



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Media Release

TRADE MINISTER LAUNCHES ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC LABS

June 11, 2019:- Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and the business community will soon receive improved outputs from at least two (2) local public labs with the commencement of a national accreditation programme. The activity which is being implemented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry through the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) was launched on June 11, 2019 by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon.

In delivering the Feature Address at the launch, Minister Gopee-Scoon said ***“This initiative is imperative as we continue to improve the quality infrastructure and culture of quality in Trinidad and Tobago to support a diverse and competitive economy.”*** She pointed out that accurate test results and reports are vital not only for the wellbeing of citizens but various stakeholder groups who use them every day as the basis for making important social and economic decisions. As examples, the Trade and Industry Minister cited the results produced by the Forensic Science Centre on crime scene evidence and the Chemistry Food and Drug Division for laboratory services in the areas of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, pesticides and toxic chemicals.

Minister Gopee-Scoon assured stakeholders that the initiative would improve the competency and reliability of testing and calibration services of at least two (2) public laboratories in 2019. There are forty-five (45) listed public laboratories. The Minister affirmed that the accreditation of public laboratories will assist with improving governance and service excellence for the public service with conformity assessment activities.



The programme is a vital component of the state's activities to improve Trinidad and Tobago's global competitiveness by enhancing the services and systems on which consumers, businesses and industry rely. Laboratories test, calibrate and measure critical elements required for trade. In order to compete internationally, the country's standards for testing must align with global benchmarks.

Mr. Lawford Dupres, Chairman, TTBS, said ***"the road to accreditation of all public laboratories is not a short one, but one we must set foot on with determination and deliberate speed regardless of who holds the purse strings of the economy."*** He gave the commitment of the TTBS to partner with stakeholder institutions to guide the programme so that each is empowered to assume the responsibilities for demonstrating a competent, innovative and robust national laboratory system integral to the national quality infrastructure.

Mr. Derek Luk Pat, Executive Director, TTBS reiterated the organisation's leading role in supporting local socio-economic growth through implementation of the National Quality Policy and active development of the National Quality Infrastructure which includes all systems for standardization, testing, inspection, certification, measurement and accreditation. The Accreditation of Public Laboratories Programme is an initiative under the National Quality Policy.

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