should proceed, but either the Magistrate's Court or the High Court Judge made decisions regarding the length of time cases took.
79. The DPP stated that she had been in the Service for two and a half years in response to a question from the Member for the Third District. She informed that her contract would expire in August, 2020. She advised that as far as succession planning she had a Principal Crown Counsel whom she worked closely with but also reiterated her request for a Senior Financial Prosecutor and not another Principal Crown Council as listed in the budget which she did not request. She felt however that at the end of her contract her Principal Crown Counsel would be her successor.
80. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked whether personal emoluments covered payments to Counsels who were recruited for special cases to which the DPP responded that those cases were covered under the Services Subhead.
81. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member further inquired about the rent, but was advised that rent was paid by the Deputy Governor's Office.
82. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the increase in travel to which the DPP advised that the increase in travel resulted from expert witness travel such as Ballistics, Drugs Analysts and other experts that are not available in the Territory. She

advised that they had started communicating with those experts through video link, but still needed to budget for it.

83. The Member for the Second District asked the DPP how many cases she had tried since her tenure, and she responded that she had done at least one every legal term in the High Court, but at the end of 2018 she had done quite a few in the Magistrate's Court to assist with the backlog of cases because she did not have enough staff to cope with all the cases.
84. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the panel for the work they have done and noted that it would be a challenging year given the budget was in a transitional state and asked that they provide a spreadsheet with their requests.
85. There were no further questions and the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Sheila Brathwaite Complaints Commissioner, Complaints Commission
(CC)

Mr. Herbert Potter Crown Counsel on rotation at the Complaints
Commissioner Office

86. The Chairman welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.
87. The Complaints Commissioner paid tribute to the late Mr. Elton Georges, the first Commissioner who established the office and sadly passed on 4th April 2018. The Office celebrated its 10th anniversary on 3rd March, 2019, but no activities were held to celebrate the anniversary.
88. The CC advised that when investigations were conducted recommendations were made which usually cover funding, legislative amendments, reorganisation of staff and even policies. The CC will seek amendments to the Complaints Commissioner Act 2003 legislation which she hoped would be achieved in 2019. She said that presently recommendations were made, and then the Act required a Special Report to be laid on the table of the HOA if there was no response. The CC advised that she would rather discuss the recommendations further and encourage adherence. She said that the new process will be reflected in their proposed amendments to the Act along with other steps to be taken before a Special Report had to be made. She said that it was also her goal to position the Commission to make a contribution to the Transformation Initiative of the Public Service, under the good governance aspect of the transformation initiative.

89. In terms of funding, the CC informed that the total budgeted amount for 2019 was \$334,500. She noted that, amongst other things, \$4,722.00 was allocated to replace furniture that was damaged during the hurricanes of 2017. In addition, she advised that funds were budgeted to attend the biennial Conference and Board Meeting of the Caribbean Ombudsman Association in 2019, to allow for an officer to participate in an attachment for at least one week at one of their counterpart agencies, and for domestic travel to the Sister Islands. A small provision was also included for Marketing and Advertising, and to have the security system re-installed.
90. The CC anticipated that they would return to their full complement of staff of four which would allow for better services to the public. She expressed her eagerness to retain Mr. Herbert Potter who has been serving on rotation for four months, and performing the duties of Assistant Complaints Commissioner.
91. For the remainder of the fiscal year, the CC expected to conduct more Own Motion Investigations, which would be initiated if it was found that a number of persons in the community would be affected, and to visit the Sister Islands at least twice for the year.
92. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about the increased costs for rent in which the CC informed that location of the office remained the same, but the rent had increased from \$3,000 to \$4,700 per month as a result of refurbishments to the office which had been badly damaged during the 2017 hurricanes.
93. The Chairman inquired as to whether the CC had any challenges to which she replied that funding to market the office and to travel overseas for training, as well as lack of cooperation from some offices were some of the challenges they faced.

94. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired as to the trend regarding the number of complaints received since she took over the office.
95. The CC indicated that the number of complaints had been on a downward trend and had reduced significantly. She anticipated that it would continue to decline because Public Officers had improved their services. In addition, she noted that in 2018 individuals were more focused on their own personal recovery rather than complaining about government services.
96. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the CC for the work of the Complaints Office and reminded the panel that the budget was in a transitional state.
97. There were no further questions for the CC and the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Ms. Sonia Webster

Auditor General, Office of the Auditor General
(AudGen)

98. The Chairman welcomed the Auditor General to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that she state her name for the record.
99. The AudGen informed of the success of the year 2018 based on the number of financial statements received from the Treasury Department from 2012 – 2016. She also informed that the Value for Money Audits (VFM) Unit was also revived in 2018 and were conducting VFM examinations. These audits dealt with projects and programmes, and required more time to complete.
100. The AudGen indicated that the focus for 2019, would be to continue with the audit mandate and to continue building the VFM function and to continue conducting Statutory Board audits, were outstanding. She informed that the focus would also be on capacity building which would increase the number of staff. She also informed that there was an increase in the budget training, which was necessary for auditors, in order to stay current.
101. The AudGen informed the Standing Finance Committee that the focus for 2019 would be to update the reviewing process on the Sister Islands and also update the processes on contract monitoring. She stated that the Audit Legislation needed to be updated, as well as updating the website for the public to have access to what the office puts out, especially contracts. The website would keep the public more engaged and more knowledgeable about the correct information. The AudGen also stated that the only new spending for a vehicle which was

damaged in 2017 and was eventually written off by the Public Works Department.

102. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the AudGen for her input and queried whether it was a constitutionally breached to not have the audits up to date. The Auditor General indicated that it was.
103. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired what was needed to get the 2017 Audits completed. The Auditor General informed that she was awaiting the financial statements from the Treasury Department.
104. The AudGen informed that there may be a delay in obtaining the 2017 financial statements because of the changed legislation in 2012, which required the adoption of international IFSTAT standards which required new changes and included all Statutory Boards in central Government.
105. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District queried about her role in auditing the Recovery Development Agency (RDA).
106. The AudGen informed that she had an overriding function, to ensure that auditors were appointed and functioning.
107. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member queried about how satisfied she was with previous suggested implemented standards.
108. The AudGen indicated that from one audit to the next the same steps were being repeated but if departments were not able to comply with the recommendations, they would normally inform the department of the recommended changes they

plan to take based on the resources the department may have, which the AudGen would acknowledge.

109. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired whether the RDA was a Statutory Body. The AudGen indicated that it was an established one. She also indicated that her department would still be engaged and would receive all copies of their contracts.
110. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District informed that the department was criticised for being under-resourced and being unable to make proper audits. The AudGen confirmed that they were under-resourced and did not take it as a criticism, and only took on the audits they could manage.
111. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the manual work which was being done on Jost Van Dyke and whether Anegada was in the same position. The AudGen indicated that it had more to do with setting up the system properly and that the Treasury Department played a role in this and would not be possible until there is an update in the internet connection and would be question better poised for the Accountant General.
112. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about contract monitoring. The AudGen informed that there were reconciliation methods to ensure that all contracts were being received from the Ministries.
113. The Member for the Second District inquired of the purpose of an audit. The AudGen stated that audits were conducted to ensure that the public is aware of what is going on with the Government, to ensure that there is value for money and also to ensure that there are checks and balances.

114. The AudGen's thanked the Members for their support.
115. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the AudGen and her staff for the work they conducted and also the level of professionalism that was executed during the process.
116. The Financial Secretary sort to clarify the manual process as it relates to Jost Van Dyke and Anegada. He stated that the Department of Information Technology (DOIT) was presently working on having the connection reinstated and inform that it will be addressed at a later date.

GOVERNOR’S GROUP

HEAD 2108

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor’s Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Arliene T. Penn	Executive Private Secretary, Governor’s Office (ExPrvSec)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor’s Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor’s Office (FPODGO)
Ms. Tamica Hodge	Accounts Officer II, Governor’s Office (AcctOII)

117. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

118. The ExPrvSec in her presentation stated the vision was to support continuous improvement in the BVI through service, partnership and open communications. The 2019 strategic priorities included the Police, Disaster Management, the Prison, the Courts and the Public Service. Partnering and supporting various government departments through recovery and good governance, and also working through cross training and sharing of portfolios to ensure continuity of the work of the Governor.

119. The ExPrvSec indicated the need for a truck which was destroyed during the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria. A new copier is also needed in addition to the much needed furniture for the Reception Hall as well as the Governor’s Office.

120. She also informed that hurricane repairs that were done to the Governor's residence was a Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) funded project.
121. The ExPrvSec indicated that the funds requested was to ensure the health and safety of all those that utilise the Governor's Office.
122. The Chairman thanked the Executive Private Secretary for her presentation.

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

123. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.
124. The PSDGO in her presentation updated the committee that the Liquor Licence Act which had its first reading in the House of Assembly in January 2019, but was being resubmitted to Cabinet with the change of Government, and also sought to try to improve the temporary process by conducting joint inspections with the Police, Departments of Fire, Environmental Health and the Deputy Governor's Office, on the same day to limit the time it took to complete the process.
125. The PSDGO also indicated that the Elections Amendment Act paved the way for the 2019 General Elections, and that a survey of the General Elections was conducted and that a total of three hundred and fifty-eight (358) persons completed it, of which some of the results were very positive, and would be advanced through the Supervisor of Elections.
126. The PSDGO informed that with the passage of Disaster Management Act in 2018, which dealt with the removal of marine derelict vessels. The focus on the new Disaster Management Bill, which was finalized but is being resubmitted to

the Cabinet for approval, as well as the Police Act and the Public Service Management Bill.

127. The PSDGO stated that one of their focuses is with housing accommodations for the Government offices which was at a cost of \$6 Million and climbing for rental properties for offices and informed that the path that we are currently on is not sustainable. The PSDGO informed that on 1st March, 2019, the Sister Islands Co-ordinator was appointed. This unit was in place to bridge the gap with the sister islands. She also made an appeal for the Archives and Records Management 2010, Act which was still waiting to come into force, in order that the archives and records officer can function properly.
128. The PSDGO informed that while they awaited a decision on a by-election, there was no provision in place if a by-election was needed but indicated of a preliminary budget that is in place, and hoped before the budget process was over, that some moneys would be made available.
129. The PSDGO informed that the Territory was hosting the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) Board meeting, and that the submission was added after the budget was submitted for \$20,000.00.
130. The PSDGO Virgin Gorda Administration Building was severely damaged after the 2017 hurricanes, and that received Cabinet's approval for funding late in 2018, and that the staff needed to be removed from the building.
131. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District thanked the PSDGO for her presentation and inquired about the Queen's Birthday celebrations. The PSDGO indicated that the provisions were there, but would not be listed as the Queen's Birthday Celebration.

132. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the renaming of the Jost Van Dyke administration building.
133. The PSDGO stated that the renaming programme was very much in place, and that the committee needed to be revived.
134. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District inquired about the training session DDM had with the Ministers and whether there were any other training in place for Members of the House of Assembly with the impending hurricane season and based on what was experienced in 2017 with Hurricanes Irma and Maria.
135. The PSDGO suggested that the Director of Disaster Management would be in a better position to answer his query.
136. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District inquired about the amount which is in place for the preliminary budget should a By-election take place. The PSDGO informed that there was a preliminary budget of \$35,000.00.
137. The Member for the Second District inquired about the administration building on Jost Van Dyke and inquired whether there was any intention for remedial works to be done to the first floor.
138. The PSDGO stated that the RDA had oversight of the project, which was being funded by the United Kingdom Government and did not have the details of the first floor.

139. The Member for the Second District suggested that the District Officer be housed on the second floor as well as have urgent works done to the first floor.
140. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the liquor licence, and whether provisions were in place at the Magistrate Court to accommodate the members of the Sister Islands, whether they can be facilitated, and suggested that the Magistrates Court could set up hearings in Anegada and Virgin Gorda.
141. The PSDGO noted the recommendations, but informed that after the passage of the act, the courts will no longer approve the licences, but they will be done by a liquor licencing board and will be valid for one year instead of six months.
142. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired how soon after the act is passed the board will be appointed.
143. The PSDGO stated that the process would be in place for the December Sitting.
144. The PSDGO thanked the committee for the opportunity to present on the behalf of the Deputy Governor's Office.
145. The Premier thanked them for their efforts and to keep in mind that this was a transitional budget.

HEAD 2110

HUMAN RESOURCES

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Michelle Donovan-Stevens	Director, Human Resources (DHR)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Jaqueline Henry	Accounts Manager, Human Resources (AMHR)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

146. The Chairman welcomed the Director of Human Resources and asked that she state her name for the record.

147. The DHR in her presentation to the committee outlined the major achievements the department made during 2018, which included improving the human resources policies and legislation; ensure alignment with the organisational needs and to support a modern public service. The continuation of the Retirement Age Act, which ceased the dual compensation of persons who were re-engaged after retirement, and the introduction of a flexible working arrangement policy and develop draft legislation for staff who requested the right for a variation of their working arrangements.

148. The DHR stated that a re-deployment plan was implemented after the 2017 hurricanes as a systematic approach for shifting talent where it was most needed. About 80% of all Government employee records have been scanned and are available electronically. Consultation on the Public Service Management Bill

were advanced which covers how the public service manages itself and included the introduction of a whistle blowing provision.

149. The Health and Safety Wellness policy was approved by Cabinet and phased in the implementation of a series of wellness programmes and through Project Uplift, which was supported by the mental and emotional wellness of public officers. A total of 200 employees participated in the programme in 2018 and also filled the vacant counsellor position which was very crucial. The Years of Service Recognition service was conducted where one hundred and forty-five public officers were recognized and a total of seventy-one retirees were honoured. The DHR indicated that a major issue was to support the transformation project.
150. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District inquired whether the Training Division was functioning. The PSDGO informed that it was not.
151. The DHR informed that the programme had been changed to learning and development.
152. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the public officers who commuted on a daily basis from the Sister Islands to Tortola and inquired whether the programme was still in place and also whether there was an increase in the commuter allowance. The DHR informed that there was no increase in the commuter allowance but the programme was still in place. The Minister noted that an increase should be considered with the rising cost of the boat fare.

153. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member also inquired about the customer service and queried whether there was any collaboration with the BVI Tourist Board and the Disney programme for customer service.
154. The PSDGO stated that the simple answer was yes, and that they have also customised the programme, but using the services of a local agent. The Junior Minister for Tourism inquired about a time line for it to be implemented. The PSDGO informed that it would be implemented by the third quarter of this year.
155. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member also inquired about the heavier customer service contact areas and whether the Departments of Immigration, Customs were considered two of those involved. The PSDGO informed that the departments of Labour and Immigration were involved in the pilot programme but was unable to confirm whether Customs was involved in phase one.
156. The Minister for Health suggested that specific attention be made with those frontline officers as the Territory boasts to be a tourist destination.
157. The DHR informed the SFC that a salary review had not been conducted since 2006 and that salary reviews will now be conducted every three to five years at maximum, which is the service standard. She also requested an additional \$4,000 for basic training and informed that the area that dealt with years of service recognition needed additional funding.
158. The Chairman thanked the Director of Human Resources for her presentation to the SFC.

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Ms. Sharleen DaBreo	Director, Disaster Management (DDM)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

159. The Chairman welcomed the Director of Disaster Management to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that she state her name for the record.

160. In the presentation given by the DDM she mentioned that their budget was divided into two programme areas, the general budget, totalling \$870,000.00 which was spent in 2018 which represented about 92% of the budget provided, and for the work programme budget the expenditure was about \$42,589.00 which amounted to 98% of her budget. 57% of the budget is allocated to staff compensation in the form of personal emoluments and contributions, and about 40% of the budget is used for programmes. She also informed that in 2017, a grant was received from the Caribbean Development Bank which amounted to \$650,000.00, which is being used to implement flood mitigation measures in Sea Cows Bay, East End/Long Look and Jost Van Dyke. The DDM indicated that the project is expected to conclude at the end of July and also informed of the department was still required to cover a number of activities which included the improvement of the drainage in and around the Nibbs Ghut in Sea Cow's Bay, repairs to the Valarie O. Thomas Community Centre and the Ebenezer Thomas Primary School and the mangrove restoration project in Jost Van Dyke, which

required extensive PR campaign, emergency signage as well as salaries for two staff members of the project.

161. The DDM informed that the focus of 2018 was on capacity building and the re-establishment of the multi hazard alert and early warning system and that the focus for 2019 improving community emergency response capacity, the 2019 readiness plan, the completion of the CDB Smart Community Project, improvements on the National hazard GIS Layers, and support the Ministries with the necessary disaster risks reduction within their structures and also prepare for re-accreditation in February 2020.
162. The DDM further stated that the current budget allows to have the Training Officer upgraded to Training Manager, the appointment of a Sister Islands Disaster Liaison Officer, with responsibilities of the technical aspects of the community based disaster risks reduction, with focus on all of the Sister Islands and would be responsible for all the hazardous assessment activities to properly define the risks to the Sister Islands to build capacity and to ensure that volunteers have the necessary public awareness and initiatives that are tailored for them. She also stated that support in 2018 came in the form of donated generators and contingency stock from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and also with the help of the Red Cross, they were able to construct seven platforms to house seven containers, which would be used as satellite warehouses. The DDM also informed that the containers were secured with the assistance of the Governor's Office, Jost Van Dyke Preservation Society, and VG ROC, but additional funding was necessary for the transportation of the containers to the sites and also to house the twenty-two generators installed which would be placed at fire stations and then converted to satellite EOC's.

163. The Member for Second District expressed his support for the DDM and recommended that the sitting government gives the department the requested funds.
164. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District acknowledged the department, and the DDM in the preparations for the hurricane season, and suggested that a series of meetings were held with Members of the House of Assembly and that everyone was aware of what is expected of them during a disaster.
165. The Member for the Third District inquired about the need for \$60,000.00 for the transporting of the containers that will be used for satellite offices.
166. The DDM informed that the cost would include the cost of transportation of the containers, installation of the generators, to outfit the containers and also for existing generators at the various community centres.
167. The Member for Third District inquired whether a container was appropriate facility to be used. The DDM informed that the department was doing as much to get the satellite offices in place, and to eventually have permanent satellite offices in many of the isolated communities.
168. The Member for the Third District commended the Director of DDM for the works done during the 2017 hurricanes.
169. The Chairman inquired of who was in charge during a national disaster.
170. The DDM informed that during a national disaster, the Governor was in charge, but in council, and by consultation with the Premier.

171. The DDM recommended that 3% of a country's budget goes into disaster management.
172. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports commended the DDM for the works her department had done and also for her efforts.

HEAD 2113

SUPREME COURT

HEAD 2116

COMMERCIAL COURT

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Erica Smith-Penn	Registrar, Supreme Court (the Registrar)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Anessa Tobin	Senior Court Administrator, Supreme Court
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

173. The Chairman welcomed the Registrar of the Supreme Court.

174. The Registrar in her presentation stated the vision and mission of the courts, and also the core roles of the courts, are for registration, to hear cases, and to administer justice in a fair manner.

175. The Deputy Speaker thanked the Registrar for her presentation given.

HEAD 2114**CIVIL REGISTRY AND PASSPORT OFFICE****Present:**

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office ((PSDGO)
Mrs. Stephanie Benn	Registrar General, Civil Registry and Passport Office (RG)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)
Miss Toya Fahie	Office Manager, Civil Registry and Passport Office

176. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

177. The RG gave a brief presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following:

- The Civil Registry and Passport Office relocated to the new space (Sakal Place), however, the office requires additional space due to the passage of the hurricanes and the Courts now utilising the space assigned to their office;
- There had been an increase of 141 applications for citizenship and 65% for Visas thus increasing the workload;
- Requested two additional staff at the Senior Executive Officer level.

178. The Member for the Third District inquired about the status of code for the passport “VGB” and the belonger seal inside of the passport.
179. The RG responded that the United Kingdom Government was still working on the issue with the Code. With regards to the seal, the RG responded that the process had resumed.
180. The PSDGO added that that the Office was trying to work out some technical difficulties with respect to internet connection so that they can accommodate prior requests.
181. The Member for the Third District inquired whether the department was in possession of the machine to print the Belonger cards.
182. The RG responded that once the Budget was passed the office would be able to purchase the new equipment.
183. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired about the plan for additional space for the Civil Registry and Passport Office.
184. The PSDGO stated that office accommodation was a challenge for the office. The plan was for the Civil Registry and Passport office to occupy the first two floors of the Sakal Place. As a result of the hurricane, the DGO had to reallocate space and based on the needs of the service, the Registrar’s Office was relocated to the second floor of the Sakal Place due to the conditions of the former location. The PSDGO further added that the Magistrate’s Court would also occupy space at the Sakal Place, as the Magistrate’s Court is located in five different locations and currently not functioning at its optimum. It is the intent

of the DGO to have the Civil Registry and Passport Office relocated to the third and fourth floors of the Sakal Place.

185. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District commended the RG for the work that the office continued to do with limited resources.

186. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2115

MAGISTRACY

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Annette Williams-Sylvester	Court Manager, Magistracy (CM)
Miss Kisha Donovan	Deputy Court Manager, Magistracy (DCM)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

187. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

188. The CM gave a comprehensive presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following:

- The Magistracy has a staff complement of 17 employees;
- The Office was operating from five (5) locations:
 - Royal Virgin Islands Police Force;
 - John's Hole Modular Building;
 - Conservation and Fisheries Conference Room;
 - Internal Audit Office; and
 - Vanterpool Administration Building on Virgin Gorda
- The Budget reflects the addition of new positions which are required to the staff the Child Maintenance Unit which is required to implement the Child

Maintenance and Access Act, 2017 (CMAA) which was brought into force with retroactive effect to 20th April, 2017.

- Requested the creation of a full time Additional Magistrate position to assist with the backlog of cases in the Magistrate's Court.

189. The CM also highlighted some achievements for 2018 work year:

- The conference room at Conservation and Fisheries was declared by the Magistrate's Court (Amendment) Order, 2017 as a courtroom. Court proceedings for the hearing of Civil, Traffic and Quasi matters commenced on Monday 19th February, 2018.
- The Criminal Division of the Court partially resumed on Wednesday 7th March, 2018 at the House of Assembly where 82 matters were disposed.
- In October, 2018 court proceedings commenced on Virgin Gorda where they only hear civil, traffic and quasi matters.
- Lord Ahmad, Minister of Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the United Kingdom handed over the keys to the new modular court building on 31st July, 2018.
- Three Additional Magistrates and a full time Magistrate were appointed to assist with the backlog of cases. Three hundred and forty (340) cases were disposed.
- The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) in partnership with the Magistracy commenced staff training on the implementation of advance Technology with the use of the (Electronic Litigation Filing and Service Procedures) Rules, 2018.

Coroner's Court Statistics

- 52 sudden deaths were reported for 2018

Liquor Licences Statistics

- A total of 388 liquor licences renewals were issued in 2018; and
- 62 new applications filed in 2018 and 10 were dismissed.

190. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about the number of persons incarcerated due to non-payment of Child Support.

191. The CM responded that she did not have an accurate figure but noted that most of the persons that were incarcerated were released. The CM stated that she would submit the information to the Committee.

192. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the panel for their presentation.

193. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Honourable Baba Aziz	Attorney General, Attorney General's Chambers (AG)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

194. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

195. The AG gave a handout for the Members of the Committee to review. He noted that:

- The AG Chambers has 10 lawyers to provide assistance to Government;
- The office needs more support in order to perform at its optimum level.

2018 Accomplishments

- 22 Acts were passed;
- 67 Statutory Instruments were enacted;
- 18 Resolutions of the House were passed
- Imperial Legislations – 1
- Appointments - 16
- Instruments of Appointments – 18
- Tendered 1164 advice to Departments

Civil Litigations

306 matters before the Court

196. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired about the Law Reform functions since the Commission has been shut down.
197. The AG responded that the administrative personnel from the Commission were relocated to the AG's Office and that the Office had not taken on any Law Reform. He further reported that the building that housed the Law Reform Commission is now occupied by the Deputy Governor's Office following the storms. He added that the AG's role also included Law Revision and the Laws of the BVI were revised up to 2013.
198. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about the backlog of cases and asked what was required for the office to deal with the matters expeditiously.
199. The AG responded that they had requested additional senior staff, which was reflected in the Budget. The PSDGO noted that some of the vacancies were in process of being filled as the positions were advertised and the deadline had passed for applications to be submitted.
200. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the AG for the work that the department continues to do.
201. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2118

POLICE

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mr. Michael Matthews	Commissioner of Police, Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (CoP)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

202. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

203. Prior to making his presentation, the CoP thanked the Financial Secretary and Ministry of Finance for their support to the RVIPF over the last 18 months.

204. The CoP gave a comprehensive report to the Standing Finance Committee and highlighted the following:

- Operating Budget for 2019 -\$17,522,993
- Proposed draft Capital Acquisition - \$3,300,000

RVIPF Performance for 2018

- 9% reduction in overall crime compared to 2017;
- 8% reduction recorded in 2016;
- 110 less victims of crime;
- Total crime 1,103;
- 6 homicides involving illegal firearms;
- 2 fatal road accidents (1 involving scooter, the other a works truck);

- 34 firearm related offences; compared to 48 in 2017, and 70 in 2016;
- 6 homicides (4 persons have been charged with 2 homicides);
- currently has a detection rate of 52% for homicides;
- Seized 10 illegal firearms; compared to 18 in 2017;
- 29% decrease in firearms.

RVIPF Training and Recruitment 2018

- The enhanced draft budget is \$183,633;
- Recruited 17 Regular Officers and 3 Auxiliary Officers;
- 40% of new recruits were BVI Islanders or persons living locally

205. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities inquired about the effectiveness of community policing and asked how many communities are being patrolled in.

206. The CoP responded that there is no community police unit at the moment. It was collapsed in the aftermath of the hurricane to focus on other greater needs. The aim is to have four (4) community officers per district so there will be 34 officers over the nine (9) districts.

207. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired about the resources to restore the CCTV capabilities and asked how effective CCTV been in helping the RVIPF to detect crime.

208. The CoP responded that CCTV is a critical crime-fighting tool for the RVIPF and he could list many occasions in the past where the cameras were used to convict persons of serious crimes. The CoP added that the RVIPF is rebuilding

their CCTV capabilities through a project that is funded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) but admitted that the process had been far too slow.

209. There were ongoing discussions regarding obtaining the CCTV cameras and the process and procedures that are in place with the CDB in order to obtain the moneys to purchase the equipment.

210. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

215. A question was posed as to the salary range of the Permanent Secretary. The Ag.PSPO responded that the post is in Grade 19 – salary range from \$78,043 - \$107,071.
216. The Member for the Second District thanked the staff of the Premier's Office for being steadfast in their duties and for helping the Cane Garden Bay Community as well as the Second District Community for the revitalisation of the tourism product. He noted that there was a balance remaining and he was hopeful that the work that was started in 2018 would be completed.
217. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired about the staffing loss in the Premier's Office. The Ag.PSPO responded that the Premier's Office has a few vacancies and the recruitment process to fill the vacant positions had begun.
218. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Standing Finance Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag. PSPO)
Ms. Desiree Smith	Chief Information Officer (CInfO), Department of Information and Public Relations
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

219. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record. The Chairman informed the CInfO that she had six (6) minutes to make a presentation.

220. The CInfO gave a brief presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following requests that have been outstanding for the department:

- Audio Visual and Photography Equipment (mixers, microphones, laptops, printers, rechargeable batteries) - **\$32,723.72**
- Sling Studio Mobile Production Kit and the accessories (live coverage on social media) - **\$3,938.64**
- Canon Copier Printer (Graphic Production Unit) - **\$55,000**
- Adobe Creative Cloud Software - **\$17,573.00**
- Collateral Apple Products - **\$14,502.00**
- **Grand Total \$123,737.36**

221. A question was posed regarding the out-dated equipment being used for Christmas recordings. The CInfO responded that last year the department received two photo cameras and two video cameras that have been very

necessary to ensure that the quality of their productions of the Christmas recordings among other things have been improved.

222. The Member for the Second District indicated that he is 100% in support of the department's request to keep the Government on the cutting edge. He is also of the view that a proper facility needs to be identified so that the department can function at its optimum. The Member also commended the CInfO and her team for their hard work.
223. A question was raised regarding more information being distributed to the public on the role and functions of Government departments as well as information being easily accessible to the public. The CInfO stated that it is necessary to create a comprehensive campaign across Ministries relative to the departments that would help to disseminate information to the wider public.
224. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District commented that the Premier's Office did a lot of work in terms of the new portal bvi.gov.vg, where forms and the process to fill those forms are on the site and it was just a matter of taking it to the next level.
225. A concern was raised with regards to the difficulty in navigating the website to obtain information and forms and that the site needed to be more user friendly.
226. The Ag.PSPO stated that Members would be aware that the Premier's Office launched the e-government strategy with the pilot for the labour and immigration system. She noted that the wider programme under the e-government strategy is to bring greater efficiency to the services and make information more readily accessible to the general public, which would include accessing the forms and helping persons to navigate through the various processes.

227. Concerns were also raised regarding receiving timely and accurate dissemination of information.
228. A question was posed regarding the number of staff assigned to the Premier's Office. The CInfo responded that each Ministry has one Information Officer and the support of the department.
229. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Capt. Anantharaman Balasubramanian Registry	Acting Director, Virgin Islands Shipping (Ag.DVISR)
Ms. Barbara Smith	Senior Administrative Officer, Virgin Islands Shipping Registry (SAOVISR)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

230. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

231. The Ag.DVISR made a presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following:

- The Virgin Islands Shipping Registry is the maritime administrator for the Territory;
- Vested with authority to administer and enforce the international law such as:
 - Safety of life at sea;
 - Marine pollution;
 - Low line convention;
 - Maritime Labour Convention

Noticeable work of the VISR:

- Survey and certification of domestic and international passenger ferries; and
- Issuance of coastal craft licences and boat master's licences.

Staffing

- Requested an additional staff of one Surveyor;
- Requested a new post in grade 12 – Accident Investigation officer;
- There are additional positions that would need to be filled before September 2019; and
- Hiring of a Consultant to draft new legislation - \$50,000

Office Accommodation

- Cleaning of office files - \$30,000;
- Relocating to 3rd floor of the RG Hodge Plaza; and
- New furniture and office equipment - \$110,000

Vehicle

- Requires a new vehicle - \$32,000

232. The Member for the Sixth District inquired about the amount of moneys outstanding which the Ag.DVISR estimated that approximately \$1.5 million is outstanding. Due to hurricane Irma, the office fell behind in collection. To date the VISR has collected approximately \$80,000.

233. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mr. Raymond Phillips	Director, Central Statistics Office (DCSO)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

234. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

235. The DCSO made a brief presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following:

Challenges:

- Requires a proper Data Collection System (present system is a manual system); and
- Statistics Act is outdated (implemented in 2005)

236. The DCSO stated that the next Census will be in 2020 and the information will be collected using tablets instead of paper to collect the data. He added that additional training and equipment will be required.

237. The DCSO reported that the office was presently out in the field conducting a standard of living survey, but due to the difficulty in obtaining the necessary information, he was of the view that the office would not meet the target of 1000 surveys by June, 2019.

238. The DCSO spoke at length of the difficulties in obtaining information from persons in the Community when conducting surveys.

239. The Member for the Third District shared his dissatisfaction with the results that he is receiving from the Statistics Department and noted the concerns shared by the DCSO. He opined that something had to be done, as statistics is vital for any Government in planning.
240. The Member for the Third District inquired about the staff complement to which the DCSO replied approximately 22 persons.
241. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member asked if there were any plans in place for public relations campaigns that will get people excited about giving the information, in addition to finding creative ways to make the public understand the importance of giving the information.
242. The DCSO stated that before every survey or any data collection activity is done, the office does publicity campaigns. The DCSO reported that he would utilise all form of communications (radio and TV) so it was not a matter of persons not being aware. The DCSO concluded by stating that he would welcome any suggestions or ideas that would get the message out there that collecting this data is of the utmost importance.
243. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired whether the DCSO had access to NHI data.
244. The DCSO stated that he had a meeting with the Director of the Social Security Board, but to date, he had not been given access to the data but it was requested.
245. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mr. Gregory Adams	Chief Planner, Town and Country Planning Department (CP)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

246. The Chairman welcomed persons to the Standing Finance Committee and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

247. The CP requested the following items:

- Computer Equipment and other hardware - \$40,000
- Requested three (3) additional vehicles

248. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated that at the Central Administration Complex there were about six (6) vehicles that could be rented on a daily basis and inquired if those vehicles could work for the CP.

249. The CP responded no and stated that due to the protocols in place for the use of the vehicles, if the department is to be responsive when contractors require site inspections, the office would be required to have dedicated vehicles to use.

250. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member inquired whether there were zoning law and if the CP recommended zoning laws.

251. The CP stated that the BVI does not have zoning laws and he is in support of zoning laws. He reported that the department is in the final stages of the national physical development plan that they have been working on for the last two years. The first step in zoning is having a land use vision and through the plan, the department now has a land use vision. If the Government chooses to enforce the land use vision, the department can create certain zoning techniques.

252. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2226

**TRADE, INVESTMENT, PROMOTION AND CONSUMER
AFFAIRS**

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mrs. Karia Christopher	Director, Trade, Investment Promotions and Consumer Affairs
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer (FPOPO)

253. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

254. The Director made a request for a vehicle for the department for \$23,995 (2019 Hyundai Tucson from TAG)

255. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired if there was an on-going programme to give assistance to Small Businesses.

256. The Director responded that there was not an on-going programme to her knowledge. She stated that in the previous administration, there were two specific programmes for generators and grants for (\$500,000) which were distributed in three increments. The Director added that the funds have been exhausted and there were several applications pending.

257. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports inquired if there were persons still making requests.

258. The Director responded in the affirmative.

259. The Junior Minister of Tourism and Territorial Member asked what the criteria were for granting non-belongers trade licences.

260. The Director responded that there is an extensive criteria for non-belonger trade licences. She stated that there were different categories but noted that a non-belonger is required to provide the following documents:

- Police Report (no older than 6 months);
- 2 references
- Personal reference
- Bank reference
- Cover letter
- Current passport from their home country
- Passport picture

261. The Director continued that the Department of Trade does the assessment internally; however, the department does not make a decision on the non-belonger trade licences without the endorsement of the Premier or the current Junior Minister for Trade.

262. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired whether the Director kept a database of the number and locations of trade licences as he had observed that there were a number of persons located in the same area with similar businesses.

263. The Director responded that there was an unwritten rule where any person who is a BVIlander or Belonger should be able to get a trade licence in whatever field that they deem necessary. She added that in most cases the persons are BVIlanders and the department has been concerned about the number of trade licenses that have been approved for (car rentals, beauty salons etc), however,

until the Premier of the day says otherwise the department cannot make a decision on its own.

264. The Junior Minister for Trade and Territorial Member inquired what was done for businesses that were operating without licences.
265. The Director responded that a company or building that was operating without a licence would be issued a cease and desist letter. She added that practice had become a very dangerous procedure in the last few years and the department have now maintained a good relationship with the RVIPF who would accompany them to issue the order. She noted that the issue faced is the follow up and indicated that they did not have the manpower as there was only one Trade Inspector for the entire BVI. They now ask the Police to follow up on the department's behalf.
266. The Junior Minister for Trade and Territorial Member inquired how does that factor in to potentially consumer protection coming into play in terms of inspection.
267. The Director responded that it factors in a lot; however, because the laws are not yet in place, it still gives those many barriers that they are still not able to control.
268. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member recalled the procedure that is done when a person is operating without a trade licence and inquired why the department did not shut down the business.

269. The Director stated that cease and desist is the legal term and the department could not revoke something that does not exist. Since the licence is not a registered licence, the department could only issue a cease and desist order.

270. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Ms. Elise Donovan	Chief Executive Officer, BVI Finance Ltd. (CEO)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

271. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

272. The CEO gave a brief presentation to the Committee and highlighted the following:

Vision of BVI Finance

- Innovative;
- Efficient;
- Respected international marketing;
- Promotion organisation.

Three (3) key objectives

- Secure the integrity and credibility of the BVI within all relevant international institutions and commercial organisations;
- Reinvigorating its reputation as a well-regarded reputable finance and business centre of substance which provides a high quality of client

service across the globe across a range of business and financial services;

- Deepen local stakeholder understanding of the BVI Business and Financial Services Sector.

Looking Ahead

- Mitigate the threats that are coming from the UK, EU and other international bodies;
- Maximise the evidence based approach through robust thought leadership initiatives especially aligning with key markets development in Asia, Latin America and Africa;
- Develop and promote new products and diversification of business and financial services proposition;
- Grow value added services which demonstrates economic substance;
- Deepening the understanding of the business and financial services sector in the BVI as a jurisdiction itself.

273. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member commended the team for the work they have been doing. He inquired if there had been any reports of adverse effects on the registration of businesses.

274. The CEO responded that over the last two years the financial services industry has had some of the best growth in the last two decades particular in the last decade. The industry has seen as much as a 20% growth. Unfortunately, because of the uncertainty concerning economic substance and the whole notion about public registries has created a sort of uncertainty in the market where people are taking a wait and see approach. Some of our biggest service providers (Vistra is the largest service provider) claim that they represent about

20% or more of the incorporations in the BVI and for the 1st quarter of 2019 they reported a 35% drop.

275. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked what is economic substance as it relates to having a presence in the BVI.

276. The CEO responded that the European Union has the requirement for the BVI to demonstrate substance in the most basic term. It is to demonstrate we have premises, economic activity and people; so generally, we have to demonstrate that we have core income generating activities in the jurisdiction to be defined as tax resident in the BVI. It is either you declare tax residency elsewhere or if you were declaring tax residency in the BVI, then you would have to demonstrate substance.

277. The CEO further stated that the QC who drafted the legislation Michael Kernis and Steve Johnson the advisor, will be visiting the BVI and will be presenting the code which is essentially the guidance or interpretation of the legislation (Economic Substance Companies and Limited Partnerships Act 2018), to give people a better understanding of what substance means and what is required. She added that an education forum would be held at the College on 24th April, 2019.

278. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired whether the CEO partners with the Tourist Board when marketing and promotion the BVI.

279. The CEO responded that the department had collaborated with the Tourist Board and the Shipping Registry with activities such as the boat shows that were held in Monaco and Florida and they plan to continue such partnerships.

280. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District commended the CEO and her team for the work they have done within the Financial Services Industry.

281. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Ms. Najan Christopher	Acting Director, International Affairs Secretariat (Ag.DIAS)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

282. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

283. The Ag.DIAS stated that she did not have a presentation and was open to questions from the Members.

284. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked what does she foresee as her greatest goals with regards to regional affairs.

285. The Ag.DIAS responded that one of the goals that the department has for the Territory is to join cariforum. They recently joined the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) but are taking steps to enhance and deepen their relationship with the region. There are many things about the Territory that the region does not appreciate and we have not been able to do as good a job of making sure that our other counterparts know and learn more about the situation. Certainly, the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria as well as Brexit and other things that are taken place now will cause us to deepen that relationship to the point where we enhance the appreciation for the Territory, as well as to provide opportunities for us to have development assistance in areas where we can cooperate with the region.

286. The Ag.DIAS further stressed that Brexit is quite significant for the BVI because the European Union is one of the organisations, which does not specifically exclude the Territory from participating in projects and programmes. With the United Kingdom potentially leaving the European Union, we would no longer be in a position to benefit as much as we currently do. We want to join cariforum, which would keep us within the European family. Europe has a policy where they are specifically calling on the countries in the region to cooperate and collaborate with the Overseas Territories, the Dutch, the French, the outer most regions of France and all the Countries and Territories in the region in particular.
287. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the Brexit Committee in the Premier's Office
288. The Ag.DIAS stated that the Brexit Committee last convened a meeting in January, 2019. The Committee is still active but in terms of monitoring where things are with Brexit, the Committee is paying attention to the discussions. There is a limitation on what the Committee is able to carry forward in terms of the work because there is so much uncertainty, the Committee did not know whether the BVI would be a part of the European Union as some of the Members of Parliament are pushing for that.
289. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

BVI PORTS AUTHORITY

Present:

Mr. Lenius Lendor	Managing Director, BVI Ports Authority (MD)
Mr. Japheth Stevens	Deputy Chief Finance Officer, BVI Ports Authority

290. The Chairman welcomed everyone to Standing Finance and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

291. The Managing Director of BVI Ports Authority (MD) stated that the BVI Ports Authority was in the rebuilding phase after the devastation caused by the 2017 hurricanes. He stated that there were a number of objectives set for this year and one being the reopening of the West End Ferry Terminal Temporary Facility. The MD stated the BVI Ports Authority was working towards an International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code compliance inspection. This compliance inspection was mandatory and was scheduled for November 2019. In preparation for the compliance inspection the Ports Authority had undertaken a number of projects to ensure that all ports facilities were in compliance so that the Authority could achieve full ISPS compliance.

292. The MD informed the Committee that for the first time in history of the Authority they would own and operate their own cargo/container handling equipment. He said currently he was working on the revision of the Regulations and Legislations to have them up to international standards. He stated that the existing facility needed to be expanded so that the layout would be more efficient to cater to future growth and increase demand of the port services. He said the lands located east of the Ports Authority that the Ports had vested interest in, the adjoining lands occupied by Fisheries and land further east of that.

293. The Premier and Minister of Finance inquired from the MD what he saw that we were able to accomplish from the Sea Trade trip.
294. The MD stated that the main accomplishment from the Sea Trade Trip was the agreement and principal from Norwegian cruise line who has agreed to look at making some of their berths available under their agreement that they rightly supposed to have since they will no longer be using them to their own acknowledgement. He stated that Norwegian would be respond back to BVI with the view to clarify the days they will make available with intention of BVI negotiating with other cruise lines to come to the BVI shores. However Norwegian will still be paying the head taxes whether they come or not as per their agreement. He said \$20 million would still benefit the economy and alternative cruise lines was been sorted to come to the BVI shores.
295. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District thanked the Premier for doing the peoples work. He asked the MD when did he join the BVI Ports Authority and when did he learn of the situation with Norwegian cruise lines.
296. The MD stated that he joined the Ports September 2018 and he learnt of the situation with Norwegian right after taking up the post. He said that he was familiarizing his-self on the berthing agreements and was brief by the Deputy Director and other senior officers at the Ports.
297. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District asked the MD if he tried to resolve this situation before going on the Sea Trade Trip this year.

298. The MD stated that discussion was had with Norwegian prior to the trip with the anticipation while at Sea Trade they would meet face to face and have further discussions.
299. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration stated that Gun Creek was a very busy area specially now with all the constructions been done on the neighboring islands. He said that the bathrooms were destroyed during the hurricanes and a number of volunteers got together and repaired them. Now that the bathrooms were fully restored the Minister inquired as to how soon Ports Authority can get a cleaner in place so that the keys can be turn over to Ports Authority.
300. The MD stated that the Ports Authority was working on getting a cleaner. He stated a Mr. Alec George had agreed to clean the bathrooms free of charge once Ports Authority provided all the toiletries and cleaning supplies. He stated that they were advised to have an agreement drafted so that it would be signed. The agreement is being worked on for Mr. George's signature.
301. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the panel for their appearance and presentation. He stated that this was a transitional Budget as there are challenges that the Government was facing and asked that the department be patient.

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Alva McCall	Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Maria Smith-Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)
Mr. Ronald Emmanuel	Budget Coordinator, Ministry of Finance (BC)
Ms. Tiffany Todman	Budget Analyst, Ministry of Finance (BA)
Ms. Tuneisha Johnson	Budget Officer I, Ministry of Finance (BO)

302. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

303. The Chairman asked if there was a presentation any member of the panel would like to make.

304. The FS indicated that he did not have a presentation and noted that he would like to outline the accomplishments of the Ministry of Finance for 2018 as well as the objectives for 2019.

305. In 2018, the FS indicated that the MOF was able to:

- Return to the CAC in March 2018 after the 2017 Hurricanes
- Access a \$50 million-dollar policy - based loan from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to assist with expenses
- Obtain 132 Cabinet Decisions, 75% of which were papers submitted directly from the MOF.

- Provide input on 40 pieces of legislation, 26 of which were statutory instruments/regulations and 14 of which were bills
- Join the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) in 2018 to obtain insurance coverage for the Government of the Virgin Islands in the event of a disaster.
- Establish a Policy Unit to assist the FS with preparing comments for papers submitted to the Ministry for revision.
- Implement Phases 1 - 3 of the AMLCFT which is an assessment of Government Departments based on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) criteria.
- Sign an MOU between the MOF and the Recovery and Development Agency (RDA) to govern the relationship between both agencies.
- Gain approval to develop a new Procurement Act which has been drafted and submitted to Cabinet for approval.
- Maintain a regional rating of AA- from the Caribbean Information and Credit Rating Services Ltd. (CARICRIS)
- Finalize and submit the audited Financial Accounts for the years 2012 to 2015. The 2016 Financial Accounts Audit was received by the FS and is being reviewed for onward submission to Cabinet.
- Process and pay over \$6.3 million in compensations

306. The FS noted that in 2019, the MOF plans to:

- Obtain a sovereign rating for the Government of the Virgin Islands from international rating agencies.
- Establish and train a Standing Negotiation Team for projects over \$50,000.00.
- Strengthen the operations of the Treasury Department which would include the migration to the International Public Sector Accounting

Standards (IPSAS). As well as move towards having consolidated accounts for the statutory boards and state-owned agencies.

- Develop an Asset Management Framework for all Government assets.
- Collect data on revenue arrears from all revenue generating departments

307. The Chairman opened the floor for questioning by the Members of the Committee.

308. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the core functions of the MOF with regards to funding and how it is allocated to Ministries.

309. The FS stated that the MOF's main function is to develop, implement and evaluate the annual budget estimates for the Government. He noted that there are certain rules/procedures that ministries and departments would have to follow with regards to the funding for their budgets.

310. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District referred to funds allocated in the budget to pay outstanding bills and inquired about reallocation of those funds to priority areas.

311. The FS stated that the Government's priority is to pay any obligations incurred on its behalf and that the funds cannot be reallocated for any other purpose.

312. The Member for the Second District commended the FS and his team for the work that they have done for the Government. He referred to the MOF's plan to obtain a sovereign rating and inquired about the goal behind that initiative.

313. The FS explained that to finance the BVI's recovery, funds would have to be borrowed. He stated that by obtaining a sovereign rating, the BVI could receive better terms or rates when borrowing.
314. The Member for the Second District inquired about what course of action is available for departments/ministries that have not submitted reports on revenue arrears.
315. The FS stated that that there is an option to have Accounting Officers report on revenue to be collected for their departments. He noted that there is also a provision within the Public Finance Management Act to surcharge persons where there is evidence of misconduct with regards to the collection of revenue.
316. The Member for the Second District pledged his support to the FS with regards to doing what needs to be done to collect outstanding revenue and cut down outstanding debt.
317. The FS thanked the Honourable Member for his pledge of support.
318. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District noted that he shares the concerns of the Member for the Second District with regards to revenue collection. He also commended the FS and his team for bringing the Territory back from where it was in the aftermath of the 2017 hurricanes.
319. The FS thanked the Honourable Member for his kind words.
320. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about who the FS would blame for the non-collection/loss of funds.

321. The FS clarified his earlier statement and explained that with the implementation of a Standing Negotiation Team, the Government would be able to potentially save millions of dollars. He stated that the MOF is dedicated to maintaining certain ratios with regards to the Protocols for Effective Financial Management.
322. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member noted that the nation was not pleased with the handling of the country's finances. He referred to the \$6.3 million that has been paid out in compensations and asked if that was the total amount that the Government would be exposed to for payment.
323. The FS indicated that the \$6.3 million referred to the compensations paid out for 2018.
324. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the payments for possible compensation were completed.
325. The FS indicated that there is an undefined number of potential liabilities that exist and noted that he does not think that the MOF will ever be done with compensation payments.
326. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about whether the MOF has any idea of the Government's level of exposure with regards to compensation payments.
327. The FS stated that he could not give a definitive answer to the Honourable Member's question.

328. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member thanked the FS and noted that the Committee looks forward to the completion of the 2017 and 2018 audited financial accounts.

329. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2330**CUSTOMS****Present:**

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Mr. Leslie Lettsome	Acting Commissioner, HM Customs (AgCOC)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)
Ms. Marieta Isles	Senior Administrative Officer, HM Customs (SAOHMC)
Mr. Shawn Netwon	Acting Finance Officer, HM Customs (AgFOHMC)
Ms. Tashima Martin	Senior Officer for the Internal Audit Unit of HM Customs

330. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

331. The Chairman asked if there was a presentation by any member of the panel would like to make.

332. The AgCOC indicated that there was a presentation to be made and began by expressing his gratitude for being afforded the opportunity to become the Acting Commissioner of Customs.

333. In his presentation, the AgCOC noted that:

- In 2018, the Department was able to bypass its target of \$27 million for revenue collection by earning over \$43 million. A total of \$1.7 million of the total revenue collected came from the environmental levy that was recently implemented

- There are some major staffing concerns as the Department lost several persons after the 2017 hurricanes for economical and personal reasons. He also noted that some persons are to retire and there are others who are expected to leave the Department for various reasons.
- There was an agreement in 2007 for the raising of salaries for the staff of the Department. However, that agreement was never materialized and it remains a concern.
- Most of their marine assets were lost in 2017 due to the hurricanes. The Department received a new boat in 2018 and recently received another vessel which had been sent for refurbishing. Two additional boats are expected to be received by year end, one of which belongs to HM Customs and the other belongs to the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force.
- In December 2018, two K9 officers were retired and two new K9s were received in February 2019.
- The Cyril B. Romney Tortola Pier Park continues to be a challenge as it is a HM Customs regulated area and there are no facilities for officers to operate from.
- The Customs Automated Processing System (CAPS) has been working very well for the Department in terms of their ability to collect data. He stated that they have also been using the Cognos Reporting System to analyze data. He noted that this system can be interfaced with the Border Management Tool which soon be implemented by the Immigration Department.

- The Department will be implementing additional features for the CAPS system such as the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS), Advance Cargo Information System (ACIS) and the Passenger Name Recorder (PNR).

334. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the purpose of the environmental levy collected by the Department.

335. The AgCOC stated that funds collected for the environmental levy are collected by the Department and deposited into the Consolidated Fund.

336. The FS asked that the DFS weigh in on the question asked by the Honourable Member.

337. The DFS indicated that the Act (Environmental Protection and Tourism Improvement Fund Act, 2017) only specifies which agencies will benefit from the environmental levy. She stated that regulations have been recently developed to determine how the funds should be spent. She explained that:

- 40% of the funds collected will go towards the BVI Tourist Board for marketing purposes
- 40% of the funds collected will go towards the Climate Change Trust Fund and;
- 20% of the funds collected will go towards the National Parks Trust

338. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member asked if the moneys collected were just sitting in an account, waiting to be distributed.

339. The DFS stated that the funds are deposited into a special account. She explained that once the Regulations have been approved by Cabinet, the funds will be distributed and that it should also outline the way in which the agencies

should request funds as well as mechanisms for reporting to ensure accountability.

340. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about what is being done to facilitate the easier collection of luggage/cargo from ferries at the Spanish Town/St. Thomas Bay Jetty in Virgin Gorda.
341. The AgCOC indicated that there are no special plans for the St. Thomas Bay Jetty. He further stated that at both the Road Town Jetty and cargo area at the T.B International Airport, baggage scanners have been placed in order to better monitor the cargo/luggage coming into the Territory.
342. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member indicated that the AgCOC did not understand her question and provided an example to illustrate her point.
343. The AgCOC indicated that the ferry operators hold responsibility for the handling of baggage and noted that the BVI Ports Authority holds responsibility for the handling of cargo.
344. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member stated that they have been informed on numerous occasions that that process was dictated to the HM Customs Department. She noted that at some point in the future, they would like to have the issue looked at and rectified.
345. The AgCOC reiterated his previous statement regarding the BVIPAs responsibility for the handling of baggage and cargo.
346. The Chairman indicated that the BVIPA has been summoned to appear before the Committee.

347. The Member for the Third District inquired about why the Department is concerned about the monitoring of cargo at the Cyril B. Romney Tortola Pier Park if it is designated at a duty – free area.
348. The AgCOC stated that the goods at the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park are under a Customs bond and noted that unless they are inspected by the Department and certified for export, the goods are not considered duty-free.
349. The Member for the Third District noted that the issues faced by the Department have been ongoing since the establishment of the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park and asked if it mean that they have not been able to execute their duties.
350. The AgCOC stated that they have been able to visit the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park from time to time and noted that there is no stationary presence at that location.
351. The Member for the Third District inquired about why the Department would need to be at the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park on a permanent basis.
352. The AgCOC stated that they are unable to fully or properly execute their duties due to the lack of a facility for officers to operate from.
353. The Member for the Third District asked if the Department has the authority to shut down the operations of the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park since they are unable to fully carry out their duties.
354. The AgCOC stated that in certain cases they were able to partially shut down operations.
355. The Member for the Third District inquired about what would be needed for HM Customs to be able to carry out the duties at the Romney B. Pier Park.

356. The AgCOC stated that the Department would need to have a facility at the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park for their operations.
357. The Member for the Third District inquired about the Ministry holding responsibility for the Cyril B. Romney Pier Park.
358. It was noted that responsibility for the Romney B. Romney Pier Park was recently assigned to the MOF and the Member for the Third District asked if the FS could promise that the issue will be rectified.
359. The FS indicated that this is his first time hearing of the issue and noted that he would do his best to ensure that it is rectified.
360. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about which agency holds responsibility for all of the Ports in the Territory.
361. The AgCOC indicated that the BVIPA is responsible for all Ports of entry.
362. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that it is important for the BVIPA to appear before the Committee as they played an important role. He asked if they had ever appeared before the Committee.
363. It was noted that the BVIPA has never appeared before the Committee as only the statutory bodies that receive a subvention from the Government of the Virgin Islands are required to attend. It was also noted that the BVIPA can be invited to appear before the Committee upon request.
364. The Chairman stated that the BVIPA has been summoned to appear before the Committee.

365. The Member for the Second District commended the AgCOC for the work done by the Department and inquired about what can be done to ensure that there are at least two Customs Officers available on Jost Van Dyke to process passengers who visit the island.
366. The AgCOC stated that they can look at the schedules for the ferry operators and try to arrange for more Officers to be on JVD during peak operating times.
367. The Member for the Second District inquired about whether the ferry dock in Jost Van Dyke is designated as a port of entry.
368. The AgCOC indicated that it was.
369. The Member for the Second District inquired about why JVD residents returning from travel to St. Thomas, USVI are forced to check in at the West End before continuing on to JVD.
370. The AgCOC stated that they have been a series of consultations with the BVIPA and the Immigration Department with regards to the facility on JVD because it is not adequate for regular operations. He noted that at the last meeting, it was determined that the BVIPA would rebuild the facility on JVD as its foundation is still stable.
371. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member thanked the AgCOC for the work that the Department has done despite their operational issues. He also thanked the Department for surpassing their revenue target for 2018.
372. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2331**INLAND REVENUE****Present:**

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Mr. Orris Thomas	Deputy Commissioner, Inland Revenue (DCIR)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

373. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

374. The DCIR introduced himself and apologised on behalf of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue for her absence due to a family emergency. He indicated that there was no presentation to be made.

375. The Member for the Second District inquired about the total amount of revenue that is uncollected for the Department.

376. The DCIR indicated that he did not have that information readily available.

377. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about the challenges faced by the Department with regards to revenue collection. He also asked about whether there were any proposed measures to rectify any of those challenges.

378. The DCIR stated that there is a major issue with the system used by the Department. He explained that it was outdated, corrupt, unstable and could crash at any time. He noted that a new system is needed.

379. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about how much a new system would cost.
380. The DCIR stated that the new system would cost approximately \$3 – \$5 million dollars.
381. The Member for the Third District inquired about whether the Department had received the support of their Minister for the purchase of this new system.
382. The Member for the Third District stated that he believes that the Inland Revenue Department should not have to appear before the Committee to ask for anything because the Minister with responsibility for the Department is the Minister of Finance.
383. The Member for the Third District inquired about why employers were required to fill out monthly declarations for their employees while still having to provide the same information at the end of the year.
384. The DCIR stated that the forms that are filled out annually serve as a means of reconciliation for the monthly submissions.
385. The Member for the Third District stated that the procedure is a nuisance to businesses and asked if it could be eliminated.
386. The DCIR noted that for that process to be eliminated, changes would have to be made to the legislation.

387. The Member for the Third District noted that there is an abundance of archaic legislation with the Government of the Virgin Islands that is counterproductive to modern day business and operations. He stated that it is the responsibility of the ministries and departments to bring forth the changes to these legislations so that the can be updated.
388. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired about any other challenges faced by the Department.
389. The DCIR stated that they are facing issues with office accommodation as they are temporarily located in the CAC in the space belonging to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture. He also stated that they are being faced with issues of staffing with regards to four vacancies that need to be filled as well as staff members who are at the top of their salary scale and are unable to receive additional increments.
390. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member noted that the revenue collected by the Department represents about 14% of the overall income for the Territory. He stated that the requests of high revenue earning departments, such as Inland Revenue and HM Customs, should be accommodated so that they could have all the resources needed to operate fully and comfortably.
391. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2332

INTERNAL AUDIT

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Dorea Corea	Director, Internal Audit Department (DIA)
Mr. Simba Todman	Deputy Director, Internal Audit Department (DDIA)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

392. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

393. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there was a presentation to be made.

394. The DIA gave a comprehensive overview and history of the Internal Audit Department and its functions.

- Additional funding is needed for the reconstitution of the Internal Audit Advisory Committee which will also allow for a stipend to be paid to members of the Committee.
- After the 2017 hurricanes, some members of staff were relocated to other departments.
- Staff members are encouraged to obtain additional certifications; however, this is not always successful as there is a lack of financial compensation and commitment.
- Internal quality assessments were completed for the Department in February 2016 and as recent as March 2019. In both instances, the

Department received a rating of partial conformance to the standards required.

- The Department has completed audits of the following:
 - i. The BVI Government Pensions and Gratuities Programme
 - ii. Department of Agriculture operations
 - iii. The Department of Trade and Investment Promotions
 - iv. NDB Loan Guarantee Programme
 - v. The Housing Recovery and Assistance Programme
 - vi. BVI Post Office operations (eZone)
 - vii. The ESHS private bank accounts and fundraisers
 - viii. BVI Government Inventory and Asset Registers – ongoing
- Challenges faced by the Department include:
 - i. Overall Productivity with regards to the cooperation of Ministries and Departments
 - ii. Staff capacity
 - iii. Operational compliance to standards
 - iv. Non-functional Internal Audit Advisory Committee

395. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District asked if the Department conducts any work on any of the Sister Islands.

396. The DIA indicated that the Sister Islands are included in all of their audit activities.

397. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities asked if departments were usually receptive of the work that they do.

398. The DIA stated Ministries/Departments are not receptive to their presence.
399. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member asked if there was a policy in place for the use of Government vehicles.
400. The DIA stated that in the past, a draft Vehicle Usage Policy was developed and submitted to the Ministries for comments. However, no feedback has been received to date. She further stated that they are currently conducting an audit of government assets which will be incorporated.
401. The FS stated that based on the Appropriation Act that is passed every year, the Accounting Officers (Heads of Departments), are entrusted with the care and deployment of Government assets under their responsibility.
402. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked if the Department had considered the use of eGovernment to determine how much it might improve the efficiency of departments and the saving of resources.
403. The DIA indicated that they had not considered any eGovernment initiatives.
404. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that he believes that the use of eGovernment should be given consideration.
405. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District commended the Department for the work that they do as their duties are essential for Government operations.

406. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about the Internal Audit Advisory Committee and its functions.
407. The DIA explained that the Internal Audit Advisory Committee is responsible for overseeing the operations of the Department and make recommendations for the development of their function.
408. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the Department could function without the Advisory Committee.
409. The DIA indicated that they could not function effectively.
410. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member noted that it is critical to support the functions and needs of the Department. He asked if the lack of the Advisory Committee affected their ability to submit reports to other departments who depend on them.
411. The DIA stated that the lack of an Advisory Committee directly impacts their work as the Committee serves to ensure that the work they produce is accurate, objective and efficient.
412. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member thanked the DIA for her submissions and for her responses provided to questions asked by the Committee.
413. The FS indicated that a Cabinet Paper has been drafted to re-establish the Internal Audit Advisory Committee.
414. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)

Ms. Pascha Stoutt Postmaster General, Post Office (PG)

Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

415. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

416. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there was a presentation to be made.

417. In her presentation, the PG stated that:

- The BVI Post had received damages to all of its locations due to the 2017 hurricanes, including the letter boxes.
- All staff members from various parts of the island are now located at the Road Town office. All mail is collected, sorted and distributed to constituents at this central location as well.
- The working conditions at the Road Town office are inappropriate.
- A Cabinet paper has been drafted and vetted with regards to the procurement of new letterboxes as well as the waiving of the tender process.
- There is potential for a proposal regarding self-declared rates put forward by the USA to cause major issues for the BVI Post. An example was

provided where the BVI would have to pay the US 80% of how much it would cost to deliver a packet of mail on their behalf. Similarly, the US would have to pay the BVI 80% of its cost to deliver a packet. The issue is that the BVI's postal rates are much lower than the US and other countries. Should the proposal be approved and implemented, it would mean a major loss of revenue/expenditure for the Department.

- A Cost Accountant is needed to ensure that the costs incurred by the BVI Post to deliver and process mail are adequately covered.
- With regards to their 2018 budget, approximately 64% went towards Personal Emoluments, 23% went towards Contractual Agreements and 13% went towards operational expenses. It was noted that the current layout of the budget is not feasible.

418. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration referred to the PG's presentation where it states that the letterboxes for North Sound, the Valley and Anegada will be installed in 2021. He inquired about whether there were any letterboxes at those locations or whether they were upgrades.

419. The PG stated that the letterboxes were being installed in three phases. She further stated that the proposal took into consideration the amount of revenue collected for each location as well as the level of damages received in the 2017 hurricanes.

420. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration inquired about the revenue collected from the sale of Apostilles/Stamps.

421. The PG provided clarification on the difference between Apostilles and regular postal stamps.

422. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member asked if the letter boxes used by the BVI Post had been boarded.
423. The PG indicated that they were working with the PSSU with regards to procuring new and improved letter boxes.
424. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member referred to the construction project currently being undertaken at the letterbox location in Road Town next to Scotia Bank (BVI) Ltd. She noted that the way the area was boarded up poses some safety concerns as pedestrians are forced to walk out into traffic. She asked the PG about who was responsible for boarding up the area in such a way.
425. The Member for the Third District inquired about the letter boxes at Sea Cows Bay and the Old Post Office locations.
426. The PG explained that the letterboxes for Sea Cows Bay will be installed in Phase Two of the project. She stated that the Old Post Office location is not safe for persons to enter as there are a number of structural and mold issues. She also stated that the letter boxes at that location are outdated and that the keys needed to open them are no longer being manufactured.
427. The Member for the Third District inquired about why there was a delay in the restoration of the letter boxes.
428. The PG stated that the Department was faced with issues of funding and the resources needed to maintain the boxes.
429. The FS stated that a total of \$377,000.00 has been allocated in the Department's 2019 Budget with regards to the purchasing/maintenance of the letter boxes. He

further stated that \$119,000.00 had been allocated in the 2018 Budget for the same purpose.

430. The Member for the Second District thanked the PG for her frank and honest presentation and responses to questions asked by the Committee.

431. The Minister for Health & Social Development and Territorial Member also thanked the PG for her honesty and stressed the importance of ensuring that the revenue earning departments of Government are made to be comfortable.

432. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2334
HEAD 4100

TREASURY DEPARTMENT
PENSIONS & GRATUITIES

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Mrs. Tamara Taylor	Financial Accountant, Treasury Department (FATD)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

433. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

434. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that they would like to highlight three major concerns of the Department:

- The FATD stated that the Department was concerned about the poor office accommodations, especially their vulnerability to members of the public who become irate and threaten members of staff.
- She indicated that the funds allocated for printing in the 2019 Budget are insufficient as they are now required to print tickets for the environmental levy which increases their expenses significantly.
- She noted that the Department is short-staffed and that additional positions are needed.

435. The Chairman noted that the FATD is also slated to report on **Head 4100 – Pensions and Gratuities** and asked if she would like to present on this matter.

436. The FATD responded in the affirmative. She stated that as of December 2018, there were 861 pensioners and that as of March 2019 there were 869. She also

stated that monthly, the Department pays out approximately \$1.1 million in pensions.

437. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the lack of credit card machines at Government Department on Virgin Gorda where this is a shortage of cash available. She also inquired about the minimum spending limit for credit card machines imposed by some Departments.

438. The FATD stated that with regards to the minimum spending limit, the bank charges are at such an amount that the Department hardly benefits from transactions made. She said that if a credit card payment needs to be made and does not meet the minimum spending limit, she does not see why a request could not be made to the Treasury for such a transaction to be approved.

439. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member stated that she had asked the Immigration Department about their lack of a credit card machine and noted that she was told that they had been asking for one for years. She said that something needs to be done for better accommodate persons who need to make payments via credit cards.

440. The FATD indicated that she would need to liaise with the Acting Accountant General with regards to the Immigration Department's request for a credit card machine.

441. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities inquired about the availability of inventory with regards to the printing paper for receipts.

442. The FATD stated that the stocks of printing papers are low and noted that they had had to give Departments limited amounts of paper. She said that the

Department recently ordered a shipment of paper and is checking to see if it had arrived in the BVI.

443. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities asked if there was an issue with the ordering of paper and why there was not enough inventory available.
444. The FATD noted that she was unsure of why the receipts were not ordered. She stated that the lack of paper may be due to the fact that the paper is stored in the basement of the CAC where persons are reluctant to go because of the mold. She said that she would have to clarify this matter with the AgAcctGen.
445. The Member for the Third District referred to the SFC Deliberations for 2017 and inquired about the Accountant General's acting position and what is being done to have her confirmed to the post.
446. The FS stated that with regards to the Ag. Accountant General's position, he has had several discussions with her on the matter. He said that there are a host of positions within the Treasury that needs to be filled and there are also issues with staff retention. He noted that the AgAcctGen is need of a Deputy and that until the staffing concerns addressed, he cannot put forward a request the her to be confirmed to the post.
447. The Member for the Third District inquired about the consultant that had been hired to work at the Treasury since 2016 and his role within the Department.
448. The FS stated that one of the functions performed by the consultant was to assist with bringing the Financial Accounts up to date. The FS said that in working with the consultant and AgAcctGen, they have been able to make some appreciable progress with regards to the updating of the Government's accounts.

He indicated that the previous Cabinet had recently approved an extension of the consultant's contract who will now be focusing on producing the accounts in the IPSAS format as well as training Department in how to produce accounts in this format.

449. The Member for the Third District asked if the accounts were being produced in the years before the consultant came on board.

450. The FS stated that he could not comment directly on the matter and noted that when he came on board in 2017 there were seven years of unaudited accounts.

451. The Chairman inquired about who the consultant reports to.

452. The FS indicated that the consultant reports to him on matters concerning policy and that he also reports to the AgAcctGen on matters concerning the day-to-day operations of the Treasury.

453. The Member for the Third District stated that AgAcctGen should not be held responsible for the unaudited accounts and noted the blame is there to be passed on to where it should be placed.

454. The FATD stated that since the consultant's arrival, he has established what the Department never had before which is a Reporting Unit that is responsible for producing the reports. She further stated that lack of audited accounts could be attributed to the lack of staff as the AgAcctGen is forced to do the job of more than one person.

455. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the FATD for appearing

before the Committee and responding to questions asked. He noted the challenges faced by the Department and stated that the Premier and Minister of Finance will carefully consider their requests.

456. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Lucia Donovan	Deputy Director, Department of Information Technology (DDIT)
Ms. Kisheba Sprauve	Senior Administrative Officer, Department of Information Technology (SAODIT)
Mrs. Maria Smith-Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

457. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

458. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there is a presentation to be made.

459. The DDIT informed the Committee that the DIT is unable to attend due to her being on leave. In her presentation, she gave an overview of the Department and its functions and outlined eight objectives for 2019:

- The restoration of the Government's wide area primary and secondary links
- Completion of network connections
- Migration from the JD Edwards System to the Enterprise One System
- Implementation of additional JDE Modules
- Work with the Human Resources Department to implement an Applicant Tracking System.

- Identify, Design and Implement system structures needed to meet objectives for data evidence for decision making and to enable online services. Components needed for this objective are:
 - i. A unique identifier
 - ii. Central registries or databases
 - iii. Implementation of data standards
 - iv. Introduction of common platforms
 - v. Delivery eGovernment services
- Develop IT infrastructure that would be used to facilitate disaster recovery and sustainability.
- Continued deployment IT equipment

460. In summary, the DDIT stated that the Department needs the support of the Committee with regards to:

- Additional funding
- The review of the Cabinet Paper to be presented for the Wide Area Network initiative.
- Better office accommodations for staff
- eGovernment – there is a need to support the separation of forms and fees from the legislation so that departments can have a bit more flexibility
- Encouraging a discussion among ministries with regards to data sharing requirements so that agreements can be established where necessary
- The passing of important pieces of legislation such as: Electronic Transactions, Electronic Evidence, Electronic Filing, Electronic Funds Transfer etc.
- Supporting the roll-out of the Unique Identifier system to the public
- Supporting the continued lobbying for more affordable internet bandwidth for the Government.

461. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that the Committee should look at what could be done to support DoIT with whatever they as they have been very accommodating and professional in their work.
462. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member asked if there was a policy in place with regards to the locking of computers for privacy and security purposes.
463. The DDIT stated that there is a policy in place where users are encouraged to lock their computer screens when leaving their desks. She also noted that all computers are set up to lock automatically after a certain period of time.
464. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member suggest that a public education campaign be implanted with regards to that policy as a lot of person are not aware of what can be done when leaving their computers unattended.
465. The Member for the Second District commended the Department for being able to do the work they have done with the amount of resources they have available.
466. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District commended the DDIT for delivering a comprehensive presentation. He noted that with 90% of the Government's IT infrastructure destroyed in the 2017 hurricanes, the Department has still been able to deliver a commendable level of service.
467. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee and they were dismissed.

HEAD 2371**MISCELLANEOUS****Present:**

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Alva McCall	Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

468. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

469. There were no questions posed by Members of the Committee.

470. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry Finance (FS)
Ms. Latoya James	Director, International Tax Authority (DITA)
Ms. Christilyn Benjamin	Deputy Director, International Tax Authority (DDITA)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

471. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

472. The FS informed the Committee that the International Tax Authority is now a Statutory Body and that the 2019 Budget Estimates will be amended accordingly.

473. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there is a presentation to be made.

474. In her presentation, the DITA gave an overview of the agency's roles and functions. She noted that:

- Prior to the establishment of the ITA, the Territory's first information exchange was handled by the Inland Revenue Department in 2010. The BVI received 8 requests for information exchange that year.
- Due to the establishment of new Tax Information Agreements (TIA) and the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance, the ITA receives

over 400 requests for information per year. In 2017, they received over 600 requests.

- The ITA currently has 25 TIAs, 7 of which are not enforced. It was noted that there is one DTC and that all other relationships were under the Multilateral Convention.
- There are approximately 100 relationships.
- The BVI is scheduled to be reviewed by the Global Forum under the new standards for EOIR for which the ITA is the lead agency. The BVI is also set to be reviewed on the implementation of Automatic Exchange of Information which means that is necessary for the procedures, systems and space used by the ITA meet the international standard.
- In 2017, the ITA lost several staff members and has been unable to replace them due to certain issues.
- Due to the workload of the ITA, the space currently being occupied by the agency is no longer adequate for their filing or staffing requirements.
- It is proposed that the ITA be split up into 2 main divisions, the International Cooperation Unit which would deal with handling of all information including policy and the practical exchange of information. The second unit, the Compliance Unit would focus on policy and the practical areas of compliance.
- It was also proposed that there be a Legal, Administrative and IT unit within the ITA.

- There are 10 members of staff who perform the functions of the ITA. There is not a Compliance Unit and they currently rely on the AG's Chambers for all legal matters.

475. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked if the ITA received all of their requests for information through the Beneficial Ownership Secure Search (BOSS) System.

476. The DITA stated that BOSS system is used to respond to beneficial ownership requests from the UK and that there is a specific sharing agreement between BVI and the UK. She further stated that ITA shares tax information under Tax Information Exchange Agreements and the Multilateral Convention.

477. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about whether there was a way to measure if any further action is taken by the bodies that request information such as the IRS, Her Royal Majesty's Revenue Collection Agency etc.

478. The DITA stated that when the ITA receives a request for information, the information collected is technically seen as evidence and that they usually ask the agency requesting the information to provide feedback on whether it was useful or not. She noted that feedback is usually not received.

479. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked if the information being requested is kept on file.

480. The DITA responded in the affirmative and stated that they are currently trying to finalize a database that they were getting from BDO that would keep all of their requests for information electronically.
481. The Member for the Sixth District inquired about how many members of staff are needed at the ITA.
482. The DITA stated that the ITA needs to have a total of 35 members of staff.
483. The Member for the Sixth District asked if there was work available for 35 staff members.
484. The DITA responded in the affirmative and noted that there is more than enough work available as there is a need to establish a compliance regime within the ITA.
485. The Member for the Third District inquired about who claims ownership for the BOSS system.
486. The DITA stated that the Financial Investigation Agency was named as the authority in charge of the system under the BOSS legislation. She further stated that there is one person at the FIA who is authorized to go into the BOSS system and retrieve information.
487. The Member for the Third District asked if there would need to be a change in the legislation with regards to the way the BOSS system is being used.
488. The DITA responded in the affirmative.

489. The Member for the Second District inquired about how the ITA raises revenue.
490. The DITA indicated that the ITA is not currently set up as a revenue generating agency. She said that there is potential for revenue to be collected and noted that this option is being reviewed with the hopes of incorporating this potential into the operations of the ITA as a Statutory Body.
491. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about the use of a single person to access the BOSS system.
492. The DITA explained that the legislation requires that another individual be appointed to act in place of the officer authorised to access the BOSS system in the event that they are sick or on vacation.
493. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the DITA for her presentation and making herself available for questions. He noted that pressure is being placed on the ITA due to the volume of requests that they receive.
494. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2436

**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES,
LABOUR AND IMMIGRATION**

Present:

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkeley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DSNRLI)
Ms. Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.DPSNRLI)
Ms. Linette Rabsatt	Acting Human Resources Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.HRMNRLI)
Mr. Norval Young	Cadastral Information Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration

495. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

496. The PSNRLI stated that there was no presentation and the panel was open for questions.

497. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member expressed her concerns about the Baths on Virgin Gorda. She stated that recently, non-commercial grade umbrellas were erected for temporary shade but have since been destroyed. She wanted to know what plans were in place for a more permanent solution for this situation which starts from the vicinity of the Poor Man Bar at the Baths.

498. The PSNRLI stated that there were moneys to spend on development for the parks in the Budget in the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) and the issues mentioned by the Junior Minister of Tourism will be addressed.
499. The Member for the Sixth District inquired about moneys that was in the Budget for her project which was in the sum of forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000.00).
500. The PSNRLI reassured the Member for the Sixth that her money was still in the Budget in the sum of thirty thousand one hundred and ninety-one dollars (\$30,191.00). He stated because of the Baba Jean Beach project the amount is less and this was the remaining balance.
501. The Member for the Second District inquired about the bathroom facilities on the beaches specifically on Cane Garden Bay, on non-ship days. He wanted to know what plans were in place to address this issue, for residents and beach goers that visit the beach on weekends and holidays that needed to use the facilities on non-ship days. The Member for the Second District inquired if the facilities were only catered for Tourist and if so, what happened to the tax payers.
502. The PSNRLI stated that the Ministry visited the idea but there was a cost involved and another issue was, persons vandalising the property. He said sometimes it seemed like the best option was to keep the facilities closed. This way, there are no need to keep repairing facilities. The PSNRLI stated that the point made by the Member was a concern of the Ministry and the Ministry is trying to find the best options as to how to handle this situation.

503. The Member for the Second District inquired about the beach wardens and also about the swim zone areas that were install in Cane Garden Bay after the hurricanes. He stated that the ground seas had since removed them. The Member for the Second District said now that it is Easter everyone including the boaters and Puerto Ricans were anchoring anywhere on the beach and on the Reefs. The Member for the Second District wanted to ensure that Jost Van Dkye, Brewers Bay and Cane Garden Bay had their swim zones areas demarcated as well as the navigating areas mark.
504. The PSNRLI stated that RDA and the Ministry was collaborating to have the markers replaced. The PSNRLI informed the Member for the Second that there were moneys under beach development in the Budget and moneys will be utilities for this project. The PSNRLI stated that the swim zones on White Bay in Jost Van Dkye were an expense of the Ministry and they were vandalize by individuals who cut and removed the markers and these were the problems the Ministry had to deal with.
505. The PSNRLI stated that beach wardens were an issue and this was an issue of cost to have beach wardens on every beach in the Territory. He said the Ministry is securing the beaches within the confines of the moneys provided.
506. The Member for the Second District stated that if the Territory is going to push the beaches as a tourism product then the resources should be made available to ensure the beaches are properly maintained on a regular basis.
507. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the Permanent Secretary and his team for appearing before the Committee. The Premier informed the PSNRLI that the Budget was a transitional Budget and the Government was maximizing it for the people of the Territory.
508. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2440

LABOUR DEPARTMENT

Present:

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkeley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Ms. Janice Rymer,	Labour Commissioner, Labour Department (LC)
Mrs. Michelle McLean,	Deputy Labour Commissioner, Labour Department (DLC)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DSNRLI)
Ms. Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag. DSNRLI)

509. The Labour Commissioner (LC) gave an overview of the operations of the Labour Department. She stated that the Labour Department was mandated by the 2010 Labour Code. The department has a total of thirty-three employees on Tortola and Virgin Gorda and the department is comprised of five units as follows;

- The **Employment Services Unit** is responsible for securing jobs for job seekers and delivering relevant training to prepare them for employment.
- The **Labour Relation Unit** is responsible for dealing with disputed filed by employees.
- The **Labour Protection Unit** is responsible for inspecting approximately eight thousand businesses throughout the Territory as well as ensuring that the work environment of employees is safe and healthy. The department will soon launch a safety Culture campaign to coincide with International Labour Organization day which is on the 28th of April.

- The **Work Permit Processing Unit** is responsible for processing work permits renewal, temporary permits, new permits and emergency permits, and soon there will be an online system.
- **Virgin Gorda Unit** functions in the same manner as the office in Road Town.

510. The LC stated that during 2018 the department collected a total of \$12 million in revenue; this represented an increase from \$6 million in 2017. This was due to the influx of skilled workers entering the Territory and the revised Fix Structure that came on stream in July, 2017. She said that there were many challenges due to the hurricanes of 2017. The Labour Department building was destroyed and the Officers were displaced. The office in Road Town has since return for operations but the branch on Virgin Gorda, the Officers were still displaced and some Officers have relocated.

511. The LC informed the Committee that recently a Data Analyst has been assigned to the department and the recovery of the data from 2017 has been fruitful in the sum of nine thousand plus work permits been recovered.

512. The LC stated that after the disaster the Labour Code was voided in regards to the Disaster Policy. The department has engaged with consultant with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to assess with the 2010 Labour Code. The consultant has submitted a report outlining the way forward in regards to the Labour Policy which also encompassed a Disaster Policy.

513. The LC advised the Committee that in order for the Labour Department to execute all the labour functions and operate accordingly funding were needed for the vacant positions to be filled to allow the department to operate as mandated in the Labour Code. Training for the officers to equip them with better customer service skills and a vehicle for the Workforce Development Unit were all priorities.

514. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired if there were any plans for Labour Department to have office hours on the other Sister Islands of Anegada and Jost Van Dkye.
515. The LC stated that there have been discussion with the Hon. Minister regarding office hours on the other Sister Islands and plans are been worked on for the best way forward.
516. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member expressed her concerns about Virgin Islanders understudying expatriates but the companies keep getting two and three work permits for individuals from overseas for the same job the locals were understudying for. She inquired if there were any laws in the Labour Code that protects locals in this matter.
517. The LC stated yes, that there is protection in the Labour Code that protects Virgin Islanders, the Section that speaks about understudying where locals a pared with expatriates who are on work permits for a particular period. The LC recalled two instances where this has happened and it worked out through development planning.
518. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired if there were any statistic on this matter and if so can the Labour Commissioner provide the Committee with a copy of the statistic for the last five to ten years post Irma at a later time. To which the LC agreed to provide at a later stage.
519. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that under the previous Administration that there was a Youth Employment Services (YES) under the Ministry of Education and Culture, he inquired if the LC saw her department being able to perform the same functions.

520. The LC stated yes they do, the Youth Employment Services which was at the Ministry of Education was about jobs. The Labour Department has Employment Service Unit which will be renamed to Workforce Development Unit. The Labour Department was about jobs for jobseekers and providing training for those jobseekers the specifications what the employers has been expressing.
521. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Members for the Seventh District stated that he would like to partner with the Labour Department to develop some feedback from the employers that he can report back to the College and the Secondary schools. He said he wanted to know the skill set that our people were lacking in the Education system and what they needed to work on. The LC has agreed to provide the Minister with some feedback from employers that she has received.
522. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2470**LAND AND SEABED MANAGEMENT****Present:**

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Mr. Dwayne Nibbs	Acting Chief Survey, Survey Department (Ag.CSur)
Mr. Michael Potter	Acting Deputy Chief Survey, Survey Department (Ag.DCSur)
Mr. Kelvin Dawson	Registrar of Lands, Land Registry (RL)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DPSNRLI)
Ms. Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.DSNRLI)

523. The Chairman welcomed the panel to Standing Finance and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

524. The Acting Chief Survey (Ag.CSur) gave a brief presentation. He stated that the Department was desirable in purchasing a Drone equipment for the department. He said prior to receiving the 2017 Aerial Mapping images, it took the Territory fifteen years to receive an aerial update and the last aerial update was in 2002. However, after the 2017 Hurricanes these images were obsolete, hence the reason why it was important to purchase the Drone mapping system which will also be used as an emergency system that will be second to none.

525. The AgCSur explained that the equipment would be able to identify a location by calculating the shortest route to aid assistance to a person in trouble or emergency but was unable to provide their address to fire or police department or the ambulance. He also mentioned that there will be an online subscription

that would generate on average of five to seven thousand per annually per company and the department was looking for an improved system for realtors and lawyers as well.

526. The AgCSur stated that with the purchasing of the Drone it can benefit the Government even before the E-Government subscription came online.

527. The Member for the Sixth District inquired as to the cost of the Drone equipment the department wanted to purchase.

528. The AgCSur stated that the equipment cost was merely one hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000.00) and with this equipment, aerial images would be current and it would save the Territory two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) every ten to fifteen years. There would be real time information where mapping and researches are done on a current basis.

529. The Member for the Sixth District endorsed the Survey Department receiving the Drone Equipment as it was truly needed.

530. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired from both Land Registry and Survey Department as to what form of back-up systems were in place to secure all of their valuable data their Department have.

531. The AgCSur elaborated that the government has afforded there Department with the opportunity to be digital. He said that maps and other information within the Department were scanned and were able to return back online was dependent on how fast Department of DoIt could restore the servers.

532. The Registrar of Lands (RL) stated that his Department do not have adequate protection for their data. However, the data was safe after the passage of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, but since then, moisture was able to

penetrate certain parts that were not adequately protected and it was time to have the system upgraded.

533. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired if the requirement for digitalisation of the data was desirable and if costing was sorted.

534. The RL admitted that prior to the Hurricanes, digitalisation of the data was being performed but Department was unable to test the system when the hurricane came. He said some of the equipment were destroyed but once funding became available the department would proceed to entering data once again.

535. The Leader of the Opposition and Member the Eighth District indicated that no funds seemed to have been allocated for construction of the Red Bay Fisherman's Wharf and with the support of the Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member and Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member requested that the Minister of Finance reallocate \$300,000 for the development of same which the Minister of Finance agreed to.

536. The Chairman thanked panel for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkeley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Ms. Rosemary Callwood	Acting Chief Immigration Officer, Immigration Department (Ag.CIO)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DSNRLI)
Ms Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.DSNRLI)
Mrs. Germain Cline	Senior Administrative Officer, Immigration Department
Mr. Charles France	Account Officer II, Immigration Department

537. The Chairman welcomed everyone to Standing Finance and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

538. The Acting Chief Immigration Officer (Ag.CIO) gave a brief presentation. She stated that the Immigration Department continues to enhance their operations and strides to reform the processes, procedures, laws and policies. The Department aim for 2019 was continued improvement as the Department focus their attention on customer services training, law enforcement training and to purchase a Modern Border Management System. These trainings would consist of enhancing the professionalism of the Officers and assist them to handle their duties in a more effective way while equipping the officers with the necessary skills to identify and respond to criminal activities.

539. The AgCIO stated that there was a need to have a more modern Border Management System. Currently, the Department system is over ten years old.

540. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member was happy to hear about the customer service training for Officers but, inquired about the fees collection on Virgin Gorda by Immigration Officers. She said, currently, that there were no machine facilities on Virgin Gorda to make payments by credit or debit cards and she wanted to know the timeline as to when these facilities would be operation.
541. The AgCIO informed the Committee that the Immigration Department has been working tirelessly to get these machines implemented at all Ports of entries. She said that on many occasion the Department has reached out to the treasury department for the assistance of cashiers to collect the fees and the credit card machines but to date there has been no assistance in this matter.
542. The AgCIO informed the Committee that she has since reach out to the new Ministry seeking their assistance in this matter as there is a great need to service the Public.
543. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District asked how many employees were employed in the Department and also requested a copy of their profiles. The profiles should include their education and salary status etc.
544. The AgCIO stated that there were a total of seventy-four employees employed with the Department and copies of the profile will be furnished at a later date.
545. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that persons were always complaining that they were unable to gain entry after the BVI Ports were closed. He said he was not sure which Departments were at fault and sought clarifications on the matter.

546. The AgCIO informed the Committee that immigration Department deals with the migration of people in and out of the Territory. If a late clearance is requested, this late clearance should be requested from the Commissioner of Customs. It is Customs that deals with the vessels after which Immigration Officers will be responsible for admitting people into the Territory. Immigration Department cannot give permission unless the Commissioner Customs at the time grants permission for the vessel. Immigration only deals with people and if the vessel is not allowed entry to the Territory Immigration Officers has to refuse the request as well.
547. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired if the Customs has always been the barrier to deny vessels entries.
548. The AgCIO stated that Customs are the ones who grant permission to any vessel to come to any of the Ports of entry outside of the Territory whether they are traveling from outside of the Territory. If it is not an authorise Port of entry they would also give the permission. Immigration would only deal with the people. The Department works long side Customs to facilitate the process.
549. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District encouraged the AgCIO to meet with the Department of Information and Public Relations and have a press release done. Have the message broadcast publicly on local media as well as social media.
550. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2543

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, YOUTH
AFFAIRS, FISHERIES AND AGRICULTURE**

HEAD 2545

EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SERVICES

HEAD 2548

SECONDARY EDUCATION

HEAD 2564

TERTIARY, ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Present:

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSEC)
Mrs. Connie George	Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary, Projects Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AsstSec)
Mrs. Jovita Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctSup)

551. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

552. PSMEC advised that she was the Accounting Officer for the all departments under the Ministry with the exception of Library Services and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. She advised that the contract signing for the ‘L’ shaped building at the Elmore Stoutt High School was held on the morning of Thursday, 18th April 2019. She advised that the Ministry was poised to begin the total build out of all schools in the Territory. Bregado Flax Educational Center is in line for major works to begin shortly. No works were undertaken at Isabella Morris Primary School as the Ministry was advised that the remains of

the buildings were not safe and they need to be demolished, demolition would cost approximately \$30,000.

553. The PSMEC stated that the May-June exams will be held at Save The Seed Center which will cost approximately \$28,000. Virgin Islands Technical and Vocational School requires a lot of work and equipment, software and training requires \$190,000.

554. The PSMEC indicated that scholarship requests continue to reach the Ministry as the programme was placed on hold; however, funds have been allocated to maintain those who are on existing scholarships. She further stated that they had begun a programme of helping the special needs students in the Vanguard Programme in Tampa, Florida. She further requested funding for the existing Assistant Secretary post in the Ministry given the added portfolio of Agriculture and Fisheries.

555. The PSMEC advised that the restructuring of the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports continued and they would like to re-establish the afterschool programme for students in the communities, which cost approximately \$210,000 per term to run the programme. She proceeded to request approximately \$200,000 for assistance with the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) to expand which is located in the eastern part of the island to assist the youths of that community.

556. The PSMEC indicated that the Department of Culture is in the midst of being restructured inclusive of handling Festival and Fairs and expressed that a decision should be made to drastically scale back the activities or properly fund them to avoid having to request a SAP at the end of each year. She further stated that the Ministry anticipated the building of a national library which would be situated in Road Town and she hoped to find a suitable location as she was concerned about the books and where they were stored at present. Recreation

Trust received a subvention of \$750,000, however, the Territory continues to increase the number of facilities to go into the trust and they are currently in arrears of 1.5 million dollars for electricity bills and once that is not paid many facilities would not be able to be used.

557. The PSMEC stated that the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College was a key player in the development of the Territory and they continued to work hard to get ensure that the college returned to its original state. She further stated that they required 12 million dollars to get the school back up and maintain their accreditations.

558. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District indicated that the space in Ward's building was not sufficient for the staff.

559. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired as to why the Ministry was not using the Multipurpose Sports Complex to house the students for their exams. The PSMEC advised that the Multipurpose Sports Complex did not have any air conditioning.

560. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired as to what was the reason for the Bregado Flax Educational Centre not being on track for refurbishment. The ASMEC indicated that on 16th April, 2019, a meeting was held concerning the school as the original scope had changed as the existing structure may have to be demolished and other concerns were expressed concerning the existing structures. The ASMEC proceeded to give a timeline for the contract signing and the commencement and conclusion date for the project. She further stated that maintenance of the building was a concern as they do not have a maintenance manager or supervisor as she was responsible for those duties coupled with her other duties since the 2017 hurricanes. The Junior

Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member indicated that the material to be used for the rebuilding of the school should be considered given the traffic.

561. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired about the above given that the government supposedly left with a lot of money had grand surpluses from the last Administration. The Member expressed concerns about the condition of the recreational facilities as well as the books and resources from our Public Library. The PSMEC advised that the books were in the 'F' Block of the Elmore Stouff High School and were in good condition. She further indicated that the conditions of the 'F' Block were not conducive for the library books or other historical artifacts of the Territory. They were initially located in the CTL building until the school was instructed to move to the CTL building. However, some library books and other items were sent to Virgin Gorda library. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired if there was an inventory done of the books and items that were placed in the 'F' Block. The PSMEC indicated that the Chief Librarian was tasked with taking the inventory and thus should have that information.

562. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired as to why new scholarships were not being allocated. The PSMEC stated that they were told that there were no funds for new scholarship recipients; however, only funds were available to maintain those who were already studying, \$600,000 per year over a two (2) year period and nobody has received a new scholarship since hurricanes Irma and Maria.

563. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District added that there were approximately six (6) students in attendance in the Vanguard programme, only one (1) has returned to the Territory thus far. A commitment was made to them for four (4) years, however in order for them to graduate it would take longer than the four (4) years. He further stated that it would take 8 million

dollars to get the scholarship programme started; the Ministry currently had 4.4 million dollars of that amount. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District clarified that 3.6 million was allocated for existing scholarships and approximately \$700,000 for new scholarships.

564. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired of the amount of money that would be required to pay for the students who were currently on scholarships abroad which included the Vanguard programme. He further inquired about the Minister's assistance grants which is used to give financial assistance to students overseas in college and university.

565. The PSMEC indicated that the grant was discontinued. The FPOMEC further stated that the money was no longer allocated due to the Budget ceiling given at the time and the amount allocated was \$75,000 for which was depleted by \$71,000. The Ministry was requesting an additional \$110,000 to be placed in the said vote. Further discussions were had on this topic. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District further inquired about the Vanguard programme; the PSMEC explained the process, the number of students covered and the cost of those students to attend the Vanguard school.

566. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired about the plans for Isabella Morris School. The PSMEC stated that they were awaiting a decision on if they were going to build a Junior High School in the West and another one in the East and just have the senior students at the Road Town Elmore Stoutt Campus. Since there was still no decision made on that front, the Ministry was in discussion with the current Minister on a way forward with the Isabella Morris campus. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District stated that there was a report on the matter that should have been completed. The PSMEC indicated that the report was complete and that it gave four (4) options before the build-out of the Elmore Stoutt High School; she explained the four options. The Premier and Minister of

Finance and Member for the First District inquired further on the demolition of the school and who advised that the school structure was weak. The PSMEC indicated that the Royal Engineers and FDL advised on the structural integrity of the building. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District requested that another opinion is obtained on the matter.

567. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District further inquired about the functionality of the ESHS in order for it to be ready for September 2019. The PSMEC advised that the ASMEC was working on that and that additional funding was being asked to pay for the furniture needed for the building; they were working with Dr. Drexel Glasgow on that request.

568. The Member for the Second District inquired about the status of the JVD Primary School. PSMEC stated that that school was under discussion with the current Minister. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District explained that a donor has been identified for the rebuilding of the school and works would proceed in due course.

569. The Member for the Second District inquired about the money allocated for the refurbishment of the Diamond Estate basketball court as well as for the JVD School and Cane Garden Bay. The ASMEC indicated that there was structural damage on the court surface that needed to be addressed, coupled with the structure with the restrooms and the concessions be completed which has been incomplete for approximately 10 years.

570. The Member for the Second District inquired about the policy for allocating scholarships for individuals. The PSMEC advised that the current policy was that there were two (2) ways that students could apply to obtain a scholarship.

571. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired if the schools and recreational facilities for the Fourth District were

amply covered under the budget for repairs. The PSMEC answered in the negative.

572. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the salaries of the Teachers and the plans for a salary review. The PSMEC stated that she would require additional discussions with other stakeholders in order to properly answer that question. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District announced that the Teacher recognition evening would take place in June.

573. The Chairman thanked that panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2544**YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS****Present:**

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSEC)
Mrs. Brenda Lettsome-Tye	Director, Youth Affairs and Sports
Mr. Carnal Cline	Chairman, British Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee
Mrs. Connie George	Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary, Projects Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AsstSec)
Mrs. Jovita Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctSup)

574. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

575. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the afterschool programmes on the Sister Islands and BVI Festival funding and planning. She further stated that in order to have a successful event at least 8-10 months advanced notice is required for the event to be a resounding success.

576. The Director for DYAS advised that there were no Sister Islands programmes in 2015 when she came onboard. She further advised that there were no tangible fruits from the programmes given the cost. She further advised that there were plans to revive the afterschool programmes on the Sister Islands and Territory

wide. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District confirmed this.

577. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about insurance for the children as she understood that that was part of the reason why the programme concluded as there was no insurance for those participating children. The Director, DYAS advised that she would look into the aforementioned.

578. The Junior Minister for Trade and Economic Development and Territorial Member inquired about the age range of the youths that the department catered to. The Director, DYAS advised that the age range was 15-29. The Junior Minister for Trade and Economic Development followed up by asking if the age-range of 10-15 would be under a different department. This sparked a brief discussion on the Youth Policy for the Territory.

579. The Member for the Sixth District inquired about the status of the Youth Parliament and the activities under the Department of Culture. The Director, DYAS advised that the Youth Parliament was active but the past participants moved onto attend college. The Speaker advised that the Youth Parliament will be moved to the House of Assembly and any additional questions should be directed to the Speaker or the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

580. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the way forward to re-establish the museums in the Territory. He further asked for clarity on the afterschool programme and the Director, DYAS complied.

581. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member inquired if softball was identified as the national sport. He further stated that sports needed to be taken more seriously and advised that a system tracking the athletes' progress should be created. Lastly, the Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member suggested that an

athletes' Hall of Fame should be created. The Director, DYAS informed that the national sport was identified under the last administration and stated that it was softball; she further stated that the matter was the Attorney General's Chambers. She also stated that there was an initiative pertaining to awards being given for all sports and have top athletes recognised. This did not materialise but it would be worked on.

582. The Member for the Second District asked if there was a plan to address having the children selling water on the side of the road to raise funds to go off and represent the school. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that the cost is great given the amount of students that participate in sports and go off the represent their school and the money that the Ministry may have would never be enough thus they may have to raise their own funds.

583. The Chairman of the BVIFFC referred to the planning for the Virgin Gorda Festival for 2019 and advised that social media was used to push the event and that would continue for the August Festival, together with other initiatives towards marketing the events. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member clarified that she would like monies to be available for marketing and advertising for the festivals earlier than it has been in the past.

584. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2547**CULTURE****Present:**

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSEC)
Ms. Anne Lennard	Acting Director of Culture (DoC)
Mr. Carnal Cline	Chairman, British Virgin Islands Festival and Fairs Committee
Mrs. Connie George	Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary, Projects Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AsstSec)
Mrs. Jovita Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctSup)

585. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee.

586. The Ag. Director of Culture advised that they have been promoting book launches on a monthly basis and listed a few upcoming launches. They were also working on observing International Museum Day which will be observed during the period of May 20-24. They were also working on a documentary on the local centurions. They also provide support services to the newly established BVI Festival and Fairs Committee. The g. Director further indicated the conditions of the department's working conditions and requested a permanent home for the department. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District indicated that the 70th Anniversary of the 1949 March was approaching discussion about reenacting the March has been underway. He

further indicated that there was a desire to have a festival of the Arts to celebrate all of the Arts and they would work with the Junior Minister for Tourism and the BVI Tourist Board to make those ideas a reality. The Director for Culture further stated that this year is the 25th anniversary of VI Culture Week.

587. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2550**LIBRARY SERVICES****Present:**

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSEC)
Ms. Suzanne Greenaway	Chief Librarian, Library Services Department (CL)
Mrs. Connie George	Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary, Projects Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AsstSec)
Mrs. Jovita Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctSup)
Mr. Arnold Thomas	Senior Accounts Officer, Library Services Department (SAcctO)

588. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

589. The Junior Minister for Trade and Economic Development and Territorial Member inquired about the Book Mobile. The Chief Librarian advised that it was damaged during hurricane Irma, then boarded and sold.

590. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about plans to rebuild a library in Road Town and the current building housing the library in Virgin Gorda. The Chief Librarian advised that there were plans to build a National Library in the Road Town. She further stated that the building in Virgin Gorda was damaged during the 2017 hurricanes, and was repaired and handed back to the Ministry in 2018.

591. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked the Chief Librarian to describe the conditions within which she was working. The Chief Librarian informed that she was seated in the East End Library since it survived the hurricanes very well and allows them to host the after school and Saturday programmes. She further informed that some items belonging to the library were riddled with mould in the 'F' Block at the ESHS where they were housed.
592. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District asked about the traffic at the East End Library. She advised that the traffic had increased due to new initiatives implemented.
593. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired if there were plans to have a temporary library in Road Town prior to building the National Library and also requested a timeline for the same. The Chief Librarian advised that she was not aware of any plans to place a temporary structure for that purpose. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports stated that there are plans for a National Library.
594. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member advised that there were a few simple solutions for not having a library such as drop boxes that would be attached to a library card.
595. The Speaker inquired if the items for the library located in "F" Block were all damaged. The Chief Librarian informed that there were a few items that were damaged but not all. She further iterated that the conditions were not conducive for the library items in the 'F' Block.

HEAD 2573

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

HEAD 2573

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Present:

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture, (PSECYAFA)
Mrs. Tessa Smith-Claxton	Acting Chief Agricultural Officer (AgCAO)
Mr. Orville Clarke	Acting Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer (AgDCAO)
Mrs. Jovita Mercer-Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer (FPOECYAFA)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary (AS)

596. The Chairman welcomed back the PSMECAFYAS to the Standing Finance Committee Meeting and asked that the staff present be introduced stating their names and positions for the record.

597. The PSMECAFYAS asked the Chairman's permission for the staff to introduce themselves to the Committee.

598. The Chairman asked if there were any presentations. The AgCAO stated that she didn't have a presentation but she can take questions.

599. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the policy for vendors at the market in Road Town.

600. The AgCAO stated that she was not completely aware and requested the assistance of the AgDCAO to answer the question.

601. The AgDCAO stated that as far as he knew the market in Road Town was provided to be used by persons distributing agricultural products for sale. The AgDCAO further stated that he was not sure under what conditions the stalls were built but was made to understand that provision of such stalls were to ensure that farmers had an outlet for their produce. The AgDCAO also indicated that he was not sure what contractual arrangement was done.
602. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired whether or not assistance is provided to persons to have their vendor stalls rebuilt at the market in Road Town.
603. The AgDCAO stated that complaints were received by vendors regarding not being able to display their produce for sale due to the minimal trafficking of patrons. The AgDCAO further stated that farmers were not too happy with the location and requested that another site be located.
604. The AgDCAO stated that there were meetings with the farmers and they suggested that a proper site would be where Pusser's Parking Lot is located currently.
605. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District also stated that there have been discussions on having a combined market on fishing and farming as a part of the vision going forward.
606. The AgDCAO asked the Chairman's permission for the AgCAO to speak on the matter as she was more in tuned with the discussions that have taken place.

607. The AgCAO stated to the Chairman that she was new at the Department of Agriculture and that she was fresh and green.
608. The AgCAO stated that many local farmers have complained about issues regarding marketing their produce. She further stated that the market space in Road Town has been seen by local farmers as not favourable for marketing their produce. She noted that a group of farmers have started their own little farmers market and would come together once every two weeks on Saturday mornings.
609. The AgCAO stated that they have engaged the farmers as well as Town and Country Planning Department to find a more suitable site that farmers are more comfortable with and have more or less decided that the area in front of Crafts Alive is the best location identified so far in Road Town. She stated that the area was looked at as being combined as a cultural fisher's farmers market; a day attraction moving into the night where locals and tourist alike can come seeing that the Craft Alive Village is there and have fresh local produce and fish in the same location.
610. The AgCAO stated that most of the produce sold in the area is imported produce from Dominica, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.
611. The Member for the Third District asked the AgCAO how long she had been in the position.
612. The AgCAO stated that she had been in the position since January, 2019.
613. The Member for the Third District stated that the AgCAO would not have known when agriculture would have had its glory days.

614. The AgCAO stated “no” in response to the statement made by Member for the Third District.
615. The Member for the Third District stated that even when agriculture was in its glory days they could not have demanded a location that they are currently demanding.
616. The Member for the Third District inquired as to what was the vision for agriculture going forward.
617. The AgCAO stated that one of the reasons that agriculture is on the decline is the lack of a true vision in terms of a policy or strategy direction for agriculture. She further stated that there is no clear information as to what is being produced locally, who the farmers are, where they are or what they are growing and what their needs are.
618. The AgCAO noted the need to know what the market demanded and what can be grown in the BVI.
619. The AgCAO stated that the next couple of months the focus will be on understanding what type of agriculture is needed in the Virgin Islands, what is needed to be done, who are the farmers, what can be farmed, what should be farmed and outline a strategy from there as to where to go. She further stated the need to gather more information before responding.
620. The Member for the Third District stated that Agriculture Week is a good place to start to build confidence in the people and is a week that the farmers get to showcase their produce. The Member for the Third District encouraged the AgCAO to go back to doing foundational activities that would restore and rebuild the confidence in the people and in agriculture.

621. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District responded by stating that the structure for the vision of agriculture has to be right.
622. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District further stated that there is proposal for the Agriculture Department to focus on the regulations of agriculture and to provide technical support through the extension officers and some level of subsidy.
623. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that the proposal involves the forming of a statutory body that will focus on commercial agricultural operations.
624. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District further stated that the proposal involved identifying land for commercial agricultural purposes and should be partnering with farmers through a cooperative and determine what crops would be produced as opposed to farmers coming up with what they want to produce, what the market demands, seek those persons that are serious about agriculture and to ensure that the plots are productive.
625. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that poultry will be an area of investment, as it is poised for strong growth through public private partnerships.

626. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member offered the Chairman and Members to sit with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Fairs, Fisheries and Agriculture and develop the vision for agriculture.
627. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member stated that farming must have a considerably amount of water and also the land must be cleared for plowing. He further noted that he had observed houses being built at Paraquita Bay.
628. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member inquired as to what is the procedure when one farmer gives up property and why is the Government property at Paraquita Bay not being kept clean or fenced.
629. The AgCAO stated that there is a water issue at Paraquita Bay and the supply of water is not stable. She further stated that farmers that are higher up in Paraquita Bay most times do not get water due to pressure issues.
630. The AgCAO stated that there is a lot of repairs needed. She further stated that recommendations were given to the Ministry for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration last year to repair the water line in Paraquita Bay.
631. The AgCAO stated that persons living on the farm in Paraquita Bay has been an issue.
632. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked the AgCAO to explain the procedure in obtaining plots and are there any lease agreements?
633. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated going forward he proposed a cooperative of farmers that can provide

labour for the plots. A body that would manage the land and determine their proper use for agricultural purposes.

634. The AgCAO stated that original intention for the land at Paraquita Bay based on research was divided up for farmers use for short term crops on a lease system. She further stated that to date only one farmer has gotten a lease in Paraquita Bay.
635. The AgCAO stated that the people that have plots in Paraquita Bay doesn't have any lease and have just gone, occupied the land and started planting.
636. The AgCAO stated no one has a lease for the agriculture land in Paraquita Bay. She further stated that after the hurricanes a lot of debris was dumped and burned and left in Paraquita Bay to this date. The AgCAO asked for the debris to be removed and stated that Paraquita Bay needs a general cleanup.
637. The AgCAO stated that there were no persons living in two story houses in Paraquita Bay but noted that there were persons living on parcels of Government agriculture land in Paraquita Bay.
638. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated the need to have a discussion regarding land occupation and leases for the farmers at Paraquita Bay.
639. The AgCAO stated that a licensing system was discussed at the Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration to allow farmers to use the property for specific purposes for certain time frames or opt for a lease. She further stated that it is managed as a commercial center of agriculture.
640. The AgCAO stated that farmers have plots in Paraquita Bay as their back yard garden for their personal consumption which should be used instead for the community.

641. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired as to what was happening regarding Anegada and Virgin Gorda agriculture lands.
642. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired as to whether or not farming was happening another place besides Paraquita Bay.
643. The AgCAO stated that there is land in Virgin Gorda in South Sound and Agriculture Substation that was occupied and owned by the Anglican Church which is being cleaned up. Another parcel of land has been leased for the Substation to occupy. She further stated that there is land in Anegada which is the Angeda substation that was destroyed has one farmer currently using that property now.
644. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that the same model currently being proposed for Paraquita Bay is being proposed for the Sister Islands.
645. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired as to what is in place to track dogs brought in place to the Territory especially if they are visitors.
646. The AgCAO stated that dogs entering the Territory must get an import permit and asked the Chairperson that the AgDCAO speak further to the question.
647. The AgDCAO stated that each owner must apply for an import permit and noted that there have been instances when animals came in without obtaining the permit and Customs Department knowing the requirement and once

happened we are called in to ensure the animals are not carrying infectious or contagious diseases.

648. The AgDCAO stated that the control of animals in restaurants it would be beyond the Agriculture Department.

649. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member stated that a conversation should take with Customs Departments regarding animals on vessels and dogs not being allowed into restaurants unless with special needs.

650. The Premier and Member for the First District thanked the Department of Agriculture for what they have done so far and pledged the support of the Government to revive Agriculture and Fisheries.

651. The Chairperson thanked both the AgCAO and AgDCAO for their appearance before the Committee.

Present:

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports (PSECAFYAS)
Mr. Kelvin Penn	Acting Chief Conservation Officer (CCO)
Mrs. Jovita Mercer-Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer (FPOECAFYAS)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary (AS)

652. The Chairman asked that the AgCCO state his name and position for the record.

653. The AgCCO stated that he didn't have any presentation but will answer any questions posed by members.

654. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired as to whether or not any plans were being considered as to the handling of the annual Sargassum invasion.

655. The AgCCO stated that Sargassum is not only a huge problem for the BVI but also for the Caribbean. The AgCCO stated that due to climate change the Sargassum seaweed has ballooned in population and size going between the North and South.

656. The AgCCO stated that it has been a problematic situation needing specialized equipment to clean it at sea and the use of heavy equipment on land.

657. The AgCCO stated that in the past equipment such as excavators were used to help clean Sargassum which is an expensive to the Government of \$20,000 to

clean one location and by the next day or next week the Sargusm has returned.

658. The Member for the Second District inquired whether or not as cruise passengers visit increase to the shores from the cruise ships and day trippers, will life guards be placed on the beaches to prevent instances where people could be potentially injured or drowned.

659. The AgCCO stated that the life guard programme has been a vexing programming initially starting 15 years ago with 12 life guards on staff mainly from Australia and England. However, over the years because of budgetary constraints the programme has been reduced and there are only 2 life guards on duty.

660. The AgCCO stated that he is in agreement that more life guards should be on duty and in the past the idea of flags was used rather than actual life guards on beaches.

661. The Member for the Second District inquired as to which beach were the two life guards stationed.

662. The AgCCO stated that prior to the hurricanes they were mostly stationed in Josiah's Bay and after the hurricanes they are stationed in the office after losing the Department's vehicle.

663. The AgCCO stated that there is plan to transfer the life guards from the Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration to the Virgin Islands Fire and Rescue Services.

664. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired as to whether or not the life guards were still at the Conservation and Fisheries Department.

665. The AgCCO stated that the life guards were still at the Conservation and Fisheries Department.
666. The AgCCO stated that one of the problems they have been facing is that the programme does not attract any benefits including permanent and pensionable status.
667. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired as to the updating of the legislation with regards to the preservation of our environment in relations to filling in of ponds and cutting out of mangroves.
668. The AgCCO stated that over the years the Department has been struggling with the issue of protecting the environment.
669. The AgCCO stated that the physical planning act is the instrument that can be used to protect the environment and there is a new proposal on climate change that will further help with the protection of the environment.
670. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District wished the AgCCO all the best in his future endeavors.
671. The Premier and Member for the First District thanked the AgCCO for his work done over the years and wished him all the best in his future endeavors.

Present:

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports (PSECAFYAS)
Mr. Lloyd Williams	Manager of BVI Fishing Complex (MBVIFC)
Mrs. Jovita Mercer-Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer (FPOECAFYAS)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary (AS)

672. The Chairman welcomed the MBVIFC to the Standing Finance Committee Meeting, asked that he state his name and position for the record.

673. The MBVIFC stated that he didn't have any presentation but can take questions.

674. The Member for the Second District asked that the MBVIFC give the true picture of what happened to the BVI Fishing Complex and his team after the passing of the hurricanes.

675. The MBVIFC stated that the damage experienced on the BVI Fishing Complex was extensive and the roof was totally destroyed facing the seaside indicating that the water was about 12 feet on the inside of the building which damaged all the equipment.

676. The MBVIFC stated that most of the equipment has been totally destroyed by the salt water that has been consistent since that time. The staff has been deployed to different departments such as the National Parks and others have been dispersed to other areas in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour.

677. The MBVIFC stated that he is currently at Agriculture Department in Paraquita Bay conducting administrative duties and also assisting with the issuance of fishing permits.
678. The Member for the Second District asked the MBVIFC to share how important the fishing industry is to the Territory that will contribute to the economy.
679. The MBVIFC stated that the fishermen have already found a market for themselves and the demand for seafood is high.
680. The MBVIFC stated that he would like to see the local fishermen trained instead of trap fishing and learn to fish from different perspectives of fishing.
681. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that he has had discussions with persons investing in the area and over the next few weeks he will be having discussions with his fellow Cabinet Members regarding that particular area and the plan moving forward.
682. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired whether the ban on spear fishing could be revisited and noted a loss of economic benefits as a result of the ban.
683. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired as to what was the situation regarding the ban of spear fishing over the past years.

684. The AgCCO stated that the Fisheries Act, 1997 gives provision for the Minister to allow the prohibited methods such as spear fishing for a specific period of time.
685. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired as to whether or not the Department has the proper equipment to patrol and if not what are the plans to patrol.
686. The AgCCO stated that due to budgetary constraints the moneys to maintain both vessels were not there and the ability to patrol has been lost over two to three years now. They used to conduct surveillance with the marine patrol from the Police and Customs but that came to a halt.
687. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired as to what would be the penalties for someone caught while patrolling and would the fine be able to offset the cost for maintenance of the boat.
688. The AgCCO stated that over the years since 1997 only two instances of prosecution occurred from the USVI. One of the men couldn't pay the fine of \$30,000.00 and spent six months in prison. Since the relationship between the USVI and BVI the penalties were reduced and stands at a maximum fine of \$15,000.00.
689. The Chairperson thanked the MBVIFC for appearing before the Committee.

Present:

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHSD)
Dr. Irad Potter	Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (CMO)
Ms. Natalie Fahie-Smith	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSH)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Mr. Clayton O’Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Mr. Duane Fraites	Assistant Project Manager

690. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

691. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the status of Iris O’Neal Clinic and the Doctors in Anegada.

692. The PSHSD stated that the moneys are sufficient and a variation was processed that incorporated the procurement and installation of the generator. She stated that projected completion date is September, 2019.

693. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District queried the date for the completion as a previous date was given for the handing over of the Iris O’Neal Clinic. He asked if the postponement was a result of the generator not being installed. He also voiced his concerns about the contract

being incomplete as it has been pending since 2015 and asked for further information.

694. The PSHSD stated that initially the installation of generator was not included from the contract. She stated that the handover was postponed because the contractor was unable to meet the deadline. The PSHSD was advised that the event would proceed however within a day of the handing over, the contractor requested an extension to February, 2019 as items and materials were still in transit. She also informed of an eight (8) week period before the building can be commissioned before it is handed over to the public.

695. The PSHSD stated that the biggest delay was the agreement on the steel frame. She stated that the agreement between the engineer and fabricator was time consuming because of language barriers, as the building is being procured from China.

696. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District queried the size and cost of the generator.

697. The PSHSD stated the generator is 750 kilovolts and cost \$210,000.00.

698. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

<u>HEAD 2653</u>	<u>AGED CARE SERVICES</u>
<u>HEAD 2655</u>	<u>SOCIAL PROTECTION</u>
<u>HEAD 2665</u>	<u>PUBLIC HEALTH</u>
<u>HEAD 2667</u>	<u>CHILDRED AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES</u>
<u>HEAD 2668</u>	<u>DISABILITY SERVICES</u>
<u>HEAD 2669</u>	<u>COMMUNITY SERVICES</u>

Present:

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Health and Social Development (PSHDS)
Mrs. Annie Malone-Frett	Chief Social Development Officer, Social Development Department (CSDO)
Ms. Stacie Stoutt-James	Acting Deputy Chief Social Development Officer, Social Development Department (Ag.DCSDO)
Mr. Clayton O’Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Ms. Carmen Rabsatt	Senior Administrative Officer, Social Development Department

699. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

700. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about the spacing issue at Adina Donovan Home and stated that several member of his community urgently anticipates admitting family members who are unable to provide homecare. He inquired about the plans moving forward.

701. The CSDO stated that the reality is, the Adina Donovan Home is a twenty (20) bed facility. She stated in 2015 there were twenty eight (28) persons, however

to date have been trying to maintain the capacity. The CSDO stated for the persons who are unable to be provided with institutional care, an alternative is a grant and home care services. There are currently eleven persons who require grants, therefore an additional fifty five thousand (US\$55,000.00) needs to be reflected in the budget be able to assist the families.

702. The Member for the Third District stated that several years ago, there was a Senior Citizen Programme, which would allow them to have activities, meals and recreation. He also stated the community centers used to be managed by committees. He asked if such practices would be restored.

703. The CSDO stated that the Senior Citizen programme is still active. She stated that the seniors meet in the Anglican Church every Tuesday, temporarily while the Community Center in Sea Cow's Bay is being refurbished. She stated that East End and Carrot Bay Seniors also meets once a week.

704. The PSHSD stated that all ten Community centers were damaged in 2017. She stated the plan is to restore all centers to be functional. She stated that negotiations were made with the European Union (EU) for a two million dollar (US\$2,000,000.00) grant which would help to refurbish the center. She stated that the Long Trench and Anegada centers are fully repaired. She further stated that the most costly projects would be the Brewers Bay and East End/Long Look Centers which were severely damaged and requires a scope of works.

705. The Member for the Third District inquired about the Sea Cows Bay Community Center.

706. The PSHSD stated that the roof was repaired and the installation of windows and doors. She stated that the drainage needs to be addressed as well as the fencing and interior upgraded.

707. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that all the social ills lies with the Ministry of Health and Social Development and will ensure that they are supported.

708. The Premier and Minister of Finance stated that the social ills of the Community is appalling and to a high degree. He informed the Ministry that it is a transitional budget, however would try his best to see what all can be accomplished and concluded by applauding them for their hard work.

709. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2654**WASTE MANAGEMENT****Present:**

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHSD)
Mr. Greg Massicote	Manager, Department of Waste Management (MDWM)
Ms. Natalie Fahie-Smith	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Mr. Clayton O'Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Dr. Irad Potter	Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (CMO)
Mr. Duane Fraites	Assistant Project Manager
Mr. Ahdan Doward	Waste Management Officer, Department of Waste Management

710. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

711. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the status and rectification of;

- 1) The unsightly conditions and health hazards of the dumpsite
- 2) Removal of Derelict Vehicles
- 3) Contracts for Garbage Collection

712. The MDWM stated that currently through the Ministry of Health the Waste Management Department engaged a Waste Management Specialist to look at strategies for disposal methods. He stated the consultancy officially ends nine

(9) months starting January, 2019 and thereafter recommendations would be made through the house and thereafter the strategies would be implemented based on resources available.

713. The MDWM stated that over the past two (2) weekends there was two major operations with the RDA for the removal of derelict vehicles in Virgin Gorda. Based on those operations, two hundred and ninety two (292) derelict vehicles were removed at the Valley, Virgin Gorda. The MDWM stated that the departments' wrecker was sent to Virgin Gorda to work with haulers in Virgin Gorda and an additional seventy plus (70+) vehicles were removed within one week. He stated that he two issues needs to be addressed, the removal of the remaining vehicles and the need for a new storage location, which also is dependent on resources.

714. The MDWM stated that there are currently eight (8) contracts for garbage collection. He stated that garbage is collected seven (7) days a week, in the Valley and four (4) times a week in North Sound. He stated that bulky waste is the responsibility of the Department.

715. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District thanked the MDWM for conducting a walk through at Paraquita Bay and asked when the site would be cleared.

716. The MDWM stated that the site was designated after the passage of Hurricane Irma as a debris management hub for the Eastern side of the Island. The site was officially closed in November, 2017. Restoration of the site is estimated to cost one hundred thousand dollars (US100, 000.00). The Restoration would

include removal of scrap metals, garbage and ash and dirt which would be capped off with soil.

717. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked if the moneys were budgeted to which the MDWM responded no.

718. The Member for the Third District spoke about dumpsite in Sea Cows Bay and suggested that Government should invest in the clean-up of the entire Territory. He stated that the Sea Cows Bay residents are fed up with the site and an additional site is needed as a matter of priority and urgency.

719. The MDWM agreed that the issue of derelict vehicles is indeed a vexing issue, however disagreed with the approach of which it is being handled. The MDWM suggested that HM Customs and BVI Ports Authority should implement age limit on importation of vehicles as a lot of the vehicles of the entire Territory ends up at the Mechanic shops or along the road which increases derelict vehicles.

720. The Member for the Third District asked if there is an alternative site to which the MDWM responded no. The MDWM stated that they will actively try to find another site.

721. The Member for the Second District commended the MDWM for doing much more than is expected due to limited resources. He applauded his responsiveness and inquired about the Hazardous Allowance and asked if it was put in place and received to which the MDWM responded no.

722. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District congratulated the MDWM for his good work and inquired about a derelict fee and asked if it is instituted to which he responded no.
723. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired about his salary scale to which he responded Grade 15.
724. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that in the six (6) to eight (8) weeks working with the department he had shown great effort in his abilities. He stated that moneys have now been approved to fund the repairs of the control panel and electrical works of the incinerator. He stated he was unable to report on the Scrubber as there are issues with Consultancy. He further stated that the open burning must be stopped, the incinerator repaired and an alternative landfill site be identified.
725. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for First District also commended the MDWM for being an ultimate professional. He inquired about the Scrubber and the state at Cox Heath.
726. The MDWM stated Cox Heath was used as a Debris Management hub since hurricanes Irma and Maria. The MDWM stated that the fire at Cox Heath has been burning since 9th May, 2018. He stated there is an internal combustion that needs to be addressed. He stated that funds were included in the budget, however the funds went toward the operations being conducted at Pockwood Pond on the hill and stated more funding would be needed in the region of two hundred and seventy thousand dollars (270,000.00). He further mentioned that it would always be reliant of the incinerator being functional, which has been down since 26th November, 2018.

Present:

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.PSTWU)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

727. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

728. There being no questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2757**FACILITIES MANAGEMENT UNIT****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU)
Mr. Ariel Donovan	Facilities Manager, Facilities Management Unit (FM)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

729. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

730. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities commended the FM for the work done to the Central Administration Complex since the passage of the hurricane as he did an exceptional job.

731. There being no further comments, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2759**FIRE SERVICES****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.PSMTWU)
Mr. Zebalon McLean	Chief Fire Officer, Fire Services (CFO)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

732. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

733. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired on the status of the East End Long Look Fire Station and asked when it would be operational.

734. The CFO stated that the station is operational; however it is currently closed due to there being no fire trucks on site. The CFO stated that it is expected to be fully operational in one (1) month.

735. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and the Member for the Fifth District asked for an update on the Fire.

736. The CFO stated that there was a fire in Mayaba area that started among the bush that moved in three different areas which threatened the residential homes however the well trained fire officers were able to contain the fire.
737. The CFO mentioned that persons should be discouraged from burning and encourage all members to take care of their health.
738. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities acknowledged Ms. Joyce Cameron for assisting with water to aid in containing the fire.
739. There being no questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2760**WATER AND SEWERAGE DEPARTMENT****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU) (Ag.DSTWU)
Mrs. Perline Scatliffe-Leonard	Director, Water and Sewerage Department (DWS)
Mr. Bernard Grant	Deputy Director, Water and Sewerage Department (DDWS)
Mr. Michael Davis	Engineer, Water and Sewerage Department
Mr. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

740. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record. The Chairman informed the panel that due to time constraints they should circulate their presentations.

741. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the timeline for the availability of meters throughout the Territory.

742. The DWS stated that currently meters are not supplied. She stated that currently the department is utilising the services Clement Donovan (Bone

Crusher) to repair meters. The DWS stated there is a fixed rate plan rate with customers which is an agreement between the department and customers. The DWS also stated that the Clarence Thomas Agency has been supplying meters. The DWS further stated that the Department is focused of tendering process of the Smart Meters and thereafter would report.

743. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the loss of revenue due to the issues with meters.

744. The DWS stated that revenue has been lost because customers are free to do as they please with water.

745. The Ag.PSMCW stated that the funding for the meters are included in the 2019 Budget Estimates for the Ministry. The Ag.PSMCW stated that quotations were received from the requisite companies and seek permission to shortlist and purchase. The Ag.PSMCW stated the department will be implementing Ultrasonic Meters that would be read by smart device that would be accompanied by a utility system. The Ag.PSMCW stated that within the next three (3) to four (4) months the meters would be on hand.

746. The Member for the Third District inquired about the Baugher's Bay Plant to which the DWS informed that it has not been functional due to damages to appliance and equipment that were damaged during the passage of Hurricane and Maria.

747. The Member for the Third District inquired about the Greenland Pump that supplies water to the Balsalm Ghut reservoir to which the DWS answered no and stated that the Sabbath Bay reservoir supplies Balsalm Ghut reservoir.

748. The Member for the Third District asked the DWS if she was aware that the sole purpose of the Baugher's Bay Plant is to supply water to the eastern side of the island to which she answered yes.
749. The Member for the Third District stated that because the Baugher's Bay Plant is not functional the Western side of the Island is being rationed to which she answered yes.
750. The Member for the Third District informed that 3.5 million was approved by cabinet in September, 2018 to remedy the water woes in the Third District. He stated that water is commodity that is considered a human right and persons in his district only get water for two hours daily and it urgently need to be rectified.
751. The Ag.PSMCW the ministry acquired the services of a consultant and a team to assist in assessing the best way to get more water across the ridge to the Hannah Hill reservoir which is an issue towards addressing the Sea Cows Bay water woes and offered further details about the consultancy.
752. The Member for the Third District seeked clarification on the mentioned 3.5 million, however due to time constraints finance was instructed to provide information at a later date.
753. The Member for the Third District asked if the Fort Hill Reservoir is supplying water to Duff Bottom and Slaney to which the Engineer answered yes.
754. The Member for the Third District asked why Slaney and Duff Bottom is unable to receive water 24/7.
755. The Member for the Third District asked if the valve at Duff Bottom is being shut off periodically to which the engineer answered yes.

756. The Engineer stated that there used to be a desalination plant at the High School that was being supplied by several wells, however the plant was abandoned. He stated that a pump was installed that is being supplied from Hannah Hill additional water is being used from Fort Hill to be pumped to Long Bush Reservoir and as a result the water going to the western side of the Island is being decreased. He further stated that during the day the water is taken to the well in Sea Cow's Bay from Fort Hill.
757. The Member for the Third District asked if there is a water shortage in the Territory to which the Engineer answered no and stated that the issue is the distribution of the water in the pipeline. The Engineer stated that two pumps at Slaney were damaged during the hurricane.
758. The Engineer stated that the replacement of the pump would be a priority.
759. The Member for the Third District inquired about the Bird Point Sewerage Treatment Plant.
760. The Ag.PSMCW stated the Bird Point Sewerage Treatment Plant was severely damaged and a technical assessment was conducted by Bi Water to develop a scope of work to be repaired in the first quarter 2018.
761. The Member for the Third District asked what resulted from the assessment the Ag.PSMCW stated that it is being tendered.
762. The Member for the Third District asked who are the beneficial owners of the Water Plant in Paraquita Bay to which the acting Ag.PSMCW answered Seven Seas.
763. The Member for the Third District requested that the names of the beneficial owners and the Sales and Purchase Agreement to be submitted to which the Ag.PSMCW agreed.

764. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about the status of the East End Long Look Sewerage Project, Public Bathroom in Long Look Clinic and water running from the Stickette to Dove Love.
765. The DWS stated that an application was made by Water and Sewerage as the concrete road that is adjacent to the clinic is a private road and approval would have to be granted to dig up the road as well as the resources have it completed. The DWS stated that the Stickette situation is long outstanding and the Environmental Health should be involved in the resolve the situation.
766. The Ag.PSMCW stated that the draft designs have been received from the Technical Consultants as well as the draft tender documents as it related to the East End Long Look Sewerage Project.
767. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the pump at the roundabout is functional to which the Ag. PSMCW answered yes.
768. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2761**MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSING****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU)
Mrs. Bethsaida Smith-Hanley	Acting Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicle (Ag.CDMV)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

769. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

770. The Member for the Third District suggested that the PV plates be discarded to which the Ag.CDMV agreed.

771. The Member for the Third District asked how many licensed vehicles are in the Territory to which the Ag.CDMV responded over 17,000.

772. The Member for the Third District inquired about the struggles faced by the department.

773. The Member for the Third District inquired about the method for identifying abandoned vehicles.

774. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities stated vehicles can be checked individually.

775. The Member for the Third District stated that there is a provision in the law that charges a fee for abandoned vehicles and inquired if it is being exercised.

776. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities stated that the Department of Waste Management is responsible for the charge.

777. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2762**PUBLIC WORKS****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU)
Mr. Navarro Donovan	Acting Director, Public Works Department (Ag.DPWD)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

778. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

779. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about the Management of the Public Works Department in Virgin Gorda and Anegada as a result of complaints. He then asked what plans are in place to reform the department to make it more effective.

780. The Ag. Director stated that currently the department is being restructured. He stated that previously there were eighteen (18) employees and currently there are only nine (9) employees on Virgin Gorda and Anegada. The Ag. PS stated that hopefully the department will be restored to its' previous staffing.

781. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District asked for a timeline so he can report to his constituents. The Ag. PS stated it will be phased throughout the year.
782. The Member for the Second District asked how long the Ag. Director has been acting in his post to which he responded June, 2018.
783. The Member for the Second District stated that he continues to work with the team at Public Works and despite shortfalls in certain areas, the responsiveness and willingness to alleviate issues in the Second District is commended and greatly appreciated.
784. The Member for the Second District inquired about Road Works Projects in the Second District, specifically the road in dog hole leading from the Ferry Dock behind the school to Foxy's referred to as the (back road) on Jost Van Dyke, the overlaying of Brewers Bay Road and road works to be completed in Mayaba and Cane Garden Bay.
785. The Ag. PS stated that the design for the road works in Jost Van Dyke was completed by an outside engineer, once included in the budget by the Ministry the works should be completed. He stated that the road works in Brewers bay, Mayaba and Cane Garden Bay would also be completed as currently there is a contract with the local contractors for asphalt and a schedule to repair roads territory wide. He stated that works will commence in the next month.
786. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member spoke about concerns as is relates to capacity building.
787. The Ag. Director stated that the Ministry along with Public Works have been actively undergoing capacity building exercises which identifies the skills gaps and skill needed to make the department more proactive instead of just being

reactive. The Ag. Director stated that vacant positions would be advertised. He further stated that the department will be developing maintenance programmes and ensured that throughout the year improvements will be made as is relates to capacity building and technical support.

788. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that he hope all projects for districts are conducted and stated that it is reliant on the department having the capacity to conduct its duties and stated he is in full support of such efforts.

789. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that when works are conducted by other department such as Water and Sewerage Department and Utility Companies it takes some time before the roads are patched and suggested that the care of the roads should be included in contracts.

790. The Ag. Director stated that such observation is factual however the asphalt plant has been out of commission therefore there was no availability of asphalt to repair roads.

791. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked for a status update on the road in Paraquita Bay, the road leading to Cedo Lettsome's building that is becoming impassable and further up the hill the undermining road approaching Solomon Pickering's residence in Long Look and Fat Hog's Bay on the main road.

792. The Ag.PS stated that in the interim the road in Paraquita Bay would be passable as there are pending works by the Water and Sewerage Department to address the Sewerage Infrastructure therefore no permanent fixes can be done.

793. The Ag. Director stated that repairs were done to the section of the Road in Fat Hog's Bay and traffic can continue once Water and Sewerage complete works. He stated that the roads in Long Look would be reviewed and works will be forwarded to the Ministry to have them completed.
794. The Member for the Third District thanked the Public Works Department for the work completed in Sea Cows Bay. He referred to the Budget Address and stated that he hope all districts would be given an equal amount of money as mentioned. He stated that the residents of the Third District suffered under the last administration and he anticipates having access to the money he will be able to fulfil the needs of his people.
795. The Ag. Director stated that the aim is to deliver projects to the Ministry.
796. Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member stated the hurricane season is upon us and sought information on the plans for Ghuts and suggested that they be cleared regularly as they gather a lot of debris.
797. The Ag. Director stated that the maintenance programme is being reviewed and upgraded. He stated that officers are assigned to monitor and log the ghuts throughout the Territory and stated that the current database needs to be updated.
798. The Member for the Third District inquired about Bush Cutting and Landscaping Projects for districts.
799. The Ag. Director stated Bush Cutting is included in maintenance programmes and was previously a part of the Retirees Programme, however, the budget was reduced significantly.

800. The Member for the Third District asked what is the plan moving forward and if it will be reinstated. The Ag. Director stated he will do his best with what is available and it will be revisited.
801. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District stated that since his inception he has been working with the Ag. Director and thanked him for going above and beyond.
802. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District stated it is a transitional budget and will try his best to assist the people of the Virgin Islands and commended him for his work.
803. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2763**TELEPHONE SERVICES MANAGEMENT UNIT****Present:**

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.PSTWU)
Mr. Reynell Turnbull	Manager, Telephone Services Management Unit (MTSMU)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

804. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

805. The MTSMU stated that his role is to manage the telecommunication infrastructure and services for BVI Government.

806. The Member for the Second District asked if the department was satisfied with the money allocated.

807. The MTSMU stated the money is sufficient however is dissatisfied with staff accommodations. The MTSMU stated that since hurricane Irma the vehicles were damaged and as a result staff is required to use their personal vehicle to respond to service calls to ensure that government business is completed.

808. The Member for the Second District stated that the Minister and the Ministry would support the department.
809. The Ag.PS stated that the Ministry work diligently to ensure the employees are comfortable. He stated that the fleet at the Facilities Management Unit would be increase and the unit would have a vehicle assigned to the unit.
810. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District stated it is a transitional budget and would accommodate the department as best as possible.
811. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

BVI ELECTRICITY

Present:

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (AgPSTWU)
Ms. Simone Penn	Acting Deputy Director, British Virgin Islands Electricity Corporation (Ag.DDBVIEC)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities

812. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

813. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about street lights as there are very dark areas throughout the district.

814. The Ag.DDBVIEC stated that the purchase of street lights is included in the 2019 budget estimates.

815. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked who is responsible for the two flood lights in Road Town by the Port Authority and asked if they were ordered to be replaced to which the Ag.PSMTWU yes.

816. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired about future plans to bury cable.
817. The Ag.DDBVIEC stated that they are in the process of developing a scope of works for burying the remainder of the transmission line that goes from Sleepy Hill to Hodge's Creek underground.
818. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities asked if three hundred thousand dollars is sufficient for street light for the entire Territory to which the Ag.PSMTWU responded yes.
819. The Member for the Second District recognised and acknowledged the Ag.PSMCW for being hard working and diligence. He also recognized and congratulated the Ag.DDBVIEC for her leadership role.
820. The Member for the Second District suggested reflective crosswalk lights for safety purposes to which the Ag. PSMCW agreed and stated it would be a priority.
821. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

TAXI AND LIVERY COMMISSION

Present:

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.PSTWU)
Mr. Dameon Percival	Director, Taxi and Livery Commission
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Office, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities (FPOTWU)
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation Works and Utilities

822. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record. The Chairman was asked if the panel wished to give a brief presentation.

823. The Director stated that Taxi and Livery Commission was introduced to regulate transportation for the industry. He stated that the Commission was faced with rough patches and required attention. He stated that for three and a half years of the six years he has been the Director he had to handle both the Inspector and Administrative Role. He stated that there have been improvement over the past six (6) months as there are currently four (4) inspectors, once of whom assist the sister islands. The Director stated that there is an increase in illegal taxing. He elaborated on the issues and stated it has been difficult to get the police to intervene. He stated that the Taxi Drivers are highly commended when surveys are conducted.

824. The Chairman asked for a report to be submitted.

825. The Ag. PSMTWU stated it is important for the Taxi and Livery Commission to function properly the Cruise Industry is dependent on its success. He stated that an addition two hundred and forty nine thousand seven hundred dollars would be needed to function throughout the year.

826. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO STATUTORY BOARDS

HEAD 2109

DEPUTY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mr. Alcedo Fahie	Interim Acting Director, Financial Investigation Agency (Interim Ag.DFIA)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (DSDGO)
Mr. Jeremy Vanterpool	Chief Operating Officer, Financial Investigation Agency (COO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

SUBHEAD 551000

GRANT TO FINANCIAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY

827. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

828. The Interim Ag.DFIA made a comprehensive presentation before the Committee and highlighted the following:

- The Agency was created on 1st April, 2004;
- The Agency is a Statutory Body governed by a Board which comprises of:
 - The Deputy Governor (Chairman;
 - The Attorney General (Deputy Chairman);
 - The Financial Secretary;
 - The Commissioner of Police;
 - The Commissioner of Customs; and
 - The Managing Director, Financial Services Commission.
- The Agency is guided by a Steering Committee which comprises of:

- The Attorney General (Chairman)
 - The Managing Director, Financial Services Commission
 - The Director, Financial Investigation Agency
- The Agency is primarily funded by Government Subventions;
 - The Agency receives special funding from the Financial Services Commission on a quarterly basis;
 - In 2018, the Agency received and processed 615 suspicious activities and suspicious transactions reports compared to 648 in 2017;
 - In 2018, the Agency received and processed 630 requests for information from other FIU's and Law Enforcement Agencies compared to 568 in 2018;
 - The Agency requires additional personnel due to workload as follows:
 - one Intelligence Officer;
 - two Administrative Assistants;
 - one Senior Analyst; and
 - one Senior Investigating Officer.

829. After a question being posed in reference to the Competent Authority of the Beneficial Ownership Secure Search System (BOSS), the Committee was informed by the Interim Ag.DFIA that the responsibilities of the BOSS System had been passed on to the Financial Investigation Agency. The Interim Ag.DFIA further reported that if the International Tax Authority (ITA) required access to the BOSS System they would have to obtain permission from the FIA.

830. The remaining discussions surrounded the issue of Suspicious Transactions Reports (STR's). The Interim Ag.DFIA explained that prior to hurricane Irma there was a steady increase of suspicious transactions reports being reported to the Agency.
831. A question was posed to the Interim Ag.DFIA regarding the amount of moneys that is received from the Financial Services Commission towards the budget. The Interim Ag.DFIA responded that the Agency received \$500,000 from the Financial Services Commission. In 2018, they received an additional \$250,000.
832. There was a question posed to the Interim Ag.DFIA regarding his tenure as Interim Ag. Director and that of the present holder of the post. The Interim Ag.DFIA responded that in August, 2017, the Director proceeded on study leave for a period of three (3) years and he has been appointed acting Interim Director from then to present. The present holder of the post was appointed in 2008.
833. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2220**PREMIER'S OFFICE****Present:**

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mrs. Sharon Flax-Brutus	Director, British Virgin Islands, Tourist Board (DBVITB)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

SUBHEAD 551000**GRANT TO BVI TOURIST BOARD**

834. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

835. The DBVITB did not make a presentation to the Committee; however, she requested a budget for \$14.2 million an increase from \$10.5 million.

836. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member gave her support for the increase in the budget to the Tourist Board.

837. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired how long has the budget of the Tourist Board been at \$10.5 million.

838. The DBVITB responded that the budget had been \$10.5 million since her appointment to the post of Director of Tourism six (6) years ago.

839. The Member for the Second District also gave his support for the increase in budget to the Tourist Board.

840. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member made a statement regarding seeing more beautification going on in the Virgin Islands and asked what measures are in place to keep the Virgin Islands clean and beautiful.
841. The DBVITB stated that the Tourist Board actively works with the different Ministries. They have a good working relationship with the Ministry of Health especially the Department of Waste Management. They also work alongside private entities in the BVI so they expect to continue that. She urged all the districts and communities to do their part in keeping the BVI Clean. There is a beautification committee in Road Town and the Tourist Board has a member of staff on that committee.
842. The Deputy Speaker and Territorial Member made mention of the garbage bins throughout the Territory and stated that a barrier needs to be created to hide the garbage as it is unsightly and a traffic hazard.
843. The DBVITB stated that the Tourist Board would be very diligent as it relates to working with the Department of Waste Management. She is aware that they are some recycling plans in place and the department would work as diligently as they could because we are selling a product.
844. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District gave his support for the Tourist Board to receive the additional funding. He noted that his district has been doing a lot of work as they have plans for Sports Tourism, Heritage Tourism among other things. He inquired how the Tourist Board would be utilising the additional funds to help develop and promote the product and ensure that the wealth shows throughout the Virgin Islands.
845. The DBVITB responded that they would be allocating moneys throughout all of the districts. As it relates to the Eighth district and the LoP's references to

Sports, Heritage and Cruise Tourism the Tourist Board had been and will continue to work with Mr. Potter as it relates to the Cruise Tourism and getting additional tours to go through the Eighth district. There are some additional enhancements in terms of signage, road works among other things. As it relates to Sports Tourism, the department has been doing quite a bit of work in terms of looking for ways that they can promote Sports Tourism by bringing in tournaments from different areas. The DBVITB further stated that the department do need to work harder on that because it is not just about the facility itself, the infrastructure in terms of roads, hotels, taxis, and support system needs to be in place. The Tourist Board also plan to use the additional monies in terms of marketing and advertising.

846. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District stated that Trellis Bay is the gateway to access other islands (Oil Nut Bay, Scrub Island etc) and noted that there have been discussions about building a proper visitors terminal. He inquired about the plans for developing the Trellis Bay area.

847. The DBVITB stated that there is a plan in place to put the first phase of the visitor information centre at Trellis Bay. The funding was received at the end of December last year. They are also hopeful that the corresponding Ministry would move towards having Trellis Bay made an official port so that the requisite attention could be paid to that area.

848. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District stated that he would appreciate if the Junior Minister for Tourism and him could work closely on that project in his district to make sure that they are all on the same page.

849. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2220**PREMIER'S OFFICE****Present:**

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mr. Denniston Fraser	Managing Director BVI Airports Authority Limited (MDBVIAA)
Coy Levons	Director of Operations, BVI Airports Authority (DOO)
Mrs. Sharifa Smith	Director of Finance, BVI Airports Authority Limited (DOF)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

SUBHEAD 531000**BVI AIRPORTS AUTHORITY LIMITED**

850. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

851. The MDBVIAA informed the Committee that the Virgin Gorda runway had never been paved for over 40 years. He received a quotation for overlaying the surface, which is an approximate value of \$2.6 million to 2.8 million. He stated that the cost has been reduced to approximately \$1 million due to the fact that they have the equipment on Beef Island so the Government will not incur the mobilisation cost.

852. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District asked what the timeframe in which they had to commence work.

853. The MDBVIAA stated that the runway at Beef Island is expected to be completed by end of April, 2019 to first week in May, 2019. There will be some after works, which will be finalised by late May to early June. The company has another job pending but they would consider Virgin Gorda if they were advised within the next two to three weeks latest.
854. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration inquired if there was any consideration given to extend the Anegada Airport.
855. The MDBVIAA stated the department had not sorted approval or a quote for the extension of the Anegada Airport.
856. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the status on the improvements to the Terminal Building on Anegada and Virgin Gorda.
857. The DOO stated that with regards to the Anegada and Virgin Gorda Terminals, minor works were done to bring them up to a minimal standard. However, the situation is that they have not received the insurance payout. Due to the lack of funding, the department was unable to do any further works on the buildings.
858. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member stated that Rosewood had committed approximately \$100,000 for improvements to the Virgin Gorda Terminal and inquired what those funds would be used for.
859. The DOO stated that if they had a \$100,000, it would be used for fixing the air condition, the parking lot, infrastructure work, and a proper roof for the building.
860. The Speaker inquired about ASSI.

861. The MDBVIAA stated that the subject of ASSI falls under the purview of the Ministry of Communications and Works.

862. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Standing Finance Committee.

HEAD 2436

**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LABOUR AND
IMMIGRATION**

Present:

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkeley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Ms. Lynda Varlack	Director of National Parks Trust, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DNPTMNRLI)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DPSNRLI)
Ms. Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag. DPSNRLI)

SUBHEAD 551000

GRANT TO NATIONAL PARKS TRUST

863. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record, to which they complied.
864. The Ag. Director of National Parks Trust (DNPT) gave a brief presentation and stated the National Parks Trust was established as a statutory body under the umbrella of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour in the Government of the Virgin Islands in 196, is tasked with a broad portfolio of conservation and protection services that speak to: species restoration, marine conservation, reforestation, historical preservation, biodiversity research and environmental engagement/education.
865. The AgDNPT stated that currently, it operated with a staff of less than thirty to manage twenty terrestrial parks and protected areas and one marine park.

866. The AgDNPT stated the critical work priorities of 2019.
867. The AgDNPT stated that the trust was invited to purchase Toad Hall (a 5 acre property) in the immediate vicinity of the Baths, National Park \$5.5 million dollars by the owner Mr. Stephen Green. The AgDNPT also stated that the owner is willing to allow the Trust to purchase the property for an initial down payment of at least \$1m and then undertake to pay the balance in equal installments within a 2-year period. The AgDNPT further stated that the trust does not have the funds to purchase the property and requires seed money. The AgDNPT requested one million dollars that could be used to serve as a down-payment necessary to initiate the transaction. The AgDNPT concluded by stating that through anticipated improvements in fiscal performance, the Trust would be able to generate the revenue needed to meet the obligation for paying off the balance to complete the purchase, and then undertake the development of the site into a full-fledged business operation.
868. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District inquired the status of Hans Creek National Park.
869. The AgDNPT stated that she know the marine portion (and perhaps coastline) of Hans Creek is a legally declared Fisheries Protected Area per the 1997 Fisheries Act. However, I would need to double-check the contents of the Trust's Parks & Protected Areas System Management Plan with respect to Hans Creek as potential area for conservation by designation as a national park.
870. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked if there a plans to incorporate Han Creek into the protected status of Long Bay, Beef Island.

871. The AgDNPT stated that to her knowledge, Hans Creek has not been identified as a distinct area to be linked directly or indirectly with ongoing effort for the declaration and management of Beef Island's Long Bay Beach as a national park. She said that the Trust can look into what the characteristics/features of Hans Creek that naturally lend themselves as opportune linkage to Long Bay Beach, Beef Island for preservation and eco-tours, recreation, education, local scientific research, citizen science, etc.
872. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that Hans Creek is a pristine ecological wonder, and a fantastic area for eco-tourism and natural recreation. He said please see how it could be preserved and protected as a national park.
873. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member stated that over a year ago the Director of Tourist Board and the now Junior Minister for Tourism met with a gentleman who own a sizable piece of land adjacent to the Baths. She inquired about the status of the negotiation stage on the piece of land.
874. The Permanent Secretary PSNRLI stated that the Ministry has met with the lawyer who is representing the Owner of the property. The owner has quoted the value of the property to be \$5.5 million. Currently, an appraisal was being sought to establish the true value of the property. Once appraisal is received an information paper would be done to take to Cabinet to get an agreement in order to have a MOU signed to take the property off the market. Discussions to find the moneys to would be the next step.
875. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thank the Permanent Secretary and his team for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2543**EDUCATION POLICY, PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION****Present:**

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (PSECYAFA)
Mr. Stephen Payne	Executive Director, Recreational Trust
Mrs. Connie George	Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (CEO)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary, Projects Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AsstSec)
Mrs. Jovita Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (FPOEC)
Ms. Koreen George	Accounts Supervisor, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth Affairs, Fisheries and Agriculture (AcctSup)

SUBHEAD 551000**GRANT TO RECREATION TRUST**

876. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District inquired about Head 3250413 that there was \$200,000 for Anegada Sporting Facilities for 2020 and under Head 42550500 Recreational Facilities Restoration; he asked if they were two (2) separate entities. There was no response to this. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated that there needs to be recreational facilities on Anegada and there was a young man who was taking an initiative to raise monies to restore the facilities there. He further asked if Members could make this a reality and have it as a high priority.

877. The Member for the Third District inquired about the existence of the Board. The Executive Director advised that the Board had expired. The PSMEC advised that the Ministry was aware that the Boards had expired just before the 2017 hurricanes and the Minister at the time advised not to reinstate that Board given that there were no recreational facilities to be managed because they were destroyed during the hurricanes as well as there were no funding to refurbish the facilities. The Member for the Third District stated that persons responsible for putting on the light bulbs at the basketball court promised to do it, but did not do it. He further stated that the same thing was for the softball field. The Executive Director advised that none of the requests the Member mentioned came through the Trust. He further described who was responsible for the Trust and further stated that one of the bulbs needed to light the AO Shirley Grounds would be 1350 Watts, if twelve (12) were placed on the grounds, which would equal almost a thousand dollars an hour per pole. He advised that they did not have the funds to manage that cost.

878. The Member for the Sixth District informed that she had submitted estimates for an open court until they can get something similar for Virgin Gorda in order that the youths can have something to utilize in the interim.

879. The Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired if there was a Master plan for all of the recreational facilities in the Territory. She informed that we are playing all of our home games in Anguilla and they are collecting \$100,000 from FIFA; 2-3 games have been played there since the season started. She further inquired about how the electricity bills were paid as she saw that the lights are left on sometimes all night. The Executive Director advised that there used to be some form of Security. However, since he had been on board they have had to replace timers on the lights and encountered vandalism which has resulted in high light bills. Capoons Bay lights were left on all night because the facilities are not secured. He stated that there is some

form of a plan to rehabilitate the facilities. He noted that the AO Shirley Grounds Track has already been re-laid, they plan to facilitate soccer on Virgin Gorda and advised that things were happening.

880. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired of the nine (9) basketball courts that were selected to be restored through the CDB loan.

881. The ASMEC informed that they were: Anegada, North Sound-Virgin Gorda, Cane Garden Bay, Sea Cow's Bay, Purcell Estate, Greenland, West End, Road Town (Long Bush), and Jost Van Dyke. She further iterated that Purcell Estate and Greenland were removed from the list and Capoons Bay and Carrot Bay were added on the list. The Premier asked why the latter two were added in as they do not need any more than \$100,000 to restore. The ASMEC advised that Purcell Estate and Greenland were taken out because they were able to restore them with local funding. The Member for the Second District asked about the assessment for the Diamond Estate basketball court. The ASMEC advised that there was no assessment done for Diamond Estate and Baugher's Bay courts. The ASMEC advised that there were minor works done on the Sea Cow's Bay basketball court. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District requested that the basketball courts at Diamond Estate, Baugher's Bay, Anegada, Capoon's Bay and Carrot Bay should be removed from the CDB loan funding as they could be restored through local spending.

HEAD 2543**EDUCATION POLICY, PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION****Present:**

Dr. Marcia Potter	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports (PSECYAFA)
Mrs. Judith Vanterpool	Acting President, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC)
Mrs. Italia Penn	Bursar, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC)
Mrs. Jovita Mercer-Scatliffe	Finance and Planning Officer (FPOECYAFA)
Ms. Lorna Stevens	Assistant Secretary (AS)

SUBHEAD 551000**GRANT TO H. LAVITY STOUTT COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

882. The Chairman welcomed the panel and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.
883. The Acting President stated that she didn't have any presentation but can be asked questions.
884. The Junior Minister for Tourism inquired as to what is the status of the Culinary Programme at HLSCC and are there any plans to improve the programme from an Associate to Bachelors Programme.
885. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired as to whether there any potential donors or sponsors willing to help with the programme.
886. The Acting President stated that presently the Culinary Arts Centre's physical structure is under repairs after the hurricanes Irma and Maria and due to lack

of funds there is a challenge in getting persons to work on the Centre to have the repairs done.

887. The Acting President stated that the challenges have experienced is getting the air conditioning repaired for the kitchen and they have had to use the Technical School in Baughers Bay for some of the classes.

888. The Acting President stated that the HLSCC has outdone their time at the Technical School and need to get back in the Centre. She further noted that by the end of this month the air conditioning workers agreed to have the Centre ready.

889. The Acting President stated that they are thinking about it and continue to seek articulations with institutions that will blend with what we are doing in the Virgin Islands.

890. The Acting President stated that they are actively seeking donors and are in quite a few discussions.

891. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated that 2020 will mark 25 years since the death of H. Lavity Stoutt which the college is named and inquired as to the progress of the statue or bust being made of H. Lavity Stoutt in honour of him at the H.Lavity Stoutt College. He also inquired as to what is the significance of the MOU recently signed between the HLSCC College and the University of the Virgin Islands as it relates to the implications on education.

892. The Acting President stated that the College will be celebrating its 30 years Anniversary next year and will be incorporating the celebration in honor of the death of the late H. Lavity Stoutt 25 years later.
893. The Acting President stated that the college is currently researching the cost of the bust.
894. The Acting President stated that the college with the MOU has been able to award our students the ability to attend the University of Virgin Islands at a reduced rate now of \$17,000.00 per semester instead of \$23,000.00 per semester. She further stated that there is now the ability for instructor exchange.
895. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired as to whether or not the college is seriously financially challenged and whether or not the college is well on its way towards maintain its accreditation.
896. The Acting President stated that the college has been putting off developments because there are no finances to support the growth of the college. The college cafeteria has been closed due to repairs and the DAI to the RDA has been gracious to assist with Sixty-one Thousand Dollars in kind by providing materials for classroom workshop to teach construction. The college with their help has been able to reinstate the fire simulator to help with the Marine Studies and air condition is now being replaced via recovery moneys. The Marine Centre is still at severe need of painting and upkeep.

897. The Acting President stated that the challenge has been without funding the programmes can't grow and the buildings can't be maintained and are at a standstill.
898. The Acting President stated the HLSCC is well on its way and will do what they can do, however financial stability is one area that the Commission focuses on and if we do not have any finances we are casting great doubt on them that we will be surviving. She further stated that it is one of the areas that she pleads attention.
899. The Member for the Third District inquired as to whether or not the HHLSCC is accredited.
900. The Acting President stated the HLSCC is accredited and that the college is up for reaffirmation this same time in 2020.
901. The Premier and Member for the First District inquired as to when did the RDA approach the college with assistance.
902. The Acting President stated that the DAI under the FCO approached the HLSCC and promised to help in kind. The RDA recently promised to assist the HLSCC at a general meeting at the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports.
903. The PSMECAFYAS stated that the RDA asked the Ministry to provide a list of things that they can work along with the HLSCC to provide assistance.
904. The Premier and Member for the First District inquired as to how much moneys received were received from the Government in last year's budget.

905. The Bursar stated that the Eight Million Dollars as stated was received from the Government for last year's budget.
906. The Bursar stated that the problem is not what the HLSCC is getting for subvention but if the subvention can fund the HLSCC based on their expenditures keeping in mind that in 2013 they were getting Eleven Million Dollars and being reimbursed for the tuition assistance. Today the HLSCC is only getting Eight Million Dollars with no tuition reimbursement and have to pay for the tuition assistance out of the subvention.
907. The Premier and Member for the First District questioned if the college is in a deficit, has been running a loss every year since 2013 and is on life support for which the Acting President answered in the affirmative.
908. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked that the Bursar speak to the importance of the financial stability of the accreditation process of the HLSCC.
909. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated that when he was a part of HLSCC Board consideration for accreditation was based on proving that the college could be financially sound and should be taken seriously.
910. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member encouraged the Members to do whatever possible to ensure that the college does not lose its accreditation that was fought for and gained.

911. The Members for the Second District inquired as to who qualified for the free tuition.
912. The Bursar stated that BVI Islanders, Belongers and persons in the country for more than seven years are among the persons who qualified for the tuition assistance.
913. The Member for the Second District stated that based on his understanding the HLSCC free tuition policy was based on BVI Islanders and Belonger who wanted to further their education and become contributing citizens to the development of the country.
914. The Member for the Second District inquired as to why the cafeteria and book store and all the other avenues that would assist to help balance the finances of the HLSCC have ceased.
915. The Acting President stated that the cafeteria has had many mishaps and the standard of production has not been forthcoming. The Building of the cafeteria is in much disarray to have the students eat there and is at a stage where the students bring their own sandwiches and are now the entrepreneurs at the college.
916. The Acting President stated that the book store is under evaluation and there are many books outdated. They are much discussions if there will be a full fledged bookstore with the incoming e-books or a campus store with a few hard cover books for students to reference in the learning centre.
917. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that as a former member of the accreditation committee at the HLSCC,

if finance is an obstacle to discussions made by the HLSCC the Commission would look at it negatively and it is very serious in the eyes of the Commission.

918. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that based on the college the tuition assistance programme information online applicants must be the holder of a British Passport issued by the Virgin Islands, BVI Belonger card, BVI Passport with the BVI as place of birth and a Certificate of Naturalisation.

919. The Member for the Third asked that the information on the criteria for free tuition be forwarded to the Committee.

920. The Junior Minister for Trade and Economic Development and Territorial Member encouraged the Premier and Members to do what is possible to assist the college.

921. The Minister for Transportation, Works and Utilities and Member for the Fifth District inquired about data on the number of students successful at the college.

922. The Premier and Member for the First District stated that it is clear that the accreditation at the HLSCC is at jeopardy and says that the information provided is timely. The Premier and Member for the First District also stated that the college is in need of a comprehensive business model review and plan. The Acting President of HLSCC responded in the affirmative.

923. The Premier and Member for the First District the Government thanked the acting President for the work done so far at the HLSCC and pledged to assist in turning the HLSCC around.

HEAD 2652**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT****Present:**

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHDS)
Mr. Ronald Georges	Chief Executive Officer, British Virgin Islands Health Services Authority (CEOBVIHSA)
Ms. Natalie Fahie-Smith	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSH)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Mr. Clayton O'Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Dr. Irad Potter	Chief Medical Officer (FPOPO)
Mr. Duane Fraites	Assistant Project Manager

SUBHEAD 551000**GRANT TO BVI HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY**

924. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

925. The CEOBVIHSA stated that the appointments, especially those at an executive level have to be approved by Cabinet. He stated there we are in discussions with the new Health Minister and agreements were made before implemented.

926. The PSHSD stated that all Top Management Positions have to go through Cabinet, there were recommendation made, the papers would be presented and Cabinet will then make a decision on appointments.

927. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District mentioned an advertisement about Medical Services on Anegada. He stated that medical services will be discontinued on Mondays and service would be given half day Tuesday and Thursday, from 9:30 - 12:30.
928. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member asked what state of the art evacuation mechanisms will be available to residents as it is very disheartening the way persons have to be transported when they are ill.
929. The CEOBVIHSA stated that Medical Evacuation has been a vexing issue for quite some time. He stated there were moves in the past for Helipads but Helipads without Helicopter is inadequate.
930. The PSHSD suggested an Ambulance Boat, a purpose built vessel which would be in the region of four hundred thousand dollars.
931. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District requested the information for the Ambulance Boat to which the PSHSD affirmed.
932. Junior Minister for Tourism and Territorial Member inquired about the functionality and condition of the generator for the Iris O'Neal Clinic.
933. The CEOBVIHSA stated that the generator would be repaired within the new two weeks.
934. The Member for the Sixth District suggested that there be a full time doctor and nurses at Long Look Clinic.
935. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District asked for a status on Long Look Clinic and the factors that led to it being closed.

936. The CEOBVIHSA stated that there were significant damages to the Clinic, however most of the repairs were conducted and should be functional in the next month.
937. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member stated the BVIHSA is in the process of being accredited. September 2019 is the next review. It is a very important step in the life of the BVIHSA which as a staff of six hundred and twenty (620) throughout the Virgin Islands. He stated that in the interim will seek to build capacity. He stated in efforts to be informative to the public, an upgrade would be given shortly.
938. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District informed that it is a transitional budget however an additional 2.5 million forms part of the budget estimates for the Information System that will aid in the accreditation was included in the budget.
939. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 2652 **MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Present:

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHDS)
Ms. Antoinette Skelton	Director, Social Security Board (DSSB)
Mr. Ian Smith	Chairman, Social Security Board
Ms. Jeanette Boynes	Deputy Director, Social Security Board
Ms. Michelle Georges	Chief Operations Officer, Social Security Board
Dr. Irad Potter	Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (CMO)
Ms. Natalie Fahie-Smith	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSH)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Mr. Clayton O’Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Mr. Duane Fraites	Assistant Project Manager

HEAD 26554173 **GRANT TO NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE**

940. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record. The Chairman informed the panel that due to time constraints they should circulate their presentations.

941. The Director apologised for the absence of Mr. Roy Barry who was away on official travel duty to Jamaica.

942. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District asked how NHI acquires their money.
943. The Director stated they acquire money from two sources, Government and the Contributors. The money that comes from government is sent to the **NHI**.
944. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District asked how much money government contributes to NHI which the Director answered forty two million dollars yearly (42,000,000.00).
945. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District asked how much is collected from the contributors.
946. The Director stated for the year ending 31st December, 2018 a total of seventy seven million two hundred and thirty one dollars (77,231,000.00) was collected, therefore, thirty five millions two hundred and thirty one thousand dollars (35,231,000.00) was collected from the contributors.
947. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District asked how much was paid out to which the Director stated seventy nine million, seven hundred and forty seven thousand eight hundred and ten dollars (79,747,810.00) which is a deficit of two million five hundred and sixteen thousand two hundred and ninety three (2,516,293.00).
948. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District asked to whom is the money owed.
949. The Director stated that the moneys are owed to the National Health Insurance System and it is outstanding.

950. The Premier and Minister for Finance and Member for the First District inquired about the eleven million five hundred thousand dollars (11,500,000.00) startup cost for National Health Insurance which led to several discussions being ensued.
951. The Director in efforts to clarify stated that when National Health Insurance was envisioned, it was recommended by the committee that contributions should be collected to build up the fund prior to paying benefits. However, the government of the day denied as persons who have to pay their private insurance would also have to pay into the National Health Insurance. The report from the HEU (Health Economic Unit), the consultant on the programme, stated it would take eleven million five hundred thousand dollars (11,500,000.00) to start up the system. The Director stated that Ministry of Finance promised to provide five million dollars (5,000,000.00) by December, 2015, however the money was not received. She further stated that to date the only payments was \$2.5 million that was paid February, 2019. The Director stated that from the inception National Health Insurance was operating from a deficit.
952. The Member for the Third District stated that he is dissatisfied with the manner in which money for the British Virgin Islands Health Services Authority is being channeled through the National Health Insurance. He suggested that the British Virgin Islands Health Services Authority should take the same route as the Private Sector in terms of being paid for services rendered. He further stated that the hospital needed to operate effectively and the only way that can be accomplished is charging for the services.
953. The Chairman stated that a fee for service would have to be a decisions for the Government, and the decision of the Subvention also came from the previous government. He stated that the National Health Insurance cannot speak for the

Ministry of BVI Health Services Authority, however NHI ensures that their clients have the best access to health care services.

954. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District queried the subvention given to the BVI Health Services Authority prior to NHI. A representative from the Ministry of Finance stated that the figure in 2013 was twenty three million, one hundred thousand dollars (23,100,000.00).
955. The Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District queried the contribution that government makes for employees in addition to the subvention, expenditure and revenue and requested information on such, as exact figure were not readily available.
956. The Minister for Health and Social Development thanked the National Health Insurance and the Board as they are operating under extreme circumstance and spoke about bettering the National Health Insurance System.
957. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee and reminded them that this is a transitional budget.

HEAD 43003103**PUBLIC DEBT****Present:**

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Alva McCall	Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Michelle Richmond-Phillips	Head of the Macro Fiscal Unit, Ministry of Finance (HMFU)
Ms. Sandra Brewley	Financial Analyst, Macro Fiscal Unit, Ministry of Finance
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

958. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

959. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there is a presentation to be made.

960. In her presentation, the HMFU stated that:

- The total Public Sector Debt as of December 2018 was \$232.69 million. Of the \$232.6M, she noted the Central Government debt was \$151.79M and guaranteed debt was \$80.9M.
- In the 2019 Budget, the Public Debt is allocated at \$181.1 million dollars.

961. The HMFU noted that the figure stated the Budget Book would be lower than the figure stated above as it speaks to existing debt. She said that the \$181.1M figure includes amounts for new debt.

962. The FS indicated that a copy of the HMFU's presentation should have been emailed to the Clerk.

963. The HMFU continued her presentation and noted that:

- With regards to the public debt stated in 2019 budget, the figure was calculated based on the assumption that the Government's acceptance of the loan guarantee proposed by the UK.
- In 2018, there had been a noticeable change in the trend for debt servicing on the guaranteed debt side. She said that there had been a change from \$16.5M in 2015 to \$41.7M in 2016 which represents disbursements under the BVIEC Social Security Loan. She also referred to:
 - i. An additional disbursement of \$50 million dollars for the BVIPA Loan
 - ii. A disbursement of \$2.1 million in 2018 for another BVIPA loan (\$5.8 million). There are two additional disbursements outstanding.

964. A Member of the Committee inquired about what the term DOD referred to.

965. The HMFU stated that DOD stands for disburse outstanding debt.

966. The FS provided an additional explanation of what the term DOD means.

967. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member inquired about whether the Government is going to remain in line with the ratios set up the Protocols for Effective Financial Management.

968. The HMFU responded in the affirmative.

969. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the Government would be able to maintain the ratios if it were to accept the loan guarantee from the UK.
970. The HMFU responded in the negative.
971. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the Government would be able to maintain the ratios if it were to accept the loan guarantee from the UK four or five years into the future.
972. The HMFU responded in the negative.
973. The FS noted that the public debt figure stated in the 2019 budget is guided by the Medium-Term Fiscal Plan which outlines the plan for borrowing up until the year 2021 that would keep the Government in line with the ratios outlined in the Protocols for Effective Financial Management.
974. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the FS his team for the work that they are doing given the constraints that they are faced with.
975. The Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee and they were dismissed.

HEAD 321

DEPUTY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE CAPITAL

Present:

Mrs. Carolyn Stoutt-Igwe	Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (PSDGO)
Mrs. Helen Seymour	Acting Deputy Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office (Ag.DSDGO)
Mrs. Kara Penn-Stoutt	Finance and Planning Officer, Deputy Governor's Office (FPODGO)

976. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

977. The PSDGO indicated that there was no presentation and would entertain questions from Members.

978. There was a question posed to the PSDGO enquiring whether the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was funded through the CDB loan. The PSDGO responded that the NEOC was the first project that was launched under the CDB loan. She further added that they had already passed through the consultancy phase and the project was presently out to tender for construction. The funding listed in the Budget is for the construction of the building.

979. The Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District commended the PSDGO and her team for the work done during the transition of the new electoral process and stated it was a well-executed and efficient process.

980. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

HEAD 322

PREMIER'S OFFICE CAPITAL

Present:

Mrs. Elvia Smith-Maduro	Acting Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office (Ag.PSPO)
Mr. Jamal Jones	Finance and Planning Officer, Premier's Office (FPOPO)

981. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

982. The Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration and Member for the Ninth District stated that the Premier's Office was now responsible for alternative energy and inquired what was in the budget regarding alternative energy.

983. The Ag.PSPO reported that in the capital expenditure, there was currently no funding in the budget for alternative energy. It was their understanding and expectation that whatever resources that were available under the previous holder of that portfolio would be transferred in this budget cycle. The Ag.PSPO further added that until the Premier's Office could get a better understanding of the portfolio item, it was difficult at this time to put a substantive budget to that portfolio subject.

984. There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Standing Finance Committee.

HEAD 323**MINISTRY OF FINANCE CAPITAL****Present:**

Mr. Glenroy A. Forbes	Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FS)
Ms. Alva McCall	Deputy Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance (DFS)
Mrs. Maria Smith - Thomas	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Finance (FPOMOF)

985. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the proceedings and asked them to state their names and positions for the record.

986. The panel introduced themselves and indicated that there was no presentation to be made.

987. The Member for the Third District asked if the MOF had plans to do anything substantial under their capital budget.

988. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member referred to the Draft B Budget Estimates for 2019 and inquired what is meant the Project Management Development.

989. The FS indicated that the Project Management Development refers to funds that are under the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Loan from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

990. The Minister for Health and Social Development and Territorial Member asked if the funds under the Project Management Development could be used for any project.

991. The FS indicated that the funds have to be used for specific projects under the loan agreement including the project supervision being done by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
992. The Member for the Third District asked if \$123,000 can be moved from under the Project Management Development to go towards the BVI Post Office.
993. The FS responded in the negative and stated that doing so would breach the terms of the contract with the CDB.
994. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired about the restrictions on spending and asked that the FS find a way to place them in in the 2019 Budget.
995. The FS assured the Committee that the MOF will be able to control spending on both the recurrent and capital sides of the budget.
996. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District stated that he would like to have restrictions placed on all votes in the budget that does not have to deal with salaries, personal emoluments and utilities. He emphasised that the Budget will be closely monitored so that more funds can be saved to be reallocated to address the needs of the people.
997. The FS assured the Committee and the Honourable Premier that restrictions will be placed on any new positions, unfilled positions, and all capital spending.

998. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee and reminded them that this is a transitional budget.

HEAD 324**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LABOUR AND
IMMIGRATION CAPITAL****Present:**

Mr. Ronald Smith Berkeley	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (PSNRLI)
Mr. Joseph Smith Abbott	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (DSNRLI)
Ms. Louann Hodge	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag. DSNRLI)
Ms. Linette Rabsatt	Acting Human Resources Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration (Ag.HRMNRLI)
Mr. Norval Young	Cadastral Information Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration

999. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked persons to state their names and positions for the record.

1000. The PSNRLI gave a short presentation. He highlighted two significant projects initiatives that would be a huge impact on the local economy in terms of job creation.

1001. The PSNRLI informed the Committee that back in the early 1970 a company by the name of Old Fort Limited received permission to reclaim approximately 6.6 acres of land going towards West End, this also included about 5.5 acres of land on the land side. This area is currently known as the Dungeon but, the correct name is Fort Purcell.

1002. He stated that this company was acquired by new owners and they were in the process of doing reclamation. He informed the Committee that at the time of the first owners an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was not

required. The Ministry has since requested that the EIA be done by the now owners who are complying. The new proprietors has since approached Government to reacquire the 5.5 acres of land side land. This area has a significant amount of ruins on it and with the historical importance this would enhance the Tourism product.

1003. The PSNRLI stated that Ministry has since gotten in contacted with Dr. Angel Smith a local historian who has agreed to work with the Ministry to maintain the historical significance of this area. This area would be of great significance addition to the tourism product. The proprietors have accepted something to substitute this land for another. The Ministry is in the process of locating a piece of land for the substitution. The PSNRLI stated that currently the Ministry was in the process of developing an information paper for Cabinet to formally inform Members of the Ministry's plans and seek their permission to move forward.
1004. The PSNRLI stated that second initiative was the Blue Economy. The Blue Economy and the Ministry has had a brief meeting with the RDA and the UNDP Representative that is on the Island locally. The PSNRLI felt that this area was where a lot of jobs in the future would certainly be coming from. This area is called the Blue Economy which covers a very wide range and promote economic growth from proper disposal of solid waste to proper governance of our Ocean.
1005. The PSNRLI stated that an iterative process has been started with FCO so that at some point hopefully by the end of this year or certainly by next year the Ministry is hoping to have the Territory fisheries water declared as Territory Economic Zone which would provide the support for the Blue Economy. He stated that a paper would be put forward to Cabinet as an information paper which would outline the initiative that surrounds this idea as approval is sought to move forward.

1006. The Member for the Eighth District inquired about the fisherman dock in the East End/Fat Hog's Bay Harbour. He said that part of this project has always been a dock facility for the Red Bay fishermen and that there has always been funding under this section. He inquired if the dock in the East End/Fat Hog's Bay would be built this year and asked the PSNRLI if the contract for this project was not signed since 2011.
1007. The PSNRL confirmed that the contract was signed in 2011, but the project was not budgeted for this year budget cycle.
1008. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District inquired what was the cost of the East End/ Long Look Project.
1009. The PSNRLI stated that the approximate cost of the East End/ Long Look Project was three hundred and eighty-five thousand dollars (\$385,000.00), however, the project was never funded.
1010. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District and the Leader of the Opposition and Member for the Eighth District requested to be provided at a later time before the Budget Debate with a copy of a full report on total cost break-down of the Brandywine Bay Project from the time it started until now with how much moneys were spent to date.
1011. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Culture, Agriculture, Fisheries, Youth Affairs and Sports and Member for the Seventh District stated that while in the past there were difficulties seeing what was happening at Brandywine Bay, presently and in the future there is a very good plan going forward for a development at Brandywine Bay that will be essential to the tourism product.

1012. The Minister for Health and Social Development and the Deputy Speaker was in full support for the fisherman dock in Red Bay and any accommodation or reallocation that could be used to afford this project they would support in it to the fullest.
1013. The Premier and Minister of Finance and Member for the First District thanked the panel for their appearance and presentation and reminded them that this is a transitional budget.

HEAD 326**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**
CAPITAL**Present:**

Ms. Petrona Davies	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (PSHSD)
Ms. Natalie Fahie-Smith	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Ms. Tasha Bertie	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health and Social Development (DSHSD)
Dr. Irad Potter	Chief Medical Officer (FPOPO)
Mr. Clayton O'Neal	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Development (FPOHSD)
Mr. Duane Fraites	Assistant Project Manager (PHSD)

1014. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record.

1015. There being no questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

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MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION, WORKS AND UTILITIES CAPITAL

Present:

Mr. Jeremy Hodge	Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (PSTWU)
Mr. Andrew St. Hilaire	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Ms. Haley Trott	Acting Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities (Ag.DSTWU)
Mr. Clifford George	Finance and Planning Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities
Mr. Giovanni Herbert	Information Officer, Ministry of Transportation, Works and Utilities

1016. The Chairman welcomed the panel to the Standing Finance Committee and asked that they state their names and positions for the record. The Chairman informed the panel that due to time constraints they should circulate their presentations.

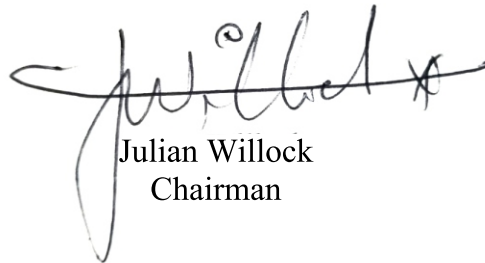
1017. There being no questions, the Chairman thanked the panel for appearing before the Committee.

CONCLUSION

1018. The Standing Finance Committee met for four days and expedited the Capital Budget Estimates and other Expenditures. The Premier and Minister of Finance advised all Statutory Bodies, Permanent Secretaries, Constitutional Bodies and other appearing before the Committee that this a Transitional Budget.

1019. The Chairman thanked all the Honourable Members and other persons appearing before the Committee.

Dated on the 24th day of April, 2019



Julian Willock
Chairman



Phyllis Evans
Secretary

APPENDIX

Dates and Times of Deliberations of the Standing Finance Committee to examine Draft Estimates for the Year 2019

<u>Date of Meetings</u>	<u>Commenced</u>	<u>Concluded</u>
5th April, 2019	12:39 p.m.	6:33 p.m.
16th April, 2019	9:49 a.m.	9:12 p.m.
17th April, 2019	2:11 p.m.	10:38 p.m.
18th April, 2019	10:57 a.m.	12:06 a.m.