

# MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - 30/1/24**

## **T&T Chamber and Customs and Excise Division Collaborate to Address Stakeholder Issues and Enhance Ease of Doing Business**

The T&T Chamber and the Customs and Excise Division (CED) met on Friday, 12th January, 2024, with a view to resolve key issues that are affecting the Chamber's membership. The meeting was one of open dialogue, with a clear emphasis on the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) geared toward enhancing the ease of doing business in Trinidad and Tobago.

Present at the meeting from the CED names were:

- Ag. Comptroller of Customs Mr. Riad Juman
- Deputy Comptroller Corporate Services Ms. Savitri Ramjit
- Ag. Deputy Comptroller Enforcement Mr. Bernard Nicholas
- Ag. Assistant Comptroller Preventive & Tobago Mr. Dexter Robertson
- Ag. Assistant Comptroller Excise, Assessment, & Approved Undertakings

Mr. Allan Mattook

Representing the T&T Chamber of Commerce were:

- Chief Executive Officer - Mr. Stephen De Gannes,
- Trade and Business Development Unit, Manager - Mr. Marc Sandy
- Trade and Business Development Unit, Regulatory Affairs Monitoring Officer -

Mrs. Kimberly Browne-Ali Bocas.

The issues raised revolved around streamlining processes, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, and promoting compliance among users of CED services. Both parties recognized the importance of these matters in creating a more conducive environment for businesses to thrive.

As referenced earlier, the focal point was the establishment of specific targeted SOPs. By developing clear guidelines and procedures, importers, exporters and shipping and logistics companies can navigate the Customs and Excise processes more easily, reducing delays and improving overall operational efficiency. The Customs and Excise Division gave its commitment to ensuring the successful implementation of these SOPs, within a specified time frame.

Simultaneously, the CED emphasized the importance of user compliance with Customs procedures. By timely lodging documents, observing customs operating hours, adhering to notices about operational changes due to public safety, and understanding the procedures for processing both trade and non-trade shipments, businesses can enhance customs efficiency.

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This compliance helps mitigate risks and streamlines trade, contributing to smoother customs and excise operations. The CED expressed its commitment to supporting stakeholders in understanding and complying with these necessary protocols.

Transparency emerged as a key theme during the discussions. Both the T&T Chamber and the CED highlighted the importance of understanding why certain issues occur, and the need for greater visibility and communication. As a result, the CED committed to providing the T&T Chamber with updated or new points of contact within their organization. This proactive measure will enable stakeholders to address specific issues promptly and foster enhanced safety and transparency for all individuals.

The T&T Chamber and the CED are confident that this collaborative approach will yield positive outcomes for the business community in Trinidad and Tobago. By working together, stakeholders and government agencies can overcome challenges, enhance operational efficiency, and create an environment that attracts local and international investments. For further information or media inquiries, please contact:

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### **About the T&T Chamber:**

The T&T Chamber is a leading business advocacy organization in Trinidad and Tobago, representing a wide range of industries and sectors. The Chamber is committed to promoting economic growth, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors, and advocating for policies and initiatives that benefit the business community and the nation as a whole.

### **About the Customs and Excise Division:**

The Customs and Excise Division is a government agency responsible for regulating and facilitating international trade in Trinidad and Tobago. The division plays a crucial role in collecting customs revenue, enforcing trade regulations, and ensuring compliance with national laws, while also supporting the growth and development of businesses in the country.