

# BUSINESS

## Two bidders to submit proposals for port project

THE Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago has announced that two bidders have been pre-qualified and will be invited to submit proposals for the Port of Spain's Public Private Partnership (PPP) Project.

The successful pre-qualified bidders were selected by an evaluation process by a Cabinet-appointed committee established in September 2024 to review the credentials of six companies and consortiums that submitted bids, including local and international entities, the Port Authority said in a statement published in the press yesterday.

The bids were based on an invitation to pre-qualify which the Port publicly issued in early July 2024.

The Authority said it aims to select a preferred partner in 2025.

It explained that the project is based on a landlord model, under a Build-Rehabilitate-Operate-Transfer (BROT) scheme for a 25-year concession.

Implementation of the PPP envisages that activities linked to the handling of containers, roll-on roll-off, and general cargo operations including ter-



IMPORTANT STEP: Lyle Alexander

minial handling, storage and additional services such as weighing, cleaning, reefer stuffing and any other activity related to cargo handling will be included under the objectives of the PPP.

Port Authority chairman Lyle Alexander said in the statement:

"This represents an important step in our strategy to grow the Port's potential and increase its competitiveness by deploying maximum port capacity in a phased manner. Ultimately, we want to positively enhance the experience of Port users, businesses and the national community."

Works and Transport Minister Rohan Sinanan said he was pleased with the progress made on the project.

"We have taken a very considered and deliberate approach to this project, following international best practice, to ensure that we make the right choice for the future of the Port of Spain."

The announcement follows weeks of protest action by port workers amid wage negotiations.

The actions disrupted shipping schedules, impacted port operations and hindered the delivery and services to local and regional stakeholders, the Port said in a media release last month.

The workers have since returned to duties after being given a directive by the Industrial Court to do so.

## LABIDCO, UTT highlight benefits of plan: 60% waste reduction

THE La Brea Industrial Development Company Ltd (LABIDCO) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) have completed their ten-month collaboration on a waste management plan report for the La Brea Industrial Estate and the Port of Brighton.

In a release, LABIDCO stated that the report was handed over during a ceremony at UTT's Agora Campus in Chaguana.

While providing a detailed roadmap for efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable treatment of waste generated on the La Brea Industrial Estate and the Port of Brighton, the release stated that the plan also highlights the environmental and economic benefits which include reducing final waste by

an estimated 60% — equivalent to 10,000 tonnes annually.

It also stated, "It includes a thorough assessment of waste volumes, opportunities for recycling, reuse and reduction, and explores innovative ways to convert waste into value-added materials and income-generating opportunities."

The release said detailed action plans for each recommendation were developed outlining specific strategies for waste diversion.

Speaking on the impact of the project, LABIDCO's general manager Dr Vernon Paltoo said the completion of this waste management plan underscores LABIDCO's dedication to sustainability and its broader strategic goals.

"It is a critical step in realising our

near-term vision of becoming a certified Green Port, promoting eco-friendly practices that positively impact the environment, our stakeholders, and the broader community," he said.

Also, in attendance at the handover were LABIDCO's deputy chairman Prof Donnie Boodlal and operations manager Terrence Boodoosingh as well as UTT's chairman Prof Clement Imbert and acting president Prof Stephen Joseph.

Members of the project team were: LABIDCO's head of sustainability, strategy and growth Khadija St Louis and associate professors at UTT Dr Solange Kelly, Dr Mariane Watson, Dr Ejaz John, Dr Samantha Chadee and senior instructor Suzette Balkaran.

## Integrity Commission records 74% compliance rate



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COMPLIANCE rates for company declarations filed with the Integrity Commission of Trinidad and Tobago under the Integrity in Public Life Act are the highest ever since the commission's inception, according to chairman Haydn Gittens.

He said the compliance rate to date is over 74%.

He made the comments Friday at the Integrity Commission's Anti-Corruption Day seminar at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre in Port of Spain.

Although the compliance rate has improved, Gittens said those who have not complied will be exposed when the commission publishes their names.

"We will continue to seek the assistance of the High Court to ensure compliance from those who still refuse the corporate after their names are published.

Coming out of this year's exercise, however, we will be in a position to zero in and focus on the public entities that were plagued by local clients whilst ensuring general compliance levels continue to improve," he said.

He added that the commission's investigation unit currently has 31 matters under active investigation, with 16 cases closed so far this year.

Gittens said to strengthen policies and procedures and reduce the possibility of corrupt practices within public entities, the commission's staff members were trained accordingly.

"In addition to day-to-day business operations, we built a strong team by resolving existing staffing issues; implementing initiatives to build morale and strengthen competencies through staff training; strengthening the legislative framework to add the most sensible amendments to the Act; and simplifying declarant interface and improving operating efficiencies through digitalisation," he

pointed out.

Although these projects have been undertaken, he stated that progress has been limited, with one of the key issues being short-term employment—three-month contracts—which have led to instability within the organisation.

Gittens explained that the board has been working on amendments to the Act, such as introducing penalties for breaching the code of conduct and facilitating the sharing of information with sister agencies; however, the proposal was withdrawn by Cabinet after submission.

"We will, however, continue our efforts to strengthen our effectiveness and impact via legislative reform," he said.

He said the allocation by the Finance Ministry in the 2024/2025 budget has allowed the commission to carry out its digitalisation project.

"This project is currently underway and we have started the

process of digitising our paper files and records. We are also in the process of issuing an RFP for phase one of our digitalisation exercise which will involve scoping our current processes, solution identification, costing and execution," Gittens noted.

In keeping with the anti-corruption theme of the seminar, he said the commission will be collaborating with international anti-corruption organisations to ensure the best practices are adopted.

"For the public, I urge you to remain vigilant, your voice matters and your actions matter. Corruption thrives in an environment where silence reigns. Do not be afraid to speak up, report wrongdoing and demand justice, you are the backbone of the integrity we seek to foster in our nation," he said.

He added that corruption drains resources needed for the people and stressed that it stifles national development.