



# Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

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Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

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## Media Release

### TATT WARNS 100.5 FM DUE TO A BREACH OF IT'S CONCESSION

The Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) acting pursuant to its duty to investigate complaints of broadcasting services under Section 18 (1)(m) of the Telecommunications Act, Ch 47:31 conducted an investigation of the *Slam Roadblock* show broadcast on Guardian Media Limited's 'SLAM 100.5 FM' on 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 for inappropriate content and possible breach of its concession.

Upon review of the programme the TATT found that the hosts of the show facilitated and encouraged an interview with a purported inmate of the Maximum Security Prison.

The TATT noted that the purported inmate was permitted to make statements through the national radio broadcaster that would have disturbed the general public particularly at that time when several prisons Officers lost their lives reportedly at the hands of criminal elements.

The TATT also found that the station ought have known that inmates are not allowed access to mobile phones and that the use of the mobile phone by the inmate to communicate with the station would have been unauthorised and contrary to the law.

These acts were considered a breach of condition D9 (c) of 100.5FM's concession which states – *Without prejudice to Condition D8, and until such time as a Broadcasting Code is promulgated in accordance with the Act, the concessionaire shall not:*

- (c) *broadcast programme, information or other material which endangers the security of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, violates any law, is of a defamatory nature, is subversive to peace or public order or is otherwise contrary to the laws of Trinidad and Tobago.*

*Directors: Mr. Gilbert Peterson, S.C. (Chairman), Dr. Kim Mallalieu (Deputy Chairman), Mr. Nikolaiski Ali, Mr. Keyun Boatwain, Mr. Nigel Cassimire, Mr. Rhondall Feeles, Ms. Fatima Aziz-Mohammed, Mr. Devon Seale, Ms. Kalana Prince- Wilson.*

The TATT found that the station did not adhere to the standards of taste and decency expected of a national broadcaster as the station exercised poor judgment in permitting an inmate access to the public airwaves without due regard to the concerns of the public.

The Authority did however consider mitigating factors, namely Guardian Media Limited's general adherence to its concessions' conditions and its timely assistance in resolving broadcasting complaints. A warning was issued to the station on the condition that the station issued a suitable apology and that the station undertakes to exercise caution and social responsibility in the conduct of interviews in the future.

In response, the station issued an apology that was broadcast on the *Slam Roadblock* programme on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2022. The full text of the apology follows:

“Slam 100.5/Guardian Media Limited wishes to apologise to the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago and to the general public for engaging in a conversation with a purported inmate of the Golden Grove Prison during the broadcast of our programme on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

It was not the intention of our hosts or the management of Slam 100.5 to encourage, incite or permit illegal conduct by anyone including anybody purporting to call as an inmate of a prison. Slam 100.5 Guardian Media Limited will immediately adapt its policy to as to avoid participation in such broadcast in the future”.

The TATT takes this opportunity to remind all broadcasters of their responsibility to comply with all conditions set out in their concessions as well as all related regulatory requirements and laws of Trinidad and Tobago.

It must be noted that the TATT will continue to be vigilant and act as required on breaches of concessions and the Telecommunications Act by providers of telecommunications and broadcasting services in Trinidad and Tobago.

**END**