



WATTS HAPPENING

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

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VISION - Powering the nation
into the next generation.

MISSION - To deliver
world-class electricity service,
through engaged and
empowered employees, using
clean, sustainable energy,
technologically advanced
systems and a highly reliable,
safe and modern electrical grid.

- The day the lights went out
- Performance appraisals move online
- Renewable energy in focus

Adaptability and evolution

There is growing local conversation on the inclusion of renewable energy in Trinidad and Tobago's generation mix. While the utility scale project from Lightsource bp, bp and Shell is underway, many persons have also asked about individuals using renewables, especially solar. For T&TEC this highlights the fact that the species that are most adaptable to changes in their environment are the most likely to survive. This applies not just in nature but business as well; adaptation and evolution facilitate longevity.

In a January interview with TTT, Chief Technical Officer, Chrisalston Belle acknowledged that solar energy can become one of the predominant sources of energy locally and reaffirmed

T&TEC's readiness for this shift, catering for the changes in the landscape. While the Commission makes the necessary adjustments to meet market demands, the public also has a role to play and several things to consider, not the least of which are safety and licence requirements.

Alternative energy sources were also a topic of conversation after the island wide outage on February 16th when what was expected to be a relatively short outage turned into several hours. While there are questions that can only be answered after the ongoing independent investigation is completed, one certainty is a shift in the way we do business, to mitigate against similar future distress to customers.

Further business adaptations are evident in the new web-based Damaged Appliance Claim process which has eliminated the need for paper submissions and the online performance management system which allows for greater confidence in the system.

All these serve as a reminder that as an organisation, whenever we find new ways of doing things, adapting to meet the needs of the everchanging environment, we make one more step in securing our future.

To learn more on the requirements for renewable energy installations, details on the island wide outage, and more, please read on.

COVER - Can you spot them? Linesman 'C' trainee, Chad Gouveia and Craft Trainee, (linesman) Jared Blackman, almost invisible amidst the forest canopy, were captured by drone footage while conducting repairs to a pole in the Blanchisseuse forest. The photo was taken during restoration efforts after the 'High Wind Alert' (yellow) of February 16-17.

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When the lights went out

A three-man independent Committee has been appointed by the government to investigate the causes of, and the national response to, the island-wide outage on February 16. The team, comprising former T&TEC Board Member, retired Professor of electrical engineering Chandrabhan Sharma, past T&TEC Chairman, Keith Sirju and Special Branch Acting Superintendent, Allister Guevarro, is expected to submit a report, with recommendations, by the end of March.

That Wednesday started off as a typical workday but would turn out to be anything but. At 12:52 p.m., a major disturbance on the electricity system disrupted the supply to all customers in Trinidad. The impact of the outage on the lives of citizens was significant. While restoration started at 6:50 p.m., some customers were affected for approximately 12 hours. This included virtually all national services, including communications, security, manufacturing and retail and transportation.

As the evening unfolded, citizens were kept informed via T&TEC media releases and a television interview with the General Manager, Kelvin Ramsook and Minister of Public Utilities, the Honourable



General Manager, Kelvin Ramsook, has the attention of the Minister of Public Utilities, the Hon. Marvin Gonzales, during the media conference held the day after the island-wide outage.

Marvin Gonzales. The event culminated with a media conference the next day, chaired by the Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds. In attendance were Minister Gonzales, the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs, the Honourable Stuart Young, the Acting Commissioner of Police, McDonald Jacob, and Mr. Ramsook.

At the media conference, Minister Gonzales acknowledged that systems did not operate as they should have and "what transpired yesterday ought not to have happened...and therefore we will look deeper into what transpired". The Minister spent approximately five hours in the Control Room observing restoration efforts, and he congratulated the team at T&TEC for their hard work and collaboration with the Independent Power Producers, Trinidad Generation Unlimited

(TGU), Trinity Power and PowerGen. He registered his "profound gratitude" and pride for the kind of work they demonstrated during the challenge.

Mr. Ramsook sincerely apologised to all customers for the inconvenience caused by the "catastrophic failure" of T&TEC's system. He explained that the fault developed on the two major Gandhi Village/ Union Estate 220 kV lines, which caused a disconnection from TGU. "The TGU Power Station provides 500 megawatts (MW) of the total load demand of 1185 MW...roughly 40% of the capacity comes from TGU," he said. What happened next triggered the "underfrequency load shedding scheme" and the other IPPs (Powergen and Trinity Power) attempted

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T&TEC gets in-depth on RE

Photovoltaic (solar) energy is one of the most popular forms of renewable energy (RE) and is poised to become one of the predominant sources of energy in Trinidad and Tobago in the future. So said Chief Technical Officer, Chrisalston Belle, while being interviewed as a guest on TTT's In Depth television programme, which aired on January 28. Because of its environmental benefits, solar energy remains an attractive option for those serious about preserving the planet for coming generations. However, the use of solar energy at an individual level has several considerations, including cost, legality, infrastructure and the safety of RE installations, as well as other energy conservation practices.

Mr. Belle, along with Corporate Communications Manager, Annabelle Brasnell, discussed these issues during the

programme, and reaffirmed T&TEC's role in the government's utility scale renewable projects and its contribution to the national goal of reducing carbon emissions.

For individuals desirous of investing in renewable energy, Mr. Belle noted that grid-tied solar installation is not yet allowed, since such connections require the completion of a Feed-in-Tariff Policy, a Non-Utility Scale Generator Policy and possible legislative changes, which are all currently being addressed by the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Grid-tied connections would allow customers to send any excess electricity they generate back to the T&TEC grid. He also advised however that while a stand-alone solar energy



installation can be made, it requires a licence from the Ministry of Public Utilities and approval from the Government Electrical Inspectorate "so that the electrical wiring in the installation can be checked to make sure that it is safe."

Section 66 (1) (a) of the T&TEC Act states that no person shall (a) use, work or operate or permit to be used, worked or operated any installation; or (b) supply to or for the use of any other person energy from any installation, except under and in accordance with the terms of a licence expressly authorising the

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Executive appointments



On April 1, 2022, **Nigel Bobb** was appointed Engineering Controller, Technical Division, following the retirement of Ravi Shukla.

Mr. Bobb joined T&TEC in 1994 and, after completing the Engineer-In-Training programme, went on to hold managerial positions at several departments, including Metering Services, System Control and Generation Interface and the then Supplies Department, as well as the East and North Distribution Areas.

Mr. Bobb holds a BSc in Electrical and Computer Engineering, an MSc in Energy Systems and an EMBA, the latter two degrees with distinctions.

Murvie Charles was promoted to Manager, Distribution East from April 1, 2022. He replaces Nigel Bobb.

Mr. Charles holds a BSc in Electrical and Computer Science, a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration and an MSc in Electrical Power Systems.

Mr. Charles joined T&TEC in 1998 and was promoted, over the next 24 years of service, into progressive positions at the Cove Power Station, Tobago, Central and North Distribution Areas and the Public Lighting Department.



Sean Mendonca was promoted to Manager, Public Lighting Department, effective April 1, 2022. Mr. Mendonca joined T&TEC in 1995 as an Engineer-in-Training.

Prior to this appointment, Mr. Mendonca was the Senior Engineer, System Control and Generation Interface. He started his 26-year career in the North Distribution Area and progressed through three departments: Communications, System Planning and Control and System Control and Generation Interface. The holder of a BSc in Electrical and Computer Engineering, he was also a former Technical Assistant and Shift Control Engineer. He also acted as Assistant Area Manager, Distribution East on several occasions.

Courtney Powell was promoted to Assistant Area Manager, Distribution Tobago on February 1, 2022. Mr. Powell joined T&TEC in 2010 as an Engineer-in-Training and was subsequently assigned to the Protection and SCADA Department. He progressed through the engineering stream and, in 2017, was transferred to the System Planning and Research Department. The following year he was promoted to Technical Assistant I and was last assigned to the North Distribution Area.

Mr. Powell is the holder of a BSc in Engineering and an MASc in Electrical and Computer Science.



Jared Hollas was promoted to Assistant Area Manager, Distribution South, effective February 1, 2022. Prior to this, he was a Technical Assistant I in the Area.

Mr. Hollas began his T&TEC career in 2005 as an Engineer II, North Distribution Area. His progression through the organisation included stints in Tobago and South Distribution Areas, and several promotions starting in 2010 from Technical Assistant III, to Technical Assistant I in 2018. He is the holder of a BSc in Engineering.

Performance appraisals now online

The annual exercise of completing performance appraisals has been overhauled into an automated, more efficient and more objective process, which, according to Senior Human Resources Officer, Nalini Baboolal-Rampath, will allow for greater confidence in the system and improved communication between managers and employees.

The new Online Performance Appraisal Module aims to make the appraisal process more efficient in a number of ways. For one, the fully online system provides flexible access and reduces human error. The former paper-based practice of manually compiling, verifying and storing the data from thousands of employees was time consuming and required a lot of resources. "Now that it is securely automated, it allows for greater confidence in the process, and easier access for all involved," said Mrs. Baboolal-Rampath.

The online system also allows for the elements of the appraisal process – setting objectives and competencies, rating and weighting of each and determining training and development needs – to be streamlined in a manner that facilitates continuous communication between the



Charmaine Baptiste-Smith, HR Officer I; Natasha Kanhai, HR Officer III and Abigail Sabad-Drakoulakou, Clerk/Typist, discuss matters related to the online performance appraisals.

supervisor and the employee. Using the ePerformance module of the Human Capital Management (HCM) System, mutually-agreed objectives are set and the employee's progress is monitored and evaluated during the review period. At the end of the period, the appraisal is discussed and scored for the employee. "When employees receive timely and meaningful feedback about their performance, it encourages a better understanding of their responsibilities and performance expectations, which results in a high level of efficiency and productivity," said Mrs. Baboolal-Rampath.

These are necessary to build confidence in a process that has not always been favourably received. With the former manual system, for

those employees who fall within grades 1-8, job performance was rated from an established list, including job knowledge, quantity of work, dependability, work quality, job attitude and working relationships. Some feedback suggested that this practice could potentially lead to instances of bias. According to Mrs. Baboolal-Rampath, the online system helps to alleviate this risk by setting goals with consensus beforehand, which helps to build trust in the assessments. "As the new system is objective-based, we look at exactly what an employee does and appraise them on set criteria, with the aim of measuring and improving the performance of employees."

For an added layer of transparency, the online system provides for the continuous



review and access by all involved and contains an audit trail for checks and balances. For those without computer access, the system includes a feature to print and then scan and upload the completed and signed appraisal forms for approval by the Head of Department.

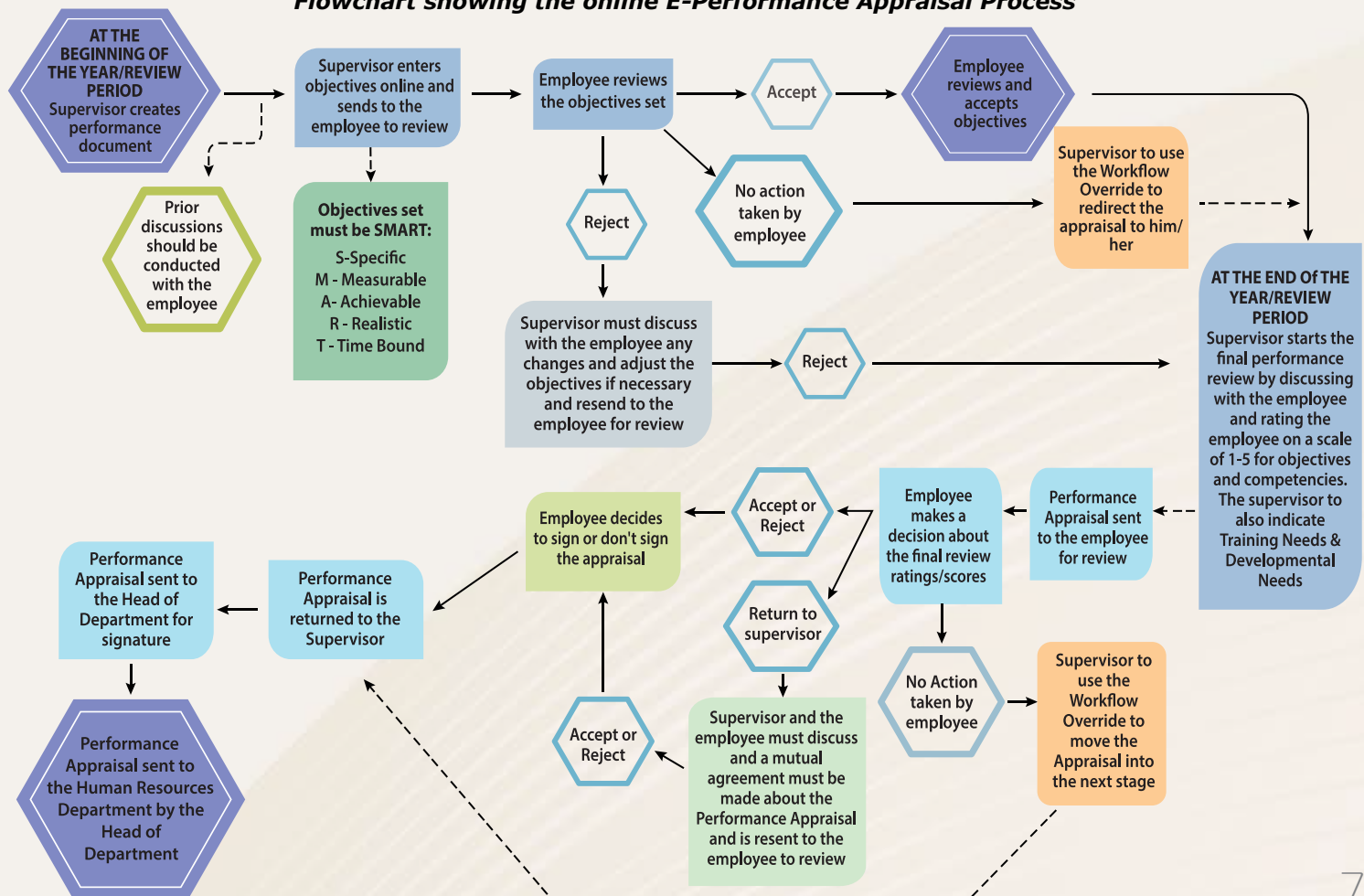
"T&TEC acknowledges that its employees play a key role in achieving its strategic objectives," said Mrs. Baboolal-

Rampath. The ability to easily track completed and outstanding appraisals, generate reports and determine training and developmental needs help to "increase the future potential and value of employees to the company" and improve the general performance of each department.

The ePerformance module was developed in-house,

through a collaborative effort between the Human Resources and Information Systems Departments. It came on stream in January and will also be used for appraisals required for transfers, and for periods of acting and probation. Future upgrades to the online module will include provisions for appraising temporary employees.

Flowchart showing the online E-Performance Appraisal Process



New Craft Trainees to bolster field staff

On November 29, 2021, 41 young men entered the Commission's Craft Trainee Programme at the El Socorro Training Facility, the new north location, and the Penal Training Facility. The three and a half years of theoretical and practical training will culminate in them being placed as Linesmen and Substation Electricians in crews across the five distribution areas. In welcoming the trainees at the south facility, Chief Human Resources Officer, Jacqueline Cheesman, encouraged them to "put all in from day one." As she outlined her expectations, she reminded them that, "what you put in, is what you will get out." Human Resources Manager, Nigel Marquez endorsed these sentiments adding, "enjoy what you do and maintain the highest level of discipline."

The trainees are currently engaged in six months of foundational instruction on electrical installation and techniques. They also completed their first periodic assessment, with promising results. Wahid Abdool, Acting Human Resources Officer - Technical Training said that

the trainees from both facilities "performed good in tasks of lifting, electrical simulation and mechanical aptitude." He expects that other areas will improve with time, such as the skill of pole climbing, where some of them need to develop the "required level of confidence." The written and practical evaluations were conducted by a team from the Technical Division, Human Resources Department and Health Safety and Environment Department.

When the first training level is successfully completed, the craft trainees will proceed on another six months of core training, where they will develop linesman competencies in overhead line construction, transformer wiring, connecting customers to supply and customer relations. This will be followed by two and a half years of on-the-job training, starting at the Distribution Areas, where the trainees will be taken on construction jobs to get practical experience on overhead line construction, low voltage and high



Instructor I, Kwame Chikuyu (right), guides Duane Heywood and Trent Trotman on how to secure an extension ladder on a pole at the El Socorro Training Facility.

voltage line extensions, overhead line maintenance and reconstruction and maintenance planning. On completion and successful evaluation, the on-the-job training will continue with rotation in departments such as Protection and SCADA, Metering Services and Transmission Maintenance, before engaging in ancillary training covering service to customers, distribution plant inspection, service connections and disconnections and public



lighting. The final level includes advanced Linesman training and hotline and maintenance training.

Upon successful completion of the programme, the Craft Trainees are expected to become permanent employees of T&TEC, as either Linesmen 'B' or Electricians 'B'. It augurs well for the Commission, "providing well-trained, skilled and all-round individuals for the succession of our human resources in the technical fields," said Mr. Abdool.

Mr. Chikuyu demonstrates how to make a scribe in the Mechanical Workshop to Trainees Aaron Gordon, Kristan Gulstan and Trent Trotman.

T&TEC assists WASA with Beetham project

Months into a highly visible project by the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) to replace a major sewer line in Beetham Gardens, T&TEC prevented further delays with quick and "masterful" engineering.

Due to the underground work by WASA, T&TEC's North Distribution Area had provided onsite supervision starting in December. However, days before its scheduled completion, WASA encountered two 33 kV underground transmission cables, leading to concerns about further delays.

Planning and execution of a job to relocate the cables, with minimal disruption to the public, would normally have taken at least one month. However, working together, a cross functional team from North Distribution Area, the Protection and SCADA and Transmission Maintenance Departments, was able to find an alternative solution to safely remove the cables from WASA's path in an impressive two days.

The two cables unearthed were the Barataria and Laventille 33 kV feeds to the WASA



Senior Supervisor, Gairy Nelson, overlooks work being done by contractors to access the underground high-voltage cable in the path of the sewer pipeline installation (photo from WASA).

Beetham Substation. According to Technical Assistant II, Transmission Maintenance, Kevin Ramsook, "De-energising these cables would have resulted in the sewage plant being without a supply from T&TEC. This plant is responsible for sewage management for a wide portion of the Northeast and Northwest of the country."



Excavation work being done to facilitate the installation of sewage pipelines in the Beetham area.

In order to keep them on supply, the North Distribution Area had to first transfer all their 12 kV load out of the substation. "A parallel connection was then created between the Waterfront

12 kV feeder out of WASA Beetham Substation and the Sea Lots West 12 kV feeder out of Abattoir substation. The two 33 kV infeeds into WASA Beetham Substation were then

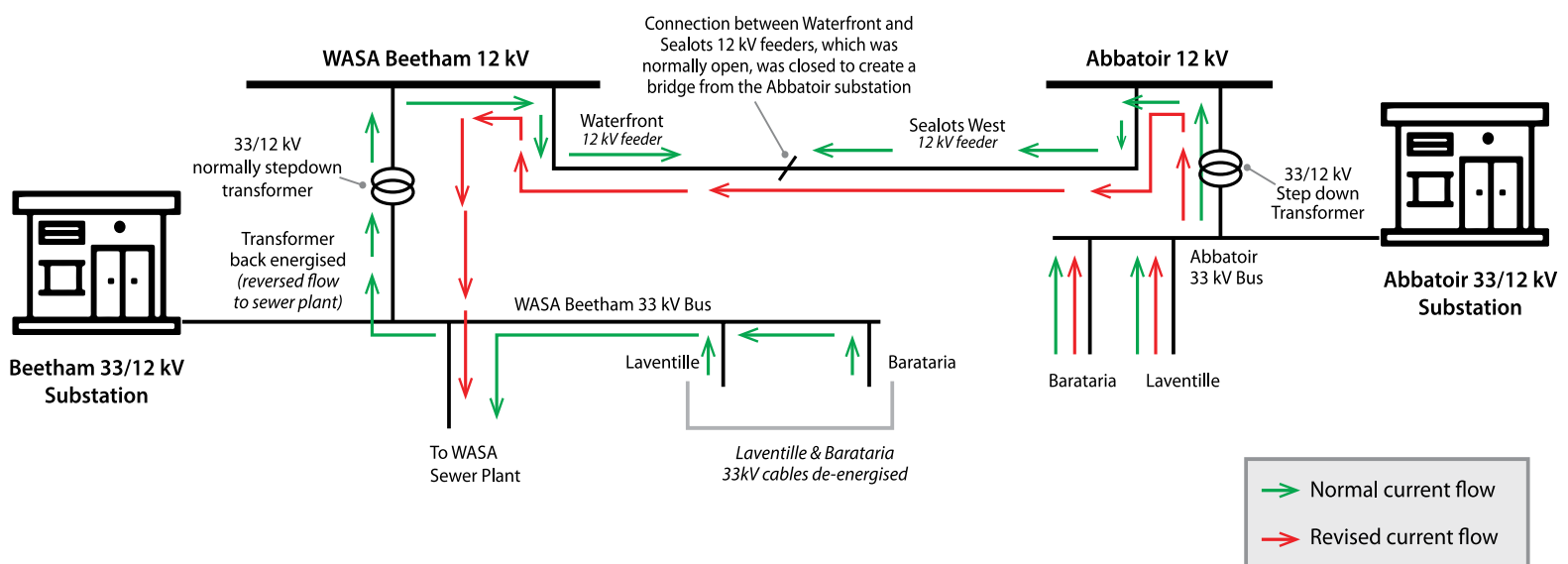
de-energised, forcing the Sea Lots West 12 kV feeder to push load through the 33/12 kV transformer at WASA Beetham substation (in a back energised state), feeding the sewer plant at 33 kV."

The solution and the quick completion of the job by the team was described by General Manager, Kelvin Ramsook as "masterful" work, as it kept T&TEC out of the spotlight for adding delays to WASA's project and did not disrupt service to customers. The North Distribution Area crew was led by Jeffrey De Bique; Protection and SCADA by Marvin Boochoon and Intikab Khan; and Transmission Maintenance

Department by Gairy Nelson and Ryan Maharaj.

The collaborative effort between WASA and T&TEC was applauded by Minister of Public Utilities, the Honourable Marvin Gonzales who, during a visit to the site, encouraged both entities to continue to work together to have the project concluded in the shortest possible time. Unfortunately, due to a later accident on site, where Kern Davidson, Cable Ganger, fell into a sewer trench, WASA's work was again delayed. Mr. Davidson is recovering well at this time and the project was completed by the middle of March.

Illustration of reverse energising to feed 33 kV customers





COVID-19 survivor, Gillian Clement

COVID positive

"I didn't even have symptoms when I was tested, so I was surprised at the positive result," said Gillian Clement of her COVID-19 test. She had accompanied her teenaged daughter who developed flu-like symptoms to do a COVID-19 test in November, 2021 and decided to get swabbed as well. Days later, Ms. Clement, a Clerk/Typist in the Security Department, was rushed to the St. James Medical Complex where she spent six weeks, diagnosed with severe COVID pneumonia.

The atmosphere on the COVID ward during a spike in cases, is grim and the possibility of death, very real. "It is not for the faint-hearted," she said. "People were dying left, right and centre. It was very

scary." In these dark hours, she turned to prayer. "I knew a lot of people were praying for me and I prayed a lot and kept positive." The effect was that she never worried about death.

Ms. Clement, IS Network Technician, Brent Noray and Substation Supervisor, Peter Thomas all spoke to the value of prayer in dealing with COVID-19. They agreed to share their stories, in the hope that colleagues may find positive lessons to navigate through the pandemic while we continue to cope with more illness, the loss of colleagues and other loved ones. After a prayerful six weeks, Ms. Clement was discharged in early January.

The positive effect of prayer was recorded in a 2020 CNN article on prayer in connection with the pandemic. While it noted that scientific research on the health benefits of prayer is limited, it also acknowledged that "prayer might help reduce stress, loneliness and fear". It is also associated with "a sense of calmness, peace, encouragement or social support".

Ms. Clement now has long COVID and only able to return to work at the end of March. "I cannot walk for more than 20 feet without getting light-headed...this is long COVID," she said with a sigh. She has had to seek treatment at hospital to manage some of her symptoms, which include

dizziness, shortness of breath and heart palpitations. While she admits that everyone responds differently to the virus, she saw the impact of the vaccine at the hospital and regrets delaying. "I was going to get vaccinated but I just never did. I could have kicked myself with regret when I got ill...I saw it first-hand, the nurses really took care of us, but the majority of persons who were vaccinated were able to walk out of the hospital," she shared. "Of course, it also helps that you build your immunity and follow the protocols."

Mr. Noray echoed her sentiment, saying "your health is very important in this fight against COVID-19." He too was diagnosed in November and while his symptoms were not as severe, there were some scary moments. "For about two days, I experienced physical sensations I never felt before – body pains, headache and extreme weakness – and then I felt better," he said. Around the middle of quarantine, some chest discomfort triggered an old concern, leading him to the hospital. "I had a heart condition years ago and I feared that it was coming back." After several tests, he was cleared to return home. Then, on day 18 of his 21-day quarantine he again fell ill

"Physical fitness doesn't prevent you from getting the virus, but staying healthy, eating right and following the protocols will help you fight it. And take your shot. We've seen what happens to those who were not vaccinated"

with more severe symptoms. He eventually recovered and returned to work, only to fall ill again after a week. It was during this time that he found prayer beneficial to overcome those moments when "all the possible bad outcomes" consumed his thoughts. It helped when well-meaning people unwittingly triggered his anxiety, like when a friend told him about someone who, just like him, had long COVID and returned to work, only to fall ill and succumb to complications later. "You want encouragement. We must remember that kind words are important," he said. "It has been a cycle of getting sick, getting better and getting re-tested. My doctor advised that it would take me about three months to recover."

Vaccinated, Mr. Noray considers himself healthy and physically fit. He admits that he didn't plan on getting

the shot at first, but is now convinced that he made the right choice. "Physical fitness doesn't prevent you from getting the virus, but staying healthy, eating right and following the protocols will help you fight it. And take your shot. We've seen what happens to those who were not vaccinated," he said. He remains thankful for his family (his mother is a retired nurse) and friends who gave him advice and support.



Peter Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth

Substation Supervisor, Peter Thomas, also noted the importance of familial and collegial support in coping with his illness. He contracted COVID-19 two weeks after receiving his first shot of the Astra Zeneca vaccine last April. His symptoms were moderate, but still debilitating – sore throat, fever, chills, followed by headaches, body pain, loss of taste and smell and insomnia. His wife, Elizabeth, who was on medication and could not take the vaccine at that time, also got the virus. She fared much

worse and had to be rushed to hospital twice. "When the ambulance left with her the first time, I just collapsed on the living room floor...I didn't know what to do with myself," said Mr. Thomas. "It was heart-wrenching wondering if she'll make it. We lost my colleague, Kavita [Praimsingh-Lall] around that time, which made it more difficult." The experience had an emotional toll on his family; his wife was tearful in her gratitude on the way back home after her second hospital stay because "she didn't think she would [have made] it out of there." "Every day you pray that

things don't take a turn for the worse. It was the most difficult time of our lives," he said.

He is grateful for his support network, including his family who delivered meals every other day, and his colleagues, who would call and check up on them. "My good friend, [Commercial Officer] Monica Jaikaran, would ensure I had everything I needed, from bread to even my daily papers," he said.

The effects of long COVID delayed Mr. Thomas' return to work, which was finally possible in August after finally

testing negative in July. He subsequently got his second vaccine, and he's "ready and willing" to take more, when required. With a new lease on life, the Thomases celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary belatedly in December with their son, who travelled from Toronto. "This [virus] has wrecked families," he said. He encourages everyone to "think about your loved ones and colleagues" if still wondering if to get the vaccine.

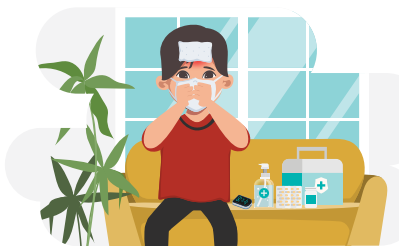
Remember, life has to continue even when COVID-19 is spreading.

How to prepare in case someone gets sick in your household:

- Have a list of contacts ready for health information and care, and your support network
- Stock up on supplies like regular medications, masks and disinfectants.
- Put a support network in place for groceries, transport and childcare.



If someone in your household is sick:



- Isolate the sick person. Prepare a separate room or isolated space and keep the room ventilated.
- Reduce contact with the virus. Have one person who is not high risk and who has the

fewest contacts with people outside to be the contact person. Wear a medical mask if in the same room with the infected person. Use separate utensils and bedding. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- Take care of the sick person. Regularly monitor the sick person's symptoms, especially those at high risk for serious illness. Ensure they rest and are well hydrated.

Source: The World Health Organisation

Farewell to two T&TEC monuments

The removal of the iconic stacks from PowerGen's Port of Spain 'B' power station signaled the start of its demolition in August last year. It was the first of two projects being carried out on the parcel of land occupied by T&TEC and PowerGen. The second, smaller project – the demolition of T&TEC's Concourse Block and POS Training Facility buildings – began in February. We take a look at how life unfolded for employees in the heyday of these buildings.

Peter Burke, who retired in 2021 as a Communications Technician I, started his 42-year career as an Apprentice of the then Port of Spain Trade School from 1977 to 1982. Back then the Trade School featured an impeccable mechanical workshop, welding shop, lecture room, stores and even an armory for the Cadets. But more than just a physical structure, he shared that the Trade School helped mold him into the person he is today.

"Then Trade School Supervisor, Major Martin Francis, had a way with young



Port of Spain Trade School apprentices at their workstations, circa 1960.

men and was about equal opportunity. He recruited apprentices from rural areas as far as Matelot, Toco and Penal and inspired them to improve their station in life," Mr. Burke said. The programme targeted young men from as young as 14 years old to mold them into quality technical employees for the Commission. It employed a holistic approach to training, with a combination of physical exercise, in-class lectures and practical work each day. They were introduced to a range of subjects like electrical and mechanical theory and practice, technical drawing and welding. "We also played the steelpan, trained as cadets and participated in the

prestigious Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, now the President's Award Scheme." Major Francis was best known as a strict disciplinarian, with inspections done of grooming, uniforms and boots every Monday morning. Mr. Burke recalled an incident when a Senior Apprentice arrived at school one minute late, clocking in at 7:01 a.m. Mr. Francis, upon seeing the timecard reprimanded the young man and sent him home with the famous words "You're too late for today and too early for tomorrow!" "He set the tone for the programme and always led by example. I had a lot of respect for him," he said.

Now with its demolition on the



Second Trade School Supervisor, Major Martin Francis.

Photos (left & right) courtesy Glen Riley.



Apprentices pose in cadet uniforms after collecting the President's Award, Silver Medal, 1985, joined by Martin Francis (left) and Personnel Manager, Patrick Bynoe (right). It included the second set of female apprentices ever recruited – (front row, l-r) Karen Ramkhelewan, Joanne McAdams-Nelson, Laura Ramlochan and Sherry Abdool-Williams.

horizon, Mr. Burke hopes that the Commission continues its investment in the craft training programme, since it “inherited a strong training culture, tried and true, which has stood the test of time.” After graduating from the Trade School, apprentices have gone on to flourishing careers at T&TEC and other companies, including the NGC, Carib and even the New York Metro.

Mr. Burke cherishes his Trade School experiences. “It is a fraternity with enduring friendships. The memories of our time there will stay with us,” he said. Presumably, even

after the walls come down.

The Concourse Block – where the Northern Area Sports Club (NASC) has been housed since May 1967, has for over 50 years, been a hub of social, recreational and sporting activity for employees and their guests. NASC members would recall climbing the three flights of stairs (or later, using the elevator) to enter the sporting hall, a majestic space with well-maintained, reddish-brown wooden floors and a well-stocked bar, to play billiards, draughts, all-fours, or imbibe with colleagues after a day's work. “It was the thing

About the project

T&TEC's demolition of its Concourse Block and POS Training Facility buildings is one of two projects being carried out on two contiguous parcels of land in Port of Spain occupied by T&TEC and PowerGen and bounded on the North by Park Street, South by Wrightson Road, East by Flament Street and West by Colville Street.

PowerGen is responsible for the first and bigger project, the demolition of the Port of Spain “B” Power Station and its ancillary buildings, which started in 2021. The second project, the demolition of T&TEC's Concourse Block and POS Training Facility, commenced in February. It will be done in two phases, 1. Abatement of Asbestos, and 2. Demolition. T&TEC has contracted PowerGen as the Project Manager for phase one of the project. Abatement will be conducted by Green Engineering Limited and is expected to last four months.

The Government has earmarked the site for redevelopment, as part of the Port of Spain Revitalisation Project.

These demolitions follow the decommissioning of the power station in 2016.

Action during the Inter-Area aerobics competition in 2014, one of the many indoor sporting activities held at the Northern Area Sports Club.



to do after work, you went to your lockers, cleaned up and went upstairs," said former President, Ian 'Jap' Serrette. The 'T&TEC Ballroom', as it was commonly called, was also a popular venue for wedding receptions and back-in-times parties during the 1980s, and numerous in-house training seminars and events. More recently, members enjoyed aerobics classes and it was also the base for the Blasters Table Tennis Club run by Dennis La Rose.

"It was there I developed a love for billiards," said Mr. Serrette. "...and we produced national players too." It was also there that a thriving cricket and football playing culture was fostered. "After any tournament, all players, winners and losers, would meet up in the Club to hang out and also to let the champions enjoy their bragging rights."

Mr. Serrette credits former NASC Presidents Hubert Roxborough and Kelvin Ceasar

for laying the foundation for a culture of camaraderie and friendship. Of the Club building's demolition, he said that "Change and progress are expected." He is hopeful that the new leadership of the Club will try to return to its old values once activities resume. "I always said that the Sports Club is not about the Committee, it's about the people," he said.

The Club will be relocated to the CEB Building, Port of Spain.

When the lights went out

continued from page 3

to take over the load from TGU. In the event of a sudden loss of generation capacity, the underfrequency scheme automatically sheds load from parts of the system. This resulted in system instability and caused all the generating machines operated by the IPPs to trip, "leading to a loss of supply to all customers in Trinidad."

Mr. Ramsook explained that since T&TEC's system is designed to detect any faults at the control centre, they were able to quickly dispatch personnel to the area of the fault to analyse the situation. "By 1:30 p.m. the site was identified as safe for T&TEC to restore supply to the country." However, getting the capacity back on to the grid proved

to be a significant challenge. He explained that with past outages, when a section of the grid is out, it allows for unaffected sections to provide power to the affected Power Plants. However, "when there is a total shutdown, it means everyone is out." The challenge then was to get the machines restarted from zero, known as a black start. It was only at 6:50 p.m. that T&TEC was able to get some degree of capacity in a stable mode at the Penal Power Station, "which allowed us to bring supply to the other generating stations to slowly add back the capacity to the grid." By 11:00 p.m., most customers from Penal to Mt. Hope were back on supply, with full restoration to the rest

of the island completed by 1:30 a.m. This was possible since all our technical staff was deployed to every substation, "in the event we had issues and had to do switching."

According to its terms of reference, the Committee will, inter alia, investigate the circumstances that caused fault(s) to develop and how these fault(s) resulted/contributed to a loss of generating capacity at the Trinidad Generating Unlimited (TGU) power plant and a knock-on effect at other Independent Power Producer (IPP) power plants. It will also examine the existence and implementation of mitigation measures, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the communication by key stakeholders, and the national security response to the event.

Damaged appliance claims exclusively online

The digital system to manage damaged appliance claims has been expanded to allow customers to now submit their claims via T&TEC's website. The Risk Management Department's modernisation efforts have seen several improvements to the internal online processing module, based on the direction of the Department to go paperless and digital.

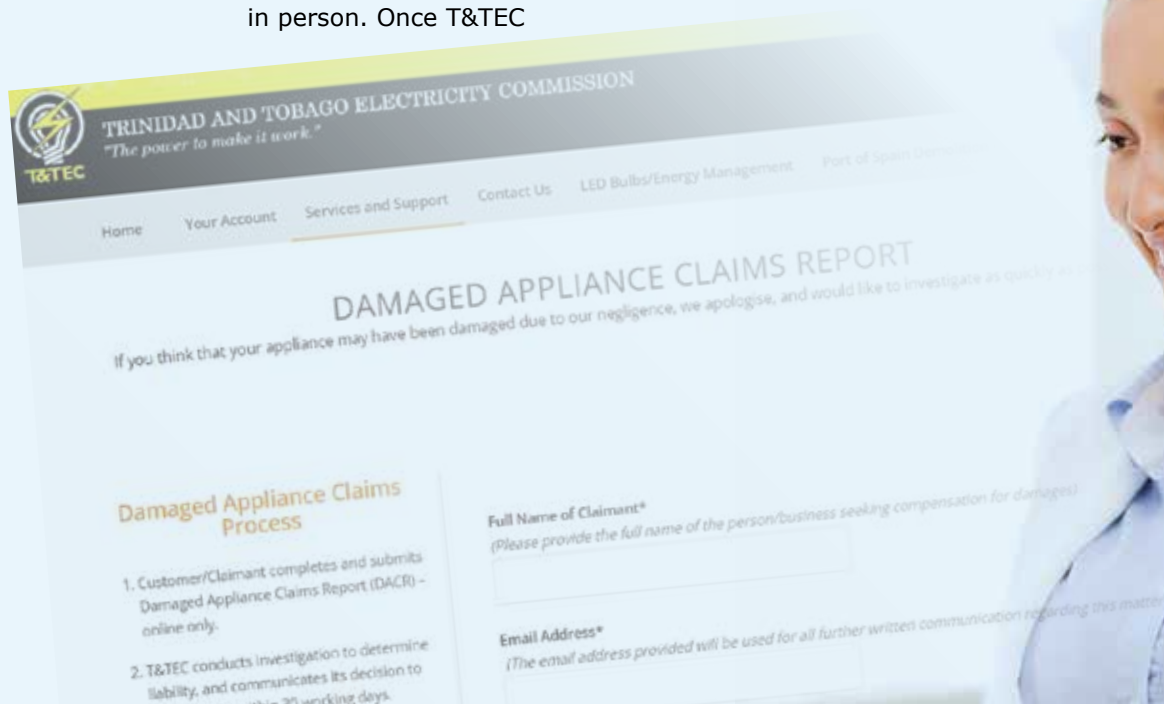
Effective March 2, any customer who thinks their appliances may have been damaged due to T&TEC's actions, must now complete and submit a Damaged Appliance Claims Report (DACR) form online. Customers will no longer be required to submit documents in person. Once T&TEC

acknowledges receipt of the report by email, the customer will then be contacted to schedule an appointment, as needed, for a visit to the premises by a Consumer Investigator. A determination of T&TEC's liability can be expected, via email, within 30 business days of receipt of the DACR.

This new claims process marks the second phase of the Damaged Appliance Claims Module, launched in 2018. It has since greatly improved the processing times for claims, the access to information on the status of a claim and the streamlining of the process in all Distribution Areas. However, according

to Risk Management Manager, Ronald De Silva, the Department continues to make improvements. "We have added the ability to apply claim payments directly to a claimant's electricity account, thus eliminating the many steps necessary for processing (and collecting) a cheque." How Consumer Investigators conduct investigations is also being revisited, "to reduce face to face interactions when collecting information."

The Risk Management Department also went paperless in January 2021, allowing for minimal impact on



The image shows a screenshot of the T&TEC website's 'DAMAGED APPLIANCE CLAIMS REPORT' form. The header includes the T&TEC logo and the text 'TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTRICITY COMMISSION "The power to make it work."'. The navigation bar has links for Home, Your Account, Services and Support, Contact Us, LED Bulbs/Energy Management, and Port of Spain. The main heading is 'DAMAGED APPLIANCE CLAIMS REPORT'. Below it, a message states: 'If you think that your appliance may have been damaged due to our negligence, we apologise, and would like to investigate as quickly as possible.' The form is titled 'Damaged Appliance Claims Process' and lists two steps: 1. Customer/Claimant completes and submits Damaged Appliance Claims Report (DACR) - online only. 2. T&TEC conducts investigation to determine liability, and communicates its decision to within 30 working days. The form includes input fields for 'Full Name of Claimant*' (with a note: '(Please provide the full name of the person/business seeking compensation for damages)') and 'Email Address*' (with a note: '(The email address provided will be used for all further written communication regarding this matter)').



productivity due to pandemic restrictions. While he admits that there was some initial resistance to change, over time users have seen the benefits of the new way of operating. "What they thought were threats have now [become] opportunities, such as the ability to concentrate on areas that were previously neglected. The old way of doing things was so inefficient and time consuming. Now, almost all of the adjusting and settlement of claims are conducted within the

department without the need for external adjusters."

The Department is still working with the Information Systems (IS) Department to customise reports to allow for improved data mining and analysis. Mr. De Silva envisages this will aid in understanding trends of claims to better plan to reduce their frequency and/or severity. "We see the application of algorithms in the future to help predict incidents," he said.

"What we have been seeking to do is to constantly make improvements where we can," said Mr. De Silva. So work continues with the implementation team, of Systems Analysts I, Marlon Sinclair and Nichelle Jagdeo from the IS Department and Risk Management members, Risk and Insurance Administrator, Curtis Rahim; Insurance Assistant I, Cleavon Lloyd; Risk Management Assistant I, Nicole Alexander; and Clerk II, Kelya Williams.

T&TEC gets in-depth on RE

continued from page 4

use or supply, as the case may be.

Acknowledging that people may "take a chance" to use a solar installation on a building already served by T&TEC, Mr Belle took time to explain why this practice is unsafe: "If for example, our network has a burst conductor that is on the ground [that is de-energised], because your installation may not have the necessary safety requirements, it could continue to feed into that [conductor] and result in anybody touching it on the outside, being injured. So that is why we are saying at this time that people

should discontinue the use of any solar mechanism being tied to the grid." He added that "the safety of the general public and the reliability of the electricity supply provided to our customers remain a priority".

Before arriving at the point of applying for a licence and investing in solar infrastructure, Ms. Brasnell advised viewers that they can help reduce their carbon footprint by adopting energy conservation practices at home. She told the story of a customer who utilised

the energy management application from T&TEC's website to track her family's electricity consumption on a daily basis. "They didn't set a goal but they took the challenge to make small changes in their behaviour every day to help reduce their electricity bill," she said. She added that the use of energy-efficient LED bulbs (distributed by the government from 2020), and the bill rebate, which increased in January from 25% to 35% for persons whose electricity bill is \$300 or less, "can all help individuals to manage their bills."

Diversity and Inclusion policy seeks to “Break the Bias”



Jacqueline Cheesman, Chief Human Resources Officer

It was National Award recipient Terry Ince who, when speaking on this year’s campaign theme for International Women’s Day (IWD), “Break the Bias”, said that “it’s

not just bias against women, it’s bias against everything [that must be broken]”. Similarly, T&TEC’s Diversity and Inclusion policy seeks to embrace employees’ differences, to foster a truly inclusive and tolerant workplace.

Bias, according to the Oxford dictionary, is the *“inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.”* While gender bias against women is the focus of IWD, the 2022 theme has universal application and offers a springboard to examine T&TEC’s new policy.

The General Instruction on Diversity and Inclusion was launched last November, four months before International Women’s Day on March 8. It acknowledges that “each employee deserves to be treated fairly, courteously and with the utmost respect at all times”. The policy seeks to, inter alia, create a harmonious environment that embraces diversity and cultivates inclusion; enable a peaceful and productive work environment; ensure all employees are provided with equal

opportunities; foster employee engagement, employee satisfaction and job performance; and improve the organisation’s critical thinking and problem-solving capacity.

It is the view of T&TEC’s Chief Human Resources Officer, Jacqueline Cheesman, that managing diversity will enable staff to better work as a team, which “will result in exchanges of a broad range of experiences and ideas, which will lead to creativity and innovation.” To arrive at this point requires a respectful and supportive environment that allows for employees to coexist, despite their differences, i.e. one of inclusion.

According to the GI, “inclusion removes all barriers of discrimination and intolerance to ensure that everyone feels valued, respected and a part of the team.” The road towards inclusion at T&TEC has been long established. As Ms. Cheesman notes, the practice of acknowledging and celebrating our different



ethnic and religious festivals like Emancipation, Eid-ul-Fitr, Divali and Christmas, and the support of groups like the Electrical Association for Women and T&TEC's sponsored bands, go a long way towards ensuring that T&TEC welcomes, embraces and supports diversity in the workplace.



Kizzy Ramdhanie, Assistant Area Manager, Distribution North



Zana Hypolite, President of the Branch Board of the EPA

"The Commission also stands strongly by its Code of Ethics No. 5 – No discrimination – and is committed to providing fair and equitable opportunities to all its employees," she said. As it relates to bridging the gender gap, T&TEC has made some progress, with an increasing number of women in leadership roles. "We currently have nine female executives. Our Engineer-in-Training programme has also been increasingly attracting women who excel on the field just like their male counterparts. In February, a female was elected as President of the Branch Board of the Estate Police Association for the first time and in December, the Commission appointed its first female Assistant Area Manager."

Notwithstanding these strides, our individual prejudices which can manifest when we enter the workforce cannot be overlooked. Ms. Cheesman identified several ways to adopt a more inclusive attitude towards our colleagues, starting with becoming familiar and compliant with the General Instruction. Additionally, "Treat others as you want to be treated," she

said. "Keep communication respectful...avoid racial slurs and derogatory language during our interactions with others." In addition, we should look out for one another, especially those who are unwilling to speak up for themselves, and welcome ideas that are different, since "creativity blossoms when we embrace diversity."

Ultimately, it is important to recognise that all forms of bias are detrimental to the existence of a harmonious, peaceful and productive work environment. Ms. Ince, who was awarded the 2020 Medal for the Development of Women (Gold), broke it down simply, "We have to look at ourselves first and then break those [biases], and I have to look at you and see [your difference] as a value and work with you in that way."

While the Human Resources Department will provide ongoing training to raise awareness and enlighten employees about the principles of diversity and inclusion and its associated benefits, employees are encouraged to get familiar with the policy. If any employee experiences harassment, victimisation, racism, bullying, or any form of discrimination, please check the Diversity and Inclusion policy for the appropriate procedures for redress.

For further information on the Diversity and Inclusion policy, see General Instruction No. HR 60/2111 on the Intranet.

Gone but not forgotten



We were saddened by the loss of two employees in recent months. Sincerest condolences go out to the families, friends and colleagues of Raevel Michael and Richard John.

Raevel Michael was a temporary Labourer of the North Distribution Area, who passed away on December 24. He joined T&TEC in May 2019 and was periodically assigned as a Driver.

Although 30-year old Mr. Michael was employed at T&TEC for just under 3 years, he was well integrated into the Northern Area family and was an "exemplary employee, who was reliable and dependable," said then Acting Operations Manager, Jamel Reid. Supervisor, Akaash Singh and Acting Field Controller, Ancil Callender agreed, saying Mr. Michael will be "missed for his cool and team-spirited attitude and willingness to assist with any task assigned to whichever crew he worked."



Richard John, Crew Supervisor, South Distribution Area, passed away on January 21, leaving his colleagues, including Area Manager, Ashmeed Ali, "deeply shocked and saddened." Mr. John joined T&TEC as temporary Linesman "C" in 1993, before becoming permanent in 2002. He advanced through the ranks to his last position of Crew Supervisor in 2020, where he was assigned an emergency crew.

He was familiarly known as "Yardie" because, according to Senior Supervisor, Rajendra Sookdeo, Mr. John was "the early bird that brought a ray of sunshine to the compound on mornings." He is remembered by Engineer, Valine Jacob and Telecoms Operator, Darren Chin Slick, as a "jovial employee" who was "fun-loving, cool and relaxed and always well-attired."

Employee update

Appointments, Promotions, Re-designations and Departures

PROMOTIONS

NAME	POSITION	AREA/DEPARTMENT
Adam Victor	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Adrian Ransome	Dr – Lr. Ldr./Lift Comb.	Distribution Central
Akeil Cooper	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Amarnath Sahadeo	Driver – Class 5 Vehicle	Distribution Central
Anand Ramdath	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Andell Cudjoe	Linesman 'A'	Distribution North
Angus John	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Brent Beam	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Charmaine Baptiste-Smith	Human Resources Officer I	Industrial Relations
Cheryl-Ann Nelson-Alleyne	Human Resources Officer I	Human Resources Department
Courtney Powell	Assistant Area Manager	Distribution Tobago
Crystal Kissoon-Sinanan	Corporate Comm Asst. (Trv)	Distribution Central
Curt Supersad	Driver – Aerial Lift Truck	Distribution Central
Denzel Mc Conney	Linesman 'B'	Distribution Tobago
Devon Edwards	Linesman 'B'	Distribution Tobago
Gabriel Sookram	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Gary Thomas	Driver – Class 5 Vehicle	Distribution Central
Haile Straker	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Hasely Exeter	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Jaime Jagassar	Mechanic 'A'	Distribution Central
Jared Hollas	Assistant Area Manager	Distribution South
Jeffrey De Bique	Technical Assistant II	Distribution North
Karen Ragbir	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Kereem Quashie	Dr – Pole Hole Borer	Engineering Controller
Kendrick Marshall	Linesman 'A'	Distribution North
Kirton Seetahal	Meter Inspector	Commercial
Kristal Ramsook	Corporate Comm. Asst. (Trv)	Distribution Central
Kurt Lopez	Revenue Accounts Officer	Chief Accountant
Lauren Rambert	Legal Officer	Corporate Secretary
Michelle Beddoe	Admin. Asst. III	Technical Division
Mitra Rickie	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Neil Sooknanan	Technical Assistant II	Distribution North
Nicky Ramdan	Dr – Pole Hole Borer Comb.	Distribution South
Rakesh Mahadeo	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Sankar Dwarmpaul	Driver – Aerial Lift Truck	Distribution Central
Sarah Gopaul	Subsection Leader	Distribution South
Shantal Ali	Clerk II	Chief Accountant
Sharon Johnson	Salaries & Wages Supv.	Chief Accountant
Shaun Byjoo	Dr – Lr. Ldr./Lift Comb.	Distribution Central
Sherry Constantine	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Shiro Wilson	Clerk II	Distribution North
Shivanand Bhagwat	Linesman 'A'	Public Lighting
Stacy Mohammed	Senior Clerk	Distribution Central
Stephen Persad	Meter & Relay Tech. IV	Metering Services
Tynielle Jack	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Valene Massiah	Clerk I	Transm Devel & Eng. Services
Vasishti Noyan	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Visham Ramroop	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South

Employee update

Appointments, Promotions, Re-designations and Departures

RE-DESIGNATIONS

NAME	POSITION	AREA/DEPARTMENT
Anita Singh	Accountant II	Chief Accountant
Clifford Gray	Consumers Investigator	Distribution North
Clyde Khan	Assistant Control Operator	System Control & Gen Interface
Indra Budu Dass	Accountant I	Chief Accountant
Marisa Byer	Accountant I	Chief Accountant
Nasilee Smart	Manager	Procurement & Supplies
Ravideo Maharaj	Senior Accountant	Chief Accountant
Rhonda Pierre-Lewis	Accountant III	Chief Accountant
Ryan Gangaram	Electrician 'C'	Distribution East
Sheldon Koon	Surveying Assistant	Distribution South

DEPARTURES

NAME	POSITION	AREA/DEPARTMENT
Aidan Lum	Revenue Accounts Officer	Chief Accountant
Akeshia Bailey	Typist	Security – Distribution East
Alana Lee Ling	Clerk II	Distribution South
Anthony Hart	Drawing Office Supervisor	Transm Devel & Eng. Services
Arnim Pompey	Line Clearer Supervisor	Distribution North
Christine Telesford	Library/ Attendant	General Manager
Cliff Ramsubag	Communications Supervisor	Communications Department
Dave Noray	Snr. Supervisor Trans. & Dist	Distribution Tobago
David Hunte	Draughtsman III	Transm Devel & Eng. Services
Derick Davis	Transmission Maintenance Manager	Transmission Maintenance
Dexter Ramroop	Driver – Aerial Lift Truck	Distribution North
Earl Julien	Crew Supervisor	Distribution East
Eric Purcell	Meter & Relay Technician I	Protection & SCADA
Fazal Ali	Control Operator	System Control & Gen Interface
Frances Benjamin	Senior Clerk	Commercial
Gillian Samuel	Clerk Typist	Technical Division
Goutam Heeraman	HRO I – Tech. Training	Human Resources Department
Jiselle De Montburn	Section Leader	Protection & SCADA
Judyann Boodoo-Babwah	Corporate Communications Officer	Corporate Communications
Lindell Brooks	Electrician 'B'	Cove Power Station
Lisa Manzano	Payments Officer	Chief Accountant
Miguel Munro	Stationery Room Attendant	Procurement & Supplies
Narish Budhu	Senior Clerk	Chief Accountant
Peter Williams	Driver – Aerial Lift Truck	Distribution East
Ricardo Fraser	Inform. Tech. Auditor	Internal Audit
Ricci Nina	HR Specialist III	Human Resources Department
Samlal Sookoo	Estate Police Inspector	Security – Head Office
Sandra Ameerai	Section Leader	Corporate Secretary
Shane Mahabir	Linesman 'C'	Distribution North
Stacey Jack-Jones	Senior Clerk	Transm Devel & Eng. Services
Valmiki Seepaul	Senior Eng. (Civil)	Engineering Controller
Yuri Dickson	Clerk II	Distribution North



Fun page

How well did you read this issue of the Watts Happening? Solve the crossword puzzle below with answers found within these pages!

Clues:

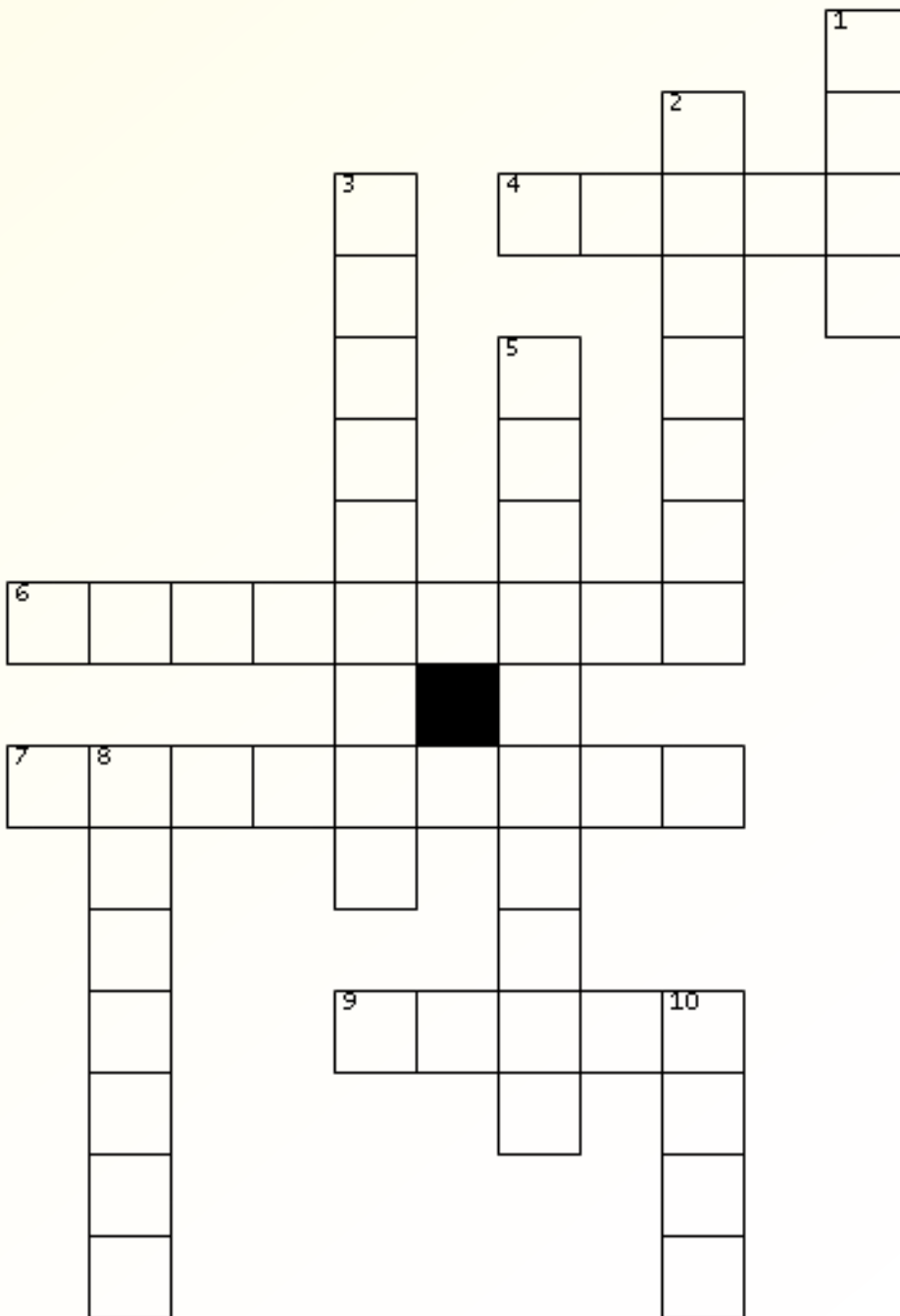
ACROSS

4. One of two lines that faulted, causing island-wide outage. Not Gandhi
6. _____ Block, to be demolished
7. _____ and Inclusion policy
9. This is set to become one of the predominant sources of power in T&T in the future

DOWN

1. The COVID that endures
2. Required from the Ministry before installing solar power
3. New location of the POS Training Facility
5. This annual exercise is now done online
8. Local TV show discussing RE
10. This Department is now paperless

Answers on page 26





**Kite season has begun!
But did you know that there are several
electrical safety hazards involved in kite flying?**

- ◆ Kites can strike and tangle on electrical power lines causing power blackouts and the risk of electrocuting the kite flyer.
- ◆ Wet kite strings can act as a conductor for static electricity and lightning when the weather is stormy.

**So while you enjoy this age-old fun time
activity, remember:**

1. Fly your kites in an open field away from electric power lines or other electrical installations and equipment.
2. Use perfectly dry string – never wire or metallic string
3. Do not try to remove a kite if it catches on an electric power line or on a power pole.
4. Do not use any metal in making a kite.
5. Do not fly your kite on or near a public highway or on a street.
6. Do not fly your kite in wet or stormy weather.
7. Have fun flying your kite, but remember, your safety comes first.



Customer commendations

The following are excerpts of letters, emails and messages that have been received over the last three months. Correspondence may have been edited for length or clarity.

Sent via Email:

January 17th 2022

Ms. Monica Jaikaran
Commercial Officer

My name is Keeran Daniella Ramdial and I am a customer who requested a connection in the Lopinot area last week.

The purpose of this email is to commend [Clerk I], Tricia Dhani for the exceptional customer service she provided while performing her duties. Ms. Dhani was quite professional and courteous, though there were some issues in accessing the area. She ensured the job was done and assured me every step along the way. Her positive attitude was such a breath of fresh air and I couldn't just let that experience go unnoticed.

I believe that persons like Tricia Dhani should be recognised and/or even be made aware of the impact she had on at least one customer. Keeran Ramdial.

The following letter was sent after Maintenance Planner, Vivian Narine, volunteered to join the community's WhatsApp group to be more accessible and better responsive to their electricity-related issues:

December 23rd 2021

Mr. Shazard Mohammed
Area Manager
Distribution Central

We would like to take this opportunity to formally recognise the contributions of Vivian Narine for his service and extraordinary performance with regards to our community, Point Pleasant Park, Cunupia. While we still face challenges of outages, voltage issues and power fluctuations from time to time, we are appreciative of the efforts of Mr Narine. We have been truly impressed with him and seen the positive improvements.

Mr Vivian Narine has exceeded our expectations on T&TEC

service delivery.

He:

- Willingly adjusts his schedule to be available when needed within 5 minutes of an issue being reported.
- Shows strong time & schedule management with his crews
- Effectively communicates with residents to share knowledge & solve problems in a timely, efficient & effective manner.
- Takes ownership towards improving service delivery in our community.

It is our privilege and honour to recognise and salute Mr. Vivian Narine. He has been an exemplary ambassador and representative of T&TEC. We are confident with him moving forward all our concerns will be resolved.

Brendon Boodai
Chairman

Crossword Answers

ACROSS
4. Union
6. Concourse
7. Diversity
9. Solar
DOWN
1. Long
2. Licence
3. ElSocorro
5. Appraisals
8. InDepth
10. Risk

Spiritual/Shouter Baptist Liberation Day

Fresh blooms and sacred vessels
- articles of an ancestral faith
whose expressive and deep
energy has endured and
enriched generations.

Best wishes to the Spiritual Shouter Baptist
community, from the Board, Management
and Staff of the Trinidad and Tobago
Electricity Commission.



The power to make it work.

