

**NEWS RELEASE.**

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## **Integrity Commission Engages In Strategic Planning Process**

### **Commissioners and Employees in two-day Retreat**

The Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago has embarked on a strategic planning exercise to chart a course for the Commission over the next three years, 2012-2015.

Commissioners and senior employees of the Commission met at the Hyatt Regency Conference Centre in Port-of-Spain on Friday and Saturday where they reviewed the environment in which the Commission operates and the factors and forces that impact on the achievement of its long-term success. They considered the internal and external environment; technological changes; the Integrity in Public Life Legislation; and sought to arrive at short and long-term strategies for positively impacting the work of the Commission.

The last Strategic Plan of the Commission was prepared for the years 2005 to 2008.

Commission Chairman Mr. Kenneth Gordon told participants the next step in the process is answering: “Where do we want to be as an Integrity Commission and how to we get there? This Strategic Plan is designed to take us over the next three years...in a way it is an attempt to break new ground...”

He added: “We have attempted and we have succeeded in carrying on with our business. We need to be proactive about the future, improve our performance, address major issues and determine what is most important.”

As the Commission moves to make a more positive difference in the lives of citizens, the Chairman emphasised: “We need not just go through the orthodox procedures of a Strategic Plan but to take a really hard look at ourselves, our society and understand the role we must play. The Integrity Commission has come under intense pressure but this is not a disturbing factor. The expression of public concerns is a valid opportunity for us. What is happening to us is an inevitable part of nation-building. We need always to

remember that it is not the size of the problem but it is always how we deal with the challenges that occur.”

In fulfilling its mandate as required by the Integrity in Public Life Act, Mr. Gordon assured employees that he remains “confident that we will address problems that now exist as opportunities that will chart a more vibrant course for the Commission. Indeed, some of the subjects we have before us will, I hope, take us firmly into the future.”

During the Strategic Planning Retreat, facilitated by Commissioner Neil Rolingson, employees and Commissioners, meeting as equal partners, identified strategies to enhance the Commission’s Image, Regulations, Performance and its Personnel Policies. Details on the outcome of the Retreat are being discussed at meetings of Commissioners.

Mr. Rolingson emphasised that the environmental scan examine “not only what is going on in our own captive jurisdiction but additionally what is emerging as ‘best practices’ in international environments with institutions similar to our own.” He questioned: “how do we get there if we do not know where “there” is. By 2015 we will know where ‘there’ is and demonstrate by the plans we have developed how we get ‘there’.”

During the Retreat Commissioners and Senior employees sought to redefine the Commission’s Mission, create a new Vision, set goals and identify measurable objectives and an action-plan.

The mandate of the Integrity Commission is the prevention of corruption of “persons in public life” by providing for public disclosure, regulating the conduct of “persons exercising public functions” and preserving and promoting the integrity of public officials and institutions.

The Integrity in Public Life Act empowers the Commission -- with a total staff size of forty-two persons -- to have an oversight and monitoring role of the integrity of public officials. In addition to facilitating legal compliance and investigating instances of corruption, the Commission is involved in a major project to educate students of our primary and secondary schools in the standards of Integrity. That competition, the “Do Right Champions” competition was held in all Primary and Secondary schools from September-November last year. Fourteen hundred entries were received in Poems, Short Stories, Cartoons and a Scenario (skit) all on the theme of Integrity.

## **Communications & Public Education Division**