



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
Communications Unit

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Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CPO reports Non- Agreement with PSA to Minister Dookeran

The Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) and the Public Services Association have been holding discussions since October 2010 on the issue of revised salaries and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for the period January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2010 for officers of the Civil Service and Statutory Authorities subject to the Statutory Authorities Act, Chap. 24:01. At March 1, 2011, fourteen (14) meetings had been held between the parties. On that date, the CPO made her final offer on revised salaries and COLA to the PSA. That offer entailed the following:

Salary

- (i) Consolidation of the COLA of \$125 per month existing at December 31, 2007 with salary at that date;
- (ii) With effect from January 1, 2008, an increase of 2% on the consolidated salary at (i) above;
- (iii) With effect from January 1, 2009, an increase of 1% on the salary at (ii) above;
- (iv) With effect from January 1, 2010, an increase of 2% on the salary at (iii) above.

Cost of Living Allowance

- (i) For the period January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2009, a new COLA of \$125 per month;
- (ii) For the period January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010, a new COLA of \$135 per month.

Lump sum

Payment of a lump sum of \$2000 in respect of the period January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2010.

In response, the PSA, by letter dated March 10, 2011, submitted the following proposal:

- (i) Consolidation of the Cost of Living Allowance of \$125 per month existing at December 31, 2007 with salary existing at that date;
- (ii) For the period January 1, 2008, a new COLA of \$135 plus a 10% increase;
- (iii) For the period January 1, 2009, a new COLA of \$140 plus a 10% increase;
- (iv) For the period January 1, 2010, a new COLA of \$150 per month plus a 14% increase.

The Association also submitted the following proposal for immediate settlement of the issue:

- (i) Consolidation of the Cost of Living Allowance of \$125 per month existing at December 31, 2007 with salary existing at that date;
- (ii) For the period January 1, 2008, a new COLA of \$130 plus a 5% increase;
- (iii) For the period January 1, 2009, a new COLA of \$135 plus a 5% increase;
- (iv) For the period January 1, 2010, a new COLA of \$150 per month plus a 6% increase.

Given the significant differences which continue to exist between the positions of the parties and in accordance with the provisions of section 17 of the Civil Service Act, Chap. 23:01, the CPO has reported to the Honourable Minister of Finance, Winston Dookeran, that the parties have been unable to reach agreement on the matter and has so advised the President of the PSA, Mr. Watson Duke.

Section 17 of the Act allows either the Personnel Department (Chief Personnel Officer) or the appropriate recognised Association (that is, the PSA), after consultation and negotiation on any matter, to report to the Honourable Minister of Finance issues on which no agreement has been reached. Once such a report is made to the Honourable Minister, a dispute is deemed to exist in respect of the matter. Where a dispute is deemed to exist under section 17 of the Civil Service Act, section 20(1) of the Act, makes it mandatory for the Minister of Finance to refer the dispute for settlement to the Special Tribunal within twenty-one (21) days from the date on which the dispute is reported to him.

The Special Tribunal, which is provided for under section 21 of the Civil Service Act, is required to hear and determine disputes referred to it and to make an appropriate award thereon: such award being for a period of not less than five (5) years from the date on which it takes effect.

The parties are yet to begin discussions on several allowances which are payable to various categories of officers. However, it is anticipated that those discussions would begin shortly.

THE END

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