

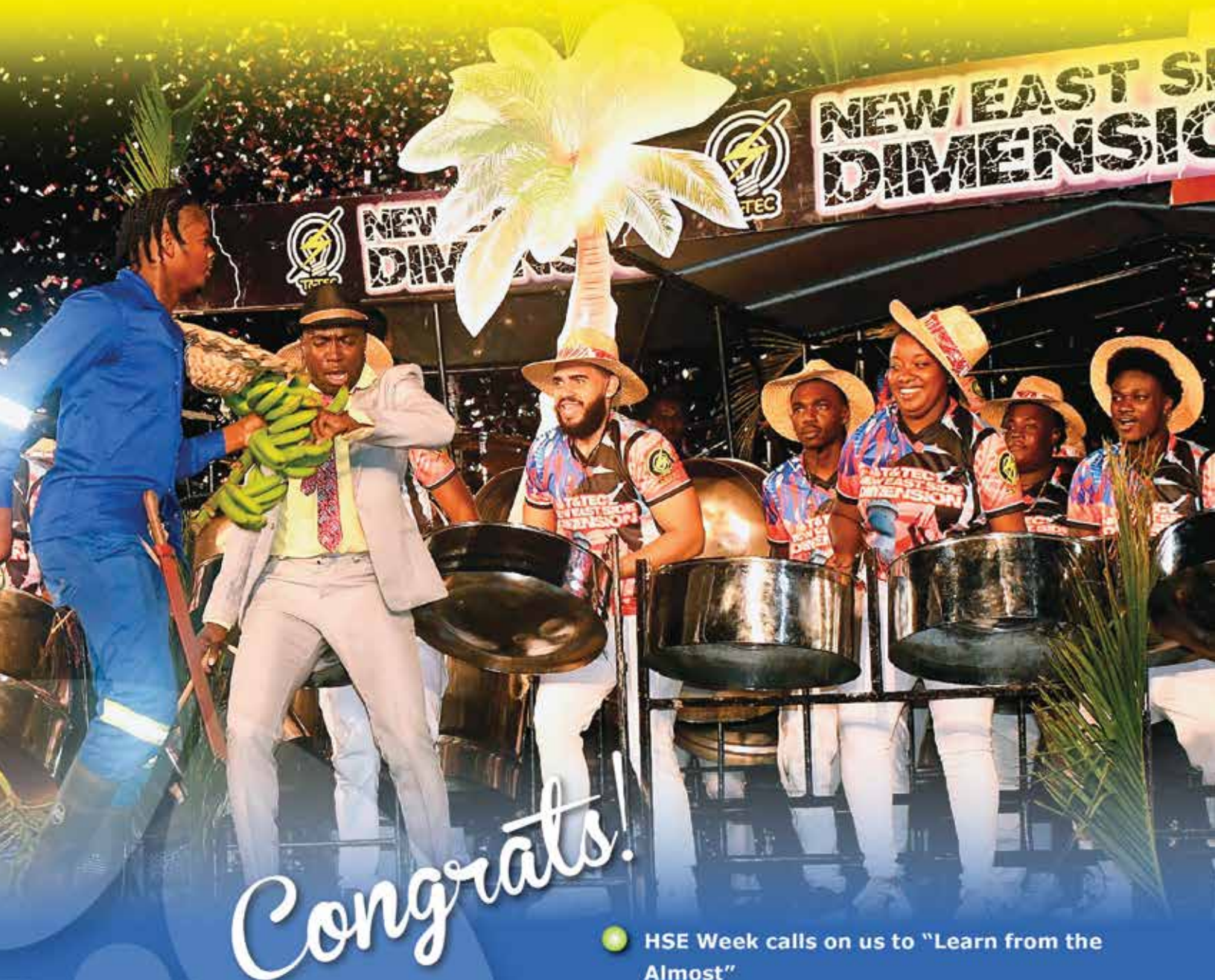


WATTS HAPPENING

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ELECTRICITY COMMISSION
Vol. 41 January - April, 2024

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.



Congrats!

- HSE Week calls on us to "Learn from the Almost"
- Some RIC directives implemented following Final Determination
- New Project Management Office supports project delivery

Editorial

Learning from the almost

The theme of this year's HSE week was "Learning from the Almost". Selected, in part, to focus on the need for improvements in near miss reporting and engendering a culture of prevention.

Life's lessons are generally better reinforced after an error, not success. Spotting the "almost", a "Near Miss Incident" in our HSE language, helps to prevent accidents (see article on page 3). The General Manager addressed this at the official launch, and his reminder that the individual's contribution to improving our HSE culture, by reporting potential hazards,

cannot be overstated.

We can also use this opportunity to extend beyond HSE, as the physical injury from an accident is not the only thing preventable by spotting and learning from the "almost". "Almost" presents opportunities to improve technical designs and procedures that can prevent failures on different parts of the grid. Errors or missed opportunities in other aspects of our work, a poor purchasing decision, for example, encourages adaptability and reinforces the need for continuous improvement as a way of life.

Seen with different lenses, learning from the "almost" really seeks to reinforce our

risk management strategies and forces us to examine systems to identify gaps and introduce mitigants.

Outside of work, "almost" moments can teach gratitude and the value of perseverance. Consider that treasured, but struggling, relationship that was saved through hard work, or that critical medical problem that would have gone unchecked until it was too late had you not done your annual health exam.

The lessons learned from near misses are invaluable, they can foster innovation and help us to navigate or avoid challenges. Embracing these lessons will take us a long way.

COVER - *Enthusiastic players of the T&TEC New East Side Dimension Steel Orchestra, during their winning performance at the Small Conventional Bands Panorama competition at Skinner Park on January 12. See story on page 16.*

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HSE Week invites us to “Learn from the Almost”



The Heinrich Safety Triangle shows that for every 600 near misses, there is, on average, one lost-time accident. With a total of 155 lost-time accidents in T&TEC in 2023, it means that there should have been approximately 93,000 near misses. However, the number of near miss reports for the year was less than 10.

This startling revelation was made by General Manager, Curvis Francois, at the launch of T&TEC’s Health, Safety and Environment Week 2024 on April 26 under the theme, Learn from the Almost. Lamenting the low levels of near miss reporting and the “fairly high” number of accidents, Mr Francois reminded employees that, “far beyond our knowledge of the various HSE procedures and rules, our individual responsibility warrants observing and reporting all safety hazards that, if left unaddressed, could escalate into serious accidents or health crises”.

Buoyed by the idea of hosting HSE Week on a full scale for the first time since the pandemic, the HSE Department organised one of the biggest observances held in recent years. Drawing

from the International Labour Organisation’s theme, *Impacts of Climate Change on Occupational Safety and Health*, the Department sought to align the critical issues of near miss reporting and that of developing a culture of prevention, with climate-related hazards

“...Our individual responsibility warrants observing and reporting all safety hazards that, if left unaddressed, could escalate into serious accidents or health crises.”

Curvis Francois, General Manager, T&TEC

in the workplace. These hazards include excessive heat, ultraviolet radiation, extreme weather, air pollution and associated diseases, which were also discussed during launch presentations on Climate Change and Occupational Safety from Kishan Kumarsingh of the Ministry of Planning and Development, and Weather Patterns and Climate Change, from Gary Benjamin of the Trinidad and Tobago

Meteorological Services.

Also speaking about climate change and the environment, Mr Francois shared some of T&TEC’s contributions towards energy conservation and energy efficiency to help reduce the country’s carbon footprint. These include a 90 MW solar photovoltaic (PV) plant under construction by a consortium comprising bpTT, Shell Trinidad and Tobago Limited and Lightsource bp to lower T&TEC’s natural gas consumption, and more efficient use, maintenance and disposal of switchgear to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gas sulphur hexafluoride gas (SF₆), used as insulation.

To start developing a culture of prevention, the Department sought to build awareness with competitions, like a poster and short film contest, that focused on near miss vigilance.

A revised Near Miss Reporting system is also expected to be launched in the near future and can assist employees to respond to Mr. Francois’ call to be observant, identify new and emerging risks, look out for gaps in existing processes and



General Manager, Curvis Francois

report them. He also reminded them to become familiar with Safety Rules and follow them, attend safety refresher training and put what is learnt into practice. "Whether you work out on the field or in the office, do your part to always put safety first...and look out for your fellow team member," he urged.

As part of the event-packed HSE Week, employees Commission-wide competed in poster, green space, booth and short film competitions hosted by the HSE Department, while each HSE Zone Committee organised activities that catered to everyone's palette. Health screenings, safety lectures from the TTPS,

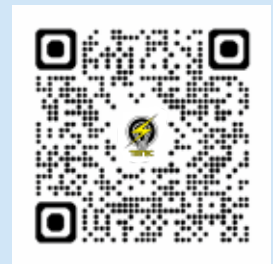


massage and cupping therapy, yoga, scavenger hunts, aerobics, electric vehicle and health product displays, and even a walk-a-thon were some of the available activities during the bumper week.

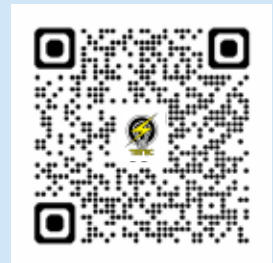
The primary goal of HSE Week is to raise awareness, foster a culture of safety, and promote environmental stewardship by learning from past near misses and applying those lessons to enhance occupational safety practices and mitigate climate change impacts. It is hoped that this important message resonates with all at T&TEC.

Check out the centre spread photo gallery capturing some of the action.

Scan codes to view the winning entries for the Short Film competition:



Sandy Chadee - "Most Creative Concept" & "Best Overall Clip"



Cheryl Ann Nelson-Alleyne – "Audience Choice Award" and "Best Safety Message"



Chief Technical Officer, Chrisalston Belle presents HR Officer I, Cheryl-Ann Nelson-Alleyne, with her prize for winning People's Choice in the Near Miss Short Film Competition.



Employee, Greig Silva, interacts with exhibitors at one of the booths at the launch of HSE Week.

T&TEC starts implementation of RIC directives

The Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) published its highly anticipated Final Determination for the Electricity Transmission and Distribution Sector of Trinidad and Tobago 2023-2028, popularly known as the T&TEC Rate Review, on November 1, 2023. More than the much-discussed recommendations for new tariffs and charges (see table), and the change from bimonthly to monthly billing (for residential and commercial customers only), the report is a “comprehensive package of service quality improvements for customers”, with measures to hold the Commission to account for its performance.

While a Government decision is pending on the implementation of the recommended maximum rates, T&TEC is required to comply with over 40 directives aimed at improving the quality of service delivered to its customers. The Commission’s compliance will be considered by the RIC in determining approval of annual tariff adjustments during the regulatory control period (2023-2028).

The issue of affordability was topical during the public consultations and the RIC has directed T&TEC to proactively advise financially vulnerable and disadvantaged customers about Government sponsored support programmes, as well as continue to offer payment plans and other measures. A free meter check is now to be made available once every four years instead of five. If the meter is found to be defective there is no charge, but if it is operating accurately, a charge of \$246 (VAT exclusive) will be applied to the customer.

In addition, T&TEC must outline to the RIC its approach to educating the public about energy conservation to help control their electricity costs and reduce the environmental impact, including specific measures to promote efficiency and conservation.

To check the pulse of customers, the RIC will conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey, independent of T&TEC’s, to obtain general feedback on various aspects of service

delivery. T&TEC will also be required to reintroduce its independent Customer Satisfaction Survey but with the focus being on customers who interacted with the Commission and their perception of how their matter was handled. In addition to soliciting customer feedback, T&TEC is now required to provide updates on specific performance indicators related to its financial health, reliability, operational efficiency and customer responsiveness.

In anticipation of the increasing popularity of electric vehicles, the RIC’s decision is that, where customers own more than two EVs, a separate meter must be installed, and the customer must bear the associated costs. Additionally, all non-residential charging stations are to be billed at commercial or higher rates depending on the rating category applicable to that customer.

In addition to improving service delivery, T&TEC is also set to earn benefits through incentives. Using an “efficiency carry-over mechanism”, T&TEC

T&TEC starts implementation of RIC directives (cont'd)

can, for a period of five years, retain any benefits gained as a result of improved efficiency in its operations. Similarly, if programmes to further reduce system losses are successfully implemented, T&TEC can share in the gains at the end of the control period if the total losses fall at a rate which exceeds the RIC's set annual reduction rate. In such a case, the Commission will be allowed to retain 90% of the gains and 10% will be passed on to customers. The Guaranteed and Overall Electricity Standards scheme continues to stipulate the minimum targets for performance in a number of areas, with financial penalties.

T&TEC also faces a number of specific obligations/targets which can attract penalties if not met. One of these include Public Disclosure of Non-Compliance and/or the Public Register notices on the RIC's websites, where the RIC will publish when and how T&TEC has not complied with any of the targets set, inclusive of allowed capital investment projects. Another directive stipulates a penalty if T&TEC exceeds the target of no more

than three interruptions per month per feeder, regarded as its worst-served customers.

According to General Manager, Curvis Francois, while the tariffs in the final

determination have not yet been implemented, T&TEC still has a duty of care to its customers and will implement the directives that can be done at this time.

RIC recommended tariffs

Rate Class	Energy Charge (\$/kWh)	Customer Charge (\$)	Demand Charge (\$/KVA)
Residential (Monthly) kWh Range			
1	200	7.50	NA
201	700		
701	1400		
	>1400		
Commercial (Monthly)			
B1	0.5600	35.00	NA
B2	0.6700	35.00	
Industrial (Monthly)			
C1	0.6269	50.00	93.00
C2	0.5858	50.00	93.00
C3	0.5487	50.00	93.00
C4	0.5114	50.00	93.00
D1	0.3145	50.00	79.00
D2	0.3508	50.00	80.45
D3	0.3126	50.00	72.00
D4	0.2723	50.00	65.20
D5	0.2608	50.00	60.31
E1	0.3306	100.00	97.01
E2	0.3306	100.00	95.04
E3	0.3306	100.00	93.74
E4	0.3306	100.00	92.40
E5	0.3306	100.00	91.43
Public Lighting (Monthly)			
Street Lights	82.50		
Traffic Lights	71.50		
Recreation Grounds	306.50		

*B1 (formerly B) customers

** Minimum Bill of 5000 kWh applies to B2 (formerly B1) customers.

NA – not applicable



Left: MP for Mayaro, Rushton Paray; Councillor for Mayaro South/ Guayaguayare, Delaverne Louison; the Hon. Marvin Gonzales, T&TEC Chairman Romney Thomas and T&TEC GM Curvis Francois gather for a photo after the ceremony.

St. Mary's/Galeota subtransmission circuit ready for 66 kV

On March 20, T&TEC completed the first link as part of the major project to upgrade the South East 33 kV sub-transmission ring to 66 kV.

Delivering the opening remarks at a formal event to mark the milestone, General Manager, Curvis Francois said that "With the upgraded infrastructure on the St. Mary's/Galeota 33 kV subtransmission circuit, T&TEC now has the ability to meet the increasing load demands from its large industrial customers and the burgeoning commercial landscape in area." This upgrade to 66 kV is necessary to increase the capacity to meet the increasing load demands of T&TEC's customers from Mayaro to Galeota and, ultimately, improve reliability and reduce voltage issues.

The St. Mary's – Galeota 33 kV subtransmission circuit, the longest transmission circuit on

the island of Trinidad at 44 km, is a critical part of the South East 33 kV sub transmission ring. It assists in supplying electrical power to customers in the St. Mary's and Galeota areas, as well as several large oil and gas companies (Heritage Petroleum, Shell Trinidad & Tobago Limited, BP Trinidad and Tobago, National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited and Woodside Energy).

At the event, held in Guayaguayare close to the Galeota Substation, the Minister of Public Utilities, the Honourable Marvin Gonzales, told the audience of journalists and Ministry and T&TEC officials that the St. Mary's – Galeota 33 kV subtransmission circuit upgrade is one of several projects funded by the Ministry of Public Utilities' Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP). At a cost of \$11 million, it

is an investment towards the electricity sector to ensure that it keeps pace with the demands of a growing society, he said. The Minister congratulated T&TEC, which “has enjoyed the most successful execution rate in the overall PSIP programme,” and its employees, who are “always about the job, always [going] above my expectations.” He also commended T&TEC for its efforts at new streetlight installations and repairs over the last year, while advising of other current projects under the PSIP for the electricity sector.

Mr. Francois also acknowledged the efforts of T&TEC’s employees in his remarks, explaining that they were “quietly engaged” in this extensive project for just over four years. This included long hours required to manoeuvre heavy equipment and poles through forested areas. “In replacing 280 17-metre poles with 21-metre poles, our crews were particularly tested by the terrain,” he said. “However, the use of these taller 21 metre poles, and the higher positioned conductors, was critical to prevent outages that can be triggered by forest vegetation contacting these lines...one measure to improve preventative maintenance.”

Also invited was the Member of Parliament for Mayaro,

Mr. Rushton Paray, who congratulated all involved in the project and gave his assurance that T&TEC will continue to have “a friend and partner in the office of the MP for Mayaro.”

The project required collaboration among employees of the Transmission Development & Engineering Services, Transmission Maintenance, Southern Distribution Area, System Control & Generation Interface and the Security Departments.

While the upgrade of the poles and lines was completed last November, similar work continues on the Rio Claro/ Mayaro and the Galeota/ Mayaro 33 kV circuits by the Transmission Maintenance Department. Simultaneously, employees of the Transmission Development and Engineering Services Department have been working to upgrade sections of the St. Mary’s and Rio Claro Substations from 33 kV to 66 kV, as well as the entire 33 kV Bus systems at Mayaro and Galeota substations to double their capacity.

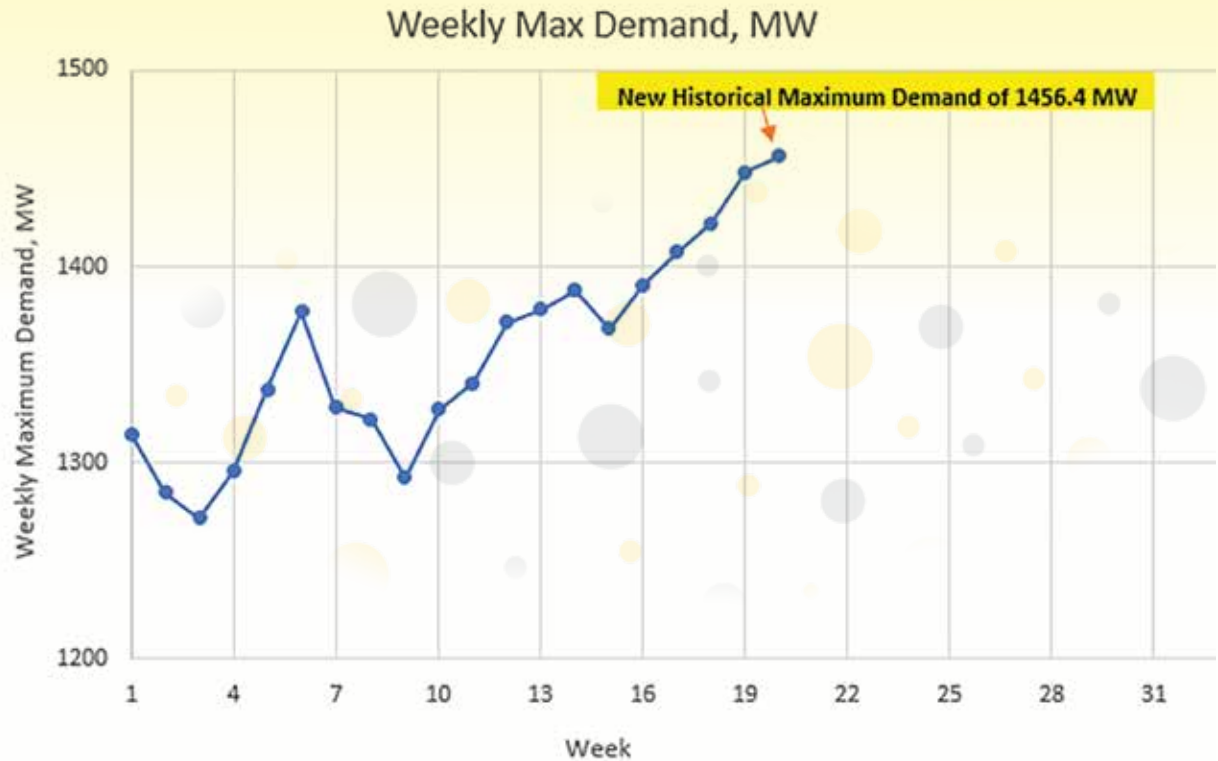
It is expected that the increased capacity of the Mayaro and Galeota Substations will become available by quarter three, 2024.

About the project:

Since part of the St. Mary’s/Galeota transmission circuit traverses a corrosive coastal environment and heavily forested terrain, coupled with infrastructure that is up to 50 years old in some parts, over time, this circuit had become less than reliable. The project involved upgrading the infrastructure with higher capacity insulation and replacing 280 17-metre poles with 21-metre poles to increase the clearance of the circuit from the ground and above the 12 kV infrastructure.

These measures not only increase the capacity to accommodate 66 kV, they also reduce the chance of outages caused by vegetation contact. In addition, aerial conductors were replaced along the entire length of the circuit to assist with lightning protection, since its destructive effects are a significant cause of power outages. Aerial conductors are devices placed on top of the pole to absorb the lightning strike and protect the circuit.

Historic increases in electricity demand recorded...again



T&TEC recorded continuous increases in electricity demand in May, exceeding previous peaks on five occasions during the first few weeks of the month.

Readers may recall that on September 13, 2023, the Commission recognised its then highest ever consumer electricity demand of 1410 megawatts (MW). However, this was surpassed in May, with recorded peak demands of 1422 MW on the 2nd, 1447.1 MW on the 6th, 1448 MW on the 7th, 1455.8 MW on the 13th and 1456.2 MW on the 15th.

The Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service (MET Service) has announced that for the second quarter of the year, "day and night temperatures are predicted to be above average for most of Trinidad and Tobago, with high (70%) probabilities for short-duration hot spells from April to June."

While T&TEC has more than enough installed capacity (2037 MW) to meet the surge in demand for electricity, the increased demand has resulted in increased natural gas usage. Practicing conservation, **once safe to do so**, will therefore help to reduce the impact on the availability of natural gas.

System upgrades improve users experience

Employees often neglect to consider themselves as customers of the services they deliver, but for the Information Systems (IS) Department internal and external customers are key beneficiaries of their services. In light of this, the recent upgrade of two computer systems – the new IPayment System and the IS Service Request System – is aimed at improving the customer service experience for all users.

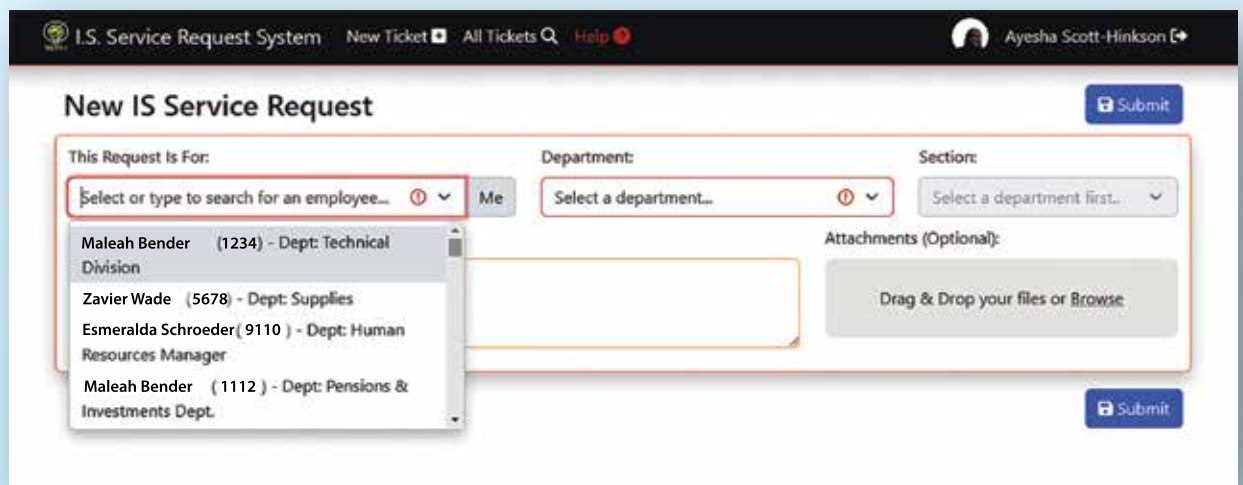
These latest upgrades follow the introduction of a suite of new IS policies, including an Incident Management and Change Management policies, as the Department seeks to ensure it employs best practices to meet the Commission’s objectives.

The first of the two upgrades, the IPayment System, went live in September 2023 to replace the OneStep cash payment application, which had become obsolete. IPayment is browser-based and features updated architecture, improved security and easier configuration for receipts and miscellaneous features. Leading the project was Systems Analyst I, Rene Labban. “[OneStep] was at the end of its



IS employees Kanika Agimudie and Joel Inniss peruse the service request system online.

life; for the Department to continue providing efficient information services to all Departments, it is necessary to ensure that applications are up-to-date and supported adequately,” he said. Users are now enjoying faster search responses, improved validation on payment processing and more robust reporting capabilities. As a result, customers will enjoy shorter wait times and an overall improvement in their service



experience. Mr. Labban credited the team that included employees from the IS and Commercial Departments and the Finance Division for their “huge team effort”.

The high volume of calls being received daily by the Service Desk prompted its employees to find another avenue for staff to contact the Department. Launched in January, the IS Service Request System (SRS) allows employees to make reports on incidents to, and request services from, the IS Department (See sidebar). With a more user-friendly interface, employees can contact the Service Desk and submit a report and/or request, easier and faster.

“The idea came after discussions among the IS staff, including the IT Support Supervisor, Service Desk staff and the Systems Officer, on how to improve the service and image of the IS

Service Desk,” said Systems Analyst – Technical Services, Gyasi Ambrose, also part of the team. Employees can still call HELP (4357), but with the SRS, in addition to reporting incidents and/or submit requests, they can also monitor the progress of their requests via email notifications and the SRS dashboard available from the Intranet, he said.

The SRS currently provides options to request security access, password resets and equipment maintenance. Other features expected to be rolled out in the coming months include, requests for new users, new hardware/software, and technician reviews/visits, and access to Internet/email, among others. To request features not yet available, employees can contact the Service Desk by using the “Incident” feature on the SRS dashboard, or via phone/ email.

According to the Department’s Incident Management Policy, an incident is defined as an occurrence of an unexpected event that can compromise the confidentiality, integrity or availability of information or information systems.

This includes:

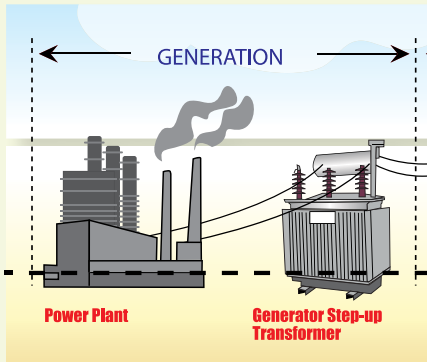
- an unplanned interruption or reduction in the quality of an IT service,
- a possible breach of the Commission’s information security policy framework, or
- a failure of controls resulting in the compromise of business operations.

A request includes requests for hardware, software installation, equipment maintenance, password reset, new software development, etc.

Engineering 101 - From Power Plant to your home

Welcome back to class! We're now at part five of our series, ENG. 101, where we simplify the electricity-related topics that make us non-engineers go "Eh?!"

We know that electricity travels a long way before getting to our power outlets at home. Remember our first session (July-Sept 2022) answered the question "How is natural gas converted to electricity?" Now we take it further to learn about the process of getting electricity from the power station to your home.

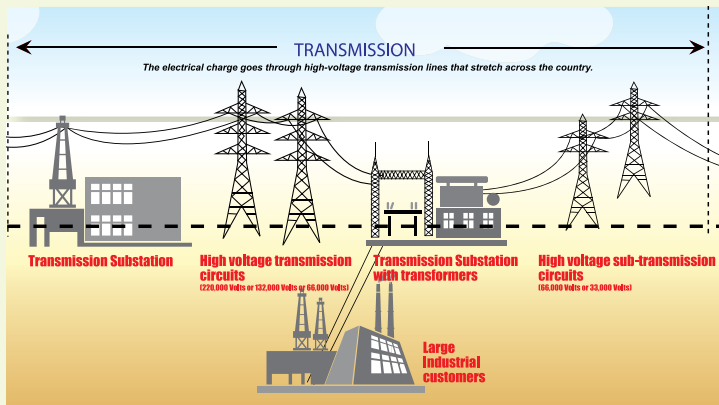


1. Where does it start? Electricity is made (generated) at a Power Plant with generators using natural gas. In T&T, power plants are operated by PowerGen, Trinidad Generation Unlimited, Contour Global Trinity Power and T&TEC (in Tobago only). The electricity is sent through step-up transformers to increase the

voltage.

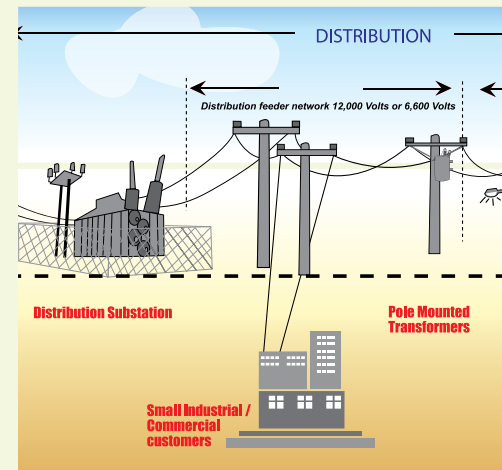
A transformer is a device used to change the voltage of electricity. It steps voltage up to push the power over long distances or steps the high voltage down to the level necessary for domestic use.

2. The current travels along high voltage transmission lines that stretch across the



county at 220,000, 132,000 or 66,000 volts to transmission substations, typically represented as 220 kV, 132 kV, 66 kV, etc. The voltage is then lowered via step-down transformers to be sent along smaller, distribution power lines to communities.

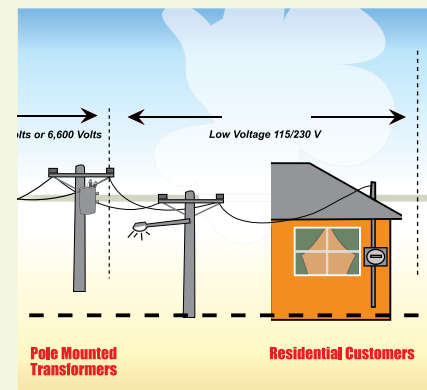
3. The power moves through distribution lines at 12,000 or 6,600 volts to smaller transformers to bring the power to a safer, lower level for use.



These smaller transformers may be mounted on the poles, or on the ground (big green boxes, called pad mount transformers).

4. Now at a low voltage (115/230 volts), the current connects to our homes through an electrical line running from the utility pole called a service drop (point of entrance). It then passes through a meter, which measures how much electricity is used, then to the service panel, where breakers and fuses protect the wires inside your home from being overloaded.

5. The electricity moves through wires inside the walls from the service panel to the outlets and switches in your home.



Project delivery improved under new PMO

Even with the best expertise and plans, technical projects can still suffer from delays and cost overruns which negatively impact their delivery. In response to the need for improved project management and delivery, in 2021 the Chief Technical Officer, Chrisalston Belle, established a Project Management Office (PMO) to provide project management support across all Departments within the Technical Division.

"The lack of a standard framework for project management across [technical] departments was one reason why the execution of projects sometimes appeared ad hoc," said Senior Engineer, Viren Ramrekersingh, who manages the PMO portfolio. This was notable in the Distribution Areas, which historically prioritised immediate needs and requests, over formal, longer term projects. The introduction of a new PMO Framework and an annual schedule has helped to resolve this issue by improving inception, planning and execution of projects.

While most activities can fit into the formal definition of a project— "a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result,"—



Employees from Distribution East offload the new 66 kV transformer during the project to upgrade the Santa Rosa 66 kV Substation in March.

executing such activities within a formal, documented framework greatly improves the chances of success. "If not done effectively, the Commission can be severely hampered in the pursuit of its core objectives", said Mr. Ramrekersingh. Effective project management is especially critical since completion of capital projects is directly linked to the Regulated Industries Commission's (RIC) approval of tariff adjustments.

Utilising the Project Management Institute's PM Body of Knowledge as a guide, together with the Five-Year Development Plans for the Distribution Areas, the PMO assists Areas and Departments in defining and documenting

their project scope, setting realistic schedules and managing budgets through proper estimation and tracking of expenditure. This supportive role yielded immediate results. While only two projects were completed throughout the Distribution Areas in 2021, in 2022 the number rose to 14.

"Another way the PMO assists the Areas is by prioritising items with other Departments to better allocate resources," said Mr. Ramrekersingh. This was demonstrated with the project to replace the St. Mary's Substation 33 kV transformer in May, where resources from the Civil Section and Protection and SCADA Department were shared among all parties involved. The PMO also developed a SharePoint one-stop-shop where all Department can access supplier contacts, videos of past projects, equipment manuals and Factory Acceptance Test data and other documents. The included repository of lessons learned, where users can search for key words and discover what were the challenges encountered on past projects, is important to ensure past mistakes are not repeated.

Mr. Ramrekersingh noted their

continued on page 17

HSE Activities 2024



Distribution East



Distribution North

Check out T&TEC employees in action throughout the Commission for various HSE Week activities



Distribution South



Distribution North



Head Office



Head Office



Head Office



Distribution South employees with tokens from their session on Climate Change by the EMA.



Distribution South



Distribution East



Distribution East



Mt. Hope



Mt. Hope



Distribution Tobago



Distribution Tobago



Distribution Tobago



Distribution Central



Distribution Central

T&TEC in D' Carnival



Exuberant players of T&TEC New Eastside Dimension.

Congratulations to our pan champs!

T&TEC is pleased to continue its association with three powerful steel bands who performed exceptionally for the 2024 Carnival season.

The Tobago-based T&TEC New East Side Dimension bettered their third-place finish in last year's Small Conventional Bands Panorama competition to earn the lion's share of top awards in their category. Playing Lord Kitchener's Toco Band, arranged by prolific arranger, Kersh Ramsey, the band topped the preliminary and semi-final stages of the competition, culminating with a spirited performance at Skinner Park on finals night, January 12, to cement the

win. Three weeks later, on February 6, the band repeated the feat at the THA Tobago Pan Champs competition.

The T&TEC Tropical Angel Harps Youth Steel Orchestra, under senior player and arranger, Jerrod Superville, placed second in the Under-21 Junior Panorama finals on January 14. Playing Olatunji's Engine Room, their solid performance earned them a tie with the Desperadoes Youth

Steel Orchestra.

Their senior bandmates also placed second in the Ken 'Professor' Philmore South/Central Pan Champs competition on February 8. Their tune of choice, arguably the song of the 2024 carnival season, Mical Teja's DNA, was arranged by Clarence Morris. This year the band included members of The Rhythm Project – a world percussion ensemble from the



Tropical Angel Harps youth on the big stage.



Tropical Angel Harps Senior Band Arranger, Clarence Morris, leads his players through their performance on finals night.

Virginia Arts Festival (VAF), who travelled for the sole purpose of performing at T&T's panorama finals*. The band went on to place eighth in the finals at the Queen's Park Savannah on February 10.

T&TEC is proud of all the players, arrangers, tuners and the management teams for their energy, passion and drive which once again yielded outstanding results.

Well done!

*The Watts Happening reached out to the group from the VAF to learn about their Trinidad panorama experience. Lisette Rice, a parent of one the pannists, shared that rehearsals for the group of 21, comprising 11 students, 3 directors and 7 chaperones, were "intense" as they had to learn the piece in one week. "We were proud of their tenacity and endurance," she said, "... we are so thankful to Angel Harps for opening their home and hearts to us."



Project delivery improved under new PMO (cont'd)

initial success has been slowed by the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act, which was proclaimed in April 2023. "We have had to adjust project timelines to keep up with the new requirements, but projects are now picking up pace," he assured.

In the future, since "what

gets tracked, gets done," it is hoped that the PMO can include a Scheduler/Planner who will monitor all projects in detail to detect issues affecting the critical path items which cause delays.

The PMO operates within the Distribution Planning and Support Department and is managed by the Senior

Engineer, Mr. Ramrekersingh, with support from Engineering Assistant, Steven Seenath. In 2023, the scope of the Office was expanded to include Transmission, with Brian Mohamed, Senior Engineer, Transmission Development and Engineering Services, responsible for managing transmission-related activities in projects.

Employee update

Appointments, Promotions, Re-designations and Departures

APPOINTMENT

NAME	POSITION	AREA/DEPARTMENT
Kurt Wellington	Mechanic 'C'	Distribution Central
Richard Archer	Mechanic 'C'	Distribution Tobago
Safraz Zaid Hosein	Systems Administrator III	Information Systems

PROMOTIONS

NAME	POSITION	AREA/DEPARTMENT
Akil Alves	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Alyssa Shah	Subsection Leader	Distribution North
Ancil Callendar	Field Controller	Distribution Central
Anderson Beharry	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Anil Sammy	Stores Attendant	Public Lighting
Anthony Noreiga	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Anya Ramkay	Insurance Assistant II	Risk Management Department
Arlene Pantaleon	Section Leader	Distribution East
Carlene Branche-Dick	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Carlus Fournillier	Linesman 'C'	Distribution North
Chantelle Wilson	Subsection Leader	Distribution East
Chike Sullivan	Linesman 'C'	Distribution South
Crystal Harrilal-Nehorah	Insurance Assistant II	Rick Management Department
Damion Charles	Maintenance Technician II	Distribution Central
Daneille Simmons	Admin. Asst. III	Pensions & Investments Dept.
David Austin	Mechanic 'B'	Transmission Maintenance
Davidson Martin	Ganger (Supplies)	Supplies
Desiree Edwards Phillips	Clerk Typist	Distribution Tobago
Desta Francis	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Dillon Corraspe	Linesman 'C'	Distribution South
Dillon Sankar	Linesman 'C'	Distribution South
Donny Balvin	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Eustace Darius	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Giselle Lall-Bhagwandeem	Internal Audit Assistant	Internal Audit
Ilan Telesford	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Ivan Ramnarine	Section Leader	Commercial
Jairaj Persad	Jointer 'B'	Distribution North
Jamal Ayres	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Jeewan Ramroop	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Keafe Sennon	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Keisha Williams	Subsection Leader	Commercial
Kelya Williams	Insurance Assistant II	Risk Management Department
Kereem Telesford	Maintenance Technician III	Distribution North
Keston Wiggins	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Kris Pooran	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Kristen Townsend	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
K-Roy Duke	Linesman 'C'	Distribution North
Kurt Sylvester	Electrician 'A'	Distribution East
Kwame Chikuyu	Snr. Instructor (Trv)	Human Resources Manager
Leslie Francis	Substation Supervisor	Distribution East
Lex Tom	Maintenance Technician III	Distribution South
Lister Hospidales	Dispatcher	Public Lighting
Marvin Springer	Linesman 'A'	Distribution South
Michael Charles	Linesman 'C'	Public Lighting
Nardeen Baran	Subsection Leader	Transmission Maintenance
Naresh Rampersad	Consumers Investigator	Distribution South
Nicholas Victor	Ganger (Distribution)	Distribution South
Nicole Ballantyne	Senior Clerk	Pensions & Investments Dept.
Nyonn Dass	Electrician 'C'	Distribution Central
Raulston Wilson	Linesman 'B'	Distribution South
Rion Belle	Transport Labourer I	Distribution East
Roger Moore	Mechanic 'A'	Public Lighting

Employee update

Appointments, Promotions, Re-designations and Departures

Roger Soodeen
Shane Kallicharan
Sharla Ramkissoo-Ramjohn
Shervon Bushell
Shervonne Valdez
Sideek Mohammed
Sieon Bethel
Simeon Augustus
Stacey Griffith-Alves
Stacy-Ann Mc Carthy
Surendra Ajodhasingh
Tigana Sparks
Valene Massiah
Wenderly Gomez

Electrician 'A'
Linesman 'C'
Maintenance & Services Assistant
Mechanical Assistant
Subsection Leader
Substation Supervisor
Linesman 'A'
Linesman 'B'
Subsection Leader
Subsection Leader
Crew Supervisor
Linesman 'B'
Senior Clerk
Accounting Assistant

Distribution South
Distribution South
Distribution Central
Distribution South
Commercial
Distribution South
Distribution South
Distribution Central
Business Development & Admin.
Distribution South
Distribution South
Transm Devel & Eng Services
Chief Accountant

DEPARTURES

NAME

Ainsley Jackman
Andrew Macintyre
Bernard Lewis
Berol Patterson
Brenton De Leon
Brooke Basdeo
Christopher Cato
Clyde Bridgemohan
Cornelius Richardson
Davis Maharaj
Dexter Mahabir
Eastern Garib
Floyd George
Garth Abraham
Glendon Roberts
Jenelle Turpin-Britto
Joel Hyacenth
John Johnson
Jovan Abraham
Kern Clarke
Michael Alexander
Michael Edwards
Ralph Greaves
Ramona Gonsalves
Randolph Pierre
Richard Seenath
Roger James
Rohan Gangadeen
Roseanne De Silva
Ruthven Benjamin
Saied Mohammed
Shaheeda Rahaman
Shazard Mohammed
Wayne Meyers

POSITION

Field Controller
Crew Supervisor
Crew Supervisor
Consumers Investigator
Linesman 'B'
Clerk II
Crew Supervisor
Supervisor – El Socorro Trn Facility
Welder 'A'
Driver – Aerial Lift Truck
Crew Supervisor
Snr. Supervisor Trans. & Dist.
Driver – Aerial Lift Truck
Maintenance Technician II
Consumers Investigator
Clerk Typist
Snr. Supervisor Trans. & Distribution
Estate Constable
Head, Security
Helper
Driver – Class 5 Vehicle
Crew Supervisor
Substation Supervisor
Clerk II
Subsection Leader
Hotline Supervisor
Driver – Aerial Lift Truck
Welder/ Fitter (Dist.)
Stewardess
Dr – Pole Hole Borer Comb.
Estate Corporal
Clerk II
Operations Manager – North
Meter Inspector

AREA/DEPARTMENT

Distribution Central
Distribution North
Distribution South
Distribution Tobago
Distribution South
Metering Services
Distribution North
Human Resources Manager
Distribution East
Distribution South
Distribution South
Distribution South
Distribution Tobago
Distribution Tobago
Distribution North
Distribution East
Transmission Maintenance
Security – Distribution South
Security – Head Office
Engineering Controller
Distribution South
Distribution Tobago
Distribution South
Distribution East
Distribution North
Distribution North
Public Lighting
Distribution North
Engineering Controller
Distribution Tobago
Security – Mt. Hope
Human Resources Department
Distribution North
Commercial

RE-DESIGNATIONS

NAME

David Joseph
Jeevan Boodhai
Nigel Charles
Olatungii Belle
Surindra Ramkissoo

POSITION

Linesman 'A'
Linesman 'A'
Human Resources Officer I
Ganger (Distribution)
Linesman 'A'

AREA/DEPARTMENT

Distribution North
Distribution North
Industrial Relations
Distribution Central
Distribution North



Women in focus – International Women’s Day



International Women’s Day (IWD), observed on March 8, is our annual reminder to persist with efforts towards a gender equal world. It is also a time to celebrate women and their achievements, raise awareness and act towards “Inspiring Inclusion” – the 2024 theme.

This year, T&TEC ladies were asked to focus on themselves, with activities that touched on personal issues. On March 8, female employees participated in an online forum aptly titled: “The MEN we need to talk about – A women exclusive virtual forum on MENopause and MENTAL Health.” Dr. Brent Pereira, Clinical Director at Elder Associates and Dr. Sabrina ‘Bri’ Ramkisson, Obstetrician and Gynecologist, were the experts invited to lead the discussions.

Dr. Pereira invited the ladies to reframe their realities regarding menopause, to “Me-No-Pause,” he suggested. “Make this a time to put yourself front and centre of your needs. How can you be intentional about how you experience this change?” he asked. Suggestions that followed ranged from exercise and diet, to practicing mindfulness through journaling, and getting a fresh makeover.

Dr. Ramkisson provided the medical responses to the questions related to menopause – How to tell when one has reached menopause? While there is no diagnostic test to check for menopause, by combining the patient history, with a pelvic ultrasound to check ovaries, and hormonal tests, the doctor can make an informed

determination. What are the treatment options? Hormone replacement therapy is a key form of treatment, while support groups and diet and exercise were other options. How to help my partner prepare for the transition? Communicate your needs. Take him along to your doctor visits so you can plan how to best navigate it together.

Dr. Ramkisson was pleased to share that her consultations have become easier since “women are so aware today... they are coming in with a lot of information, and that’s great.” The forum was well-received, with vibrant interaction between the speakers and the participants, who asked pointed questions and delivered quips among themselves in the accompanying chat.

Some Area Offices hosted their own activities to celebrate and empower women. Distribution Tobago collaborated with the Tobago Regional Health Authority to host a health and wellness symposium on IWD. The goal – to provide a simple yet powerful solution to bring about transformative changes in women’s overall well-being. Senator Dr. the Honourable Maria Dillon-Remy delivered a lecture on integrating spiritual health and wellness, and presentations by invited a doctor, dentist, nutritionist, and a physical trainer, aimed to equip our women with knowledge and

tools for a better life. Testing for lifestyle illnesses, HIV, and immunisations, were also available.

Head Office ladies were treated to a fun, lunchtime escape on March 22, when they gathered with their lunch for an hour of bonding, complete with inspirational colouring activities, dessert and mocktails.

The events were welcome respites for the ladies, whose balance of the daily demands of work and other responsibilities can be overwhelming. The activities delivered on the aim to validate and celebrate the differences of women, all while inspiring inclusion.



Meet the Employee Wellness Committee



Due to the high cost associated with employee absenteeism, injuries, diseases, sickness, stress and other maladies, companies worldwide are increasingly becoming aware of the need to improve the wellness of their employees in order to reduce these costs and improve productivity. In light of this, the Human Resources Division formed a nine-member Employee Wellness Committee (EWC), tasked with creating initiatives to promote a culture of wellbeing within the Commission. Health fairs, puzzle competitions, awareness sessions, and an aerobic "sweat fete", were some of the activities held by the Committee geared towards this goal, and its members are set to engage with staff even more.

For the first quarter of the year, activities hosted by the EWC included a crossword competition to commemorate International Women's Day and a donation drive for Down's Syndrome Day. Other plans for the coming months include a Family-Feud style Wellness Wars, panel discussion on Domestic Violence, International Men's Day commemoration and Area Health Fairs.

While the concept of the Employee Wellness Committee emerged in July 2012, with programmes starting in 2013, this present Committee was inaugurated in 2022.

The Members:



Marisa Victor – Chairman

Ms. Victor, a Human Resources Officer II, a strong advocate for annual medical check-ups hopes to encourage employees to make the effort to adopt a

healthy lifestyle, not just physically, but also emotionally, mentally, spiritually and otherwise.

physical and mental health, and productivity is very clear to her.



Michela Alexander – Member

Ms. Alexander, Stenotypist, is passionate about how a healthy work life balance assists in improving the lives of her co-workers and

encouraging them into healthier lifestyles for the benefit of both their work and family life.

Chrystal Joseph – Vice Chairman

Ms. Joseph has always believed that a happy and healthy employee is a productive employee. As a peer councillor and Senior HSE Coordinator, the correlation between



Tyjondah Antoine – Member

Ms. Antoine, Sub-section Leader, Communications Department, was inspired to be a part of the committee

because she believes in the importance of fostering a healthy and supportive workplace, which aligns perfectly with her personal values.

Zaheer Mohammed – Member

Zaheer (or Zee, as he is commonly called) is an Assistant Warehouse Supervisor, who considers personal wellness and health very important. As such, he prioritises activities and habits that contribute to the overall well-being and health of himself and others.



reduction in sick leave, as she believes that preventative action can lead to a healthy culture at the Commission.

Al Mckhell Rodney - Member

Mr. Rodney is a Communications Rigger, who also places great value in sports, which taught him to channel negative energy and anger into positivity and eagerness. He encourages everyone to take care of their health, since this is often taken for granted.



Cheryl-Ann Nelson-Alleyne – Member

Ms. Nelson-Alleyne, HR Officer I, is motivated to see the work of the Committee impacted positively on the group health plan and a



The Employee Wellness Committee welcomes your feedback. Send your questions/comments to ewc@ttec.co.tt. They can also be reached via telephone, at extensions #2050 (Chairman) and #4070 (Vice-Chairman).

Tobago Carnival Burnout

T&TEC Tobago held a Carnival Burnout and Obstacle Course on February 8, 2024 – the first of many team building initiatives scheduled for the Area this year. Employees from Distribution Tobago, Cove Power Station and the Training Facility competed for prizes and bonded while participating in novelty team building events. By all accounts, a great time was had. Congratulations to the members of the winning team led by Strisand Murray and including Jameel Bournes, Cameron Sharpe, Akil Thomas, Jamal Small, Dane McKenzie and Omilia Jarrott.



Kevin Cummings, Jerrell Daniel, Julieann Mc Dougall and Safiya Potts-Makoul work together to balance a tennis ball using sticks.

Death Announcements

We will miss you

We recognise and mourn the loss of our dear colleagues, Patricia Duke and Merle Soogrim – Ramkissoon who passed away recently.

The outgoing and selfless **Patricia Duke**, Clerk II of the Human Resources Department, died on April 23 after a period of illness.



Ms. Duke, who was 45 years old, first joined the Commission temporarily in 2000 and 2001. She returned to T&TEC in 2008 as a Temporary Typist in the Human Resources Department and was made permanent in November 2011. In 2014, she was promoted to Clerk/Typist and was redesignated to Clerk II in February 2023.

“Customer focused, caring, hardworking, dedicated, considerate...” said Human Resources Manager, Nigel

Marquez of Pat, as she was affectionately called. Commercial Officer, Monica Jaikaran, described her as “one of [T&TEC’s] most courteous, efficient and pleasant employees...always willing to go the extra mile for each employee.”

Ms. Duke was known for her commitment to her duties, but this dedication extended to even beyond work. “Often times Pat would apply for leave to assist persons in her community,” shared another colleague. “She would take them for medical treatment, appointments and attended to them,” she said. She will be terribly missed.

Merle Soogrim – Ramkissoon, Clerk II of Distribution South, died on May 12, after illness. Ms. Soogrim-Ramkissoon, who was 44 years old, started her career at T&TEC as a Temporary Clerk III in 2001 and became permanently employed in November 2003. Exactly two years later, she was promoted to Clerk II, her last position.

Ms. Soogrim-Ramkissoon was a beloved member of staff at the Area’s Field Office. Her former Supervisor, Field Controller, Peter Mohan (now



at Distribution East), spoke of her dedication to getting the job done. “Even when she got additional work five minutes to four she would stay back and finish the task,” he said. “She loved life along with her children and family and was part of all the Southern Area’s winning march past routines for sports day.”

Field Controller, Distribution South, Naresh Jeewan, expressed sadness over the loss of his colleague and friend of over 20 years. “She was a simple person, friendly, approachable and highly dependable. Her death is a great loss,” he shared.

The T&TEC Family offers our sincerest condolences to the family, colleagues and friends of Patricia Duke and Merle Soogrim-Ramkissoon.

May they rest in peace.



Fun page

Test your recollection skills by answering the following questions. The answers can be found in the articles featuring T&TEC's Carnival activities.

1. Which Distribution Area held a Carnival Burnout and Obstacle Course in February?
2. The obstacle course winning team included 2 females. **True or False?**
3. Who was the arranger for the T&TEC New East Side Dimension?
4. Where were the finals for the Small Conventional Bands Panorama competition held?
5. Who composed the song of choice for the Tropical Angel Harps Steel Orchestra senior band?
6. Visiting ensemble from Virginia?
7. Tropical Angel Harps Youth Band tied with which band in the U-21 Panorama competition?
8. Engine Room composer?
9. The South/Central Pan Champs competition is named after which pan icon?

Answers on page 27

Second CAPE scholarship for one T&TEC family

Congratulations to Drawing Office Supervisor, Rakesh Bharatsingh, whose daughter, Renita, a former student of the Lakshmi Girls' Hindu College, secured an Open Scholarship in Mathematics. The award followed her results in the 2023 Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE). Renita is the second child of Mr. Bharatsingh to earn a national scholarship – in 2018 his older daughter, Ranelle, was awarded an additional scholarship for Natural Sciences.

On this amazing accomplishment, Mr. Bharatsingh and his wife are undoubtedly "delighted and proud." Their philosophy for success has always been to encourage their daughters to "maintain a balance" between academics and sports. Renita, currently in her first year at the University of the West Indies, was actively training with the East Zone youth volleyball team while at secondary school. Once she completes her degree in



Rakesh Bharatsingh (right), with his daughter Renita (left) and wife, Cindy.

Electrical and Computer Engineering, she plans to further her studies in System Analysis and Design.

The proud father vows to continue to support his daughter along this journey.

Best of luck to them both!

Watty says



Did you know that if a pedestrian is hit by a vehicle at a speed of 50-60 KPH, their chances of being killed on impact is over 50 percent? At 80KPH and over, this increases to 90 percent!

Watty Says...Be safe on the road with these Pedestrian Road Safety Tips:

1. **Cross safely.** When attempting to cross, stay on the pavement with your hand in the air to get the driver's attention. Make sure there is no traffic coming in either direction, then cross safely.
2. **Ditch the distraction.** Mobile phones and headphones make it difficult to hear approaching vehicles. Don't attempt to cross a main road while on a phone.
3. **Plan your route.** Never congregate as a group on the roadside.
4. **Use the pavement.** Always walk on designated walkways and always in the opposite direction to the traffic.
5. **Safeguard your kids.** Children get distracted easily. Look out for hazards and hold their hands while walking on the road.
6. **Use the walkover.** Walk to a pedestrian crossing or walkover. It is safer that way and is good exercise.
7. **Do not cross between vehicles.** If you must, take your time and stick your head out gradually, looking right and left.
8. **Wear something bright.** Try to wear clothing that is white, bright or fluorescent. At night, wear something reflective and use your phone light or a torch light to be seen by drivers.

Source: iRoadsafe & Arrive Alive





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.

The following was a post made by a customer on Facebook:

March 25, 2024

The live electrical line was hanging precariously and was about to dislodge from the building at one of our properties.

I called T&TEC. I was impressed with the quick response and the speed these guys worked to cut the electricity to the building, secure the line, return electricity and give us a relief from what I felt was imposing danger to life.

As a people we are quick to complain about the poor service we get from service agents. I want to be quick to celebrate the good, pleasant service and friendly workers whenever I meet them.

So, to Thomas Richardson, Denzel Mc Conney, Kiel Smith and Ray Campbell of T&TEC, I salute you guys. Thanks very much for representing your organisation well.

Michael Stewart
Tobago

May 15, 2024

I would like to recognise T&TEC Officer, Estate Constable John Thorpe at your San Fernando Office for his excellent service observed today. While seated in the waiting area, I saw this gentleman greet each walk-in client, offer his assistance, aid a waiting mom in entertaining her baby and, taking the cake for me, was when an older customer approached him for assistance while he was on what sounded as an important call. He immediately turned all his attention to assisting this person, even going as far as saying to the client that he was more important...all this great service rendered in less than an hour's time!

Officer Thorpe, thank you. I'm sure you positively impacted many customers you interacted with.

Mala Harry
Via E-mail



Answers

1. Distribution Tobago
2. False. The winning team included one female, Omilia Jarrott.
3. Kersh Ramsey
4. Skinner Park
5. Mical Teja
6. The Rhythm Project
7. Desperadoes Youth Steel Orchestra
8. Olatunji
9. Ken 'Professor' Philmore

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

REMEMBER YOUR
mental health



THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS:

WARNING SIGNS

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks.
- Trying to harm or end one's life or making plans to do so.
- Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behaviour that causes harm to self or others.
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or difficulty breathing.
- Significant weight loss or gain.
- Excessive use of alcohol or drugs.
- Drastic changes in mood, behaviour, personality or sleeping habits.
- Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still.
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities.

WHAT TO DO?

- Tell someone - family member, close friend, colleague, faith leader.
- Check with your doctor to rule out other physical health conditions.
- Be honest about what you're feeling and be clear about what you want.
- Ask for help finding a therapist or mental health professional that works for you.

www.nami.org

Contact the Employee Assistance Programme:

24-hour hotline service: (868) 622-6594

Email: info@eldertt.com