

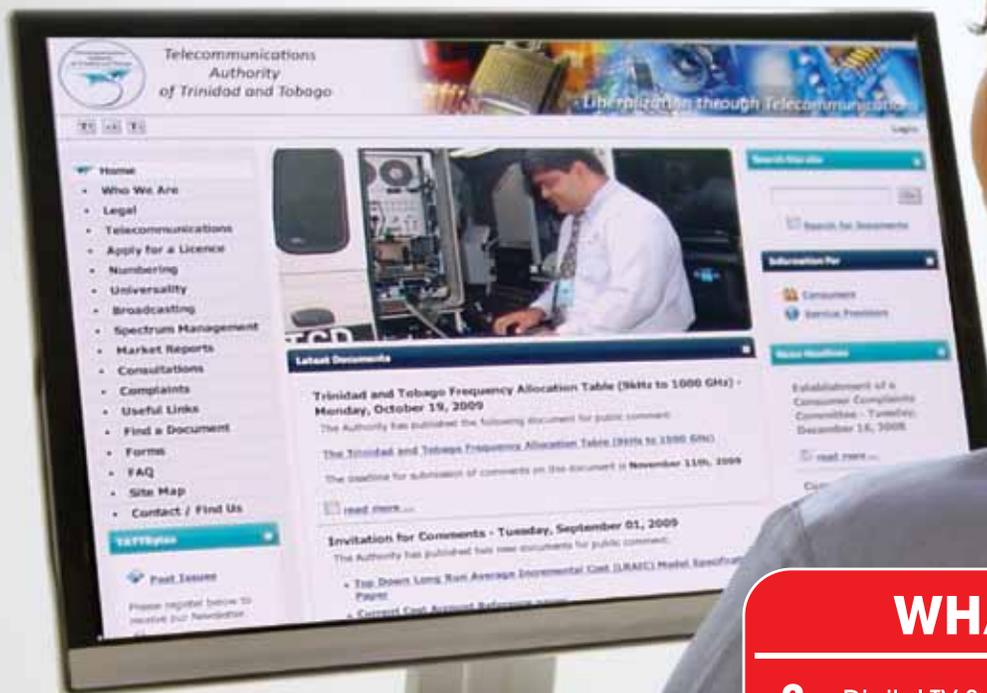


# TATT Bytes

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## Virtual solutions to telecom needs

TATT to launch cutting edge, interactive website



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# DIGITAL TV SWITCHOVER

“Analog to digital switchover brings a wide array of benefits to everyone – Government, broadcaster, consumer. It’s a change that is happening globally and it’s one we would like to have achieved sooner than later because we would like to capitalise on the benefits”

Ryan James,  
Broadcast Engineer



Major change is coming to television across the globe. Nations are moving television broadcasting from analog to digital. For some countries, like the United States of America, the change has already taken place. For others the process is only now beginning. This will have consequences not only for the kind of transmitting equipment broadcasters must use and television set technology the public must buy, but it will also affect the quality of the viewing experience and even potentially open up the market for more television service providers. This process of moving from analog to digital television is called the “digital switchover” (DSO).

## What is the digital switchover?

The digital switchover is the movement of television broadcasting from analog (the traditional type of broadcasting) to digital. Many countries have either begun switching over or are developing a blueprint for the move. So far 10 nations have completed the transition and over 40 in some way are in the process.

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the United Nations’ specialised agency for regulating broadcasting and telecommunications, has advised that all countries move to digital television by 2015.

“What this means is that broadcasters are going to be providing their service in a digital format when they transmit,” explains Ryan James, a broadcast engineer with TATT.

“We are accustomed to free-to-air television services through analog broadcasting. This means that what we receive on our television antenna and what we see on our television set is from an analog signal. The intention is to move to a digital signal. So the signal that the antenna receives and what your TV puts out would be of an improved quality,” he says.

The switchover process has three phases with key milestone dates:

1. **Digital switch-on:** where television stations begin broadcasting their programming through a digital signal.
2. **Multi-cast period:** where both analog and digital signals are available to the public.

3. **Analog switch-off:** where stations discontinue the analog signal.

## Why are countries making the digital switch?

Digital television has numerous benefits over analog – for viewers, broadcasters and even the society on a whole. The most important one is that it allows for a much more efficient use of spectrum.

“Digital TV allows for much better use of the transmitting frequency,” Mr. James says. “One single analog channel can provide up to six content channels in digital. So say for example you turn to channel 6. You can now select six separate programmes on that channel. So you get improved efficiency of spectrum, more content per channel.”

One of the many benefits of implementing the DSO is the additional spectrum that will be freed-up that will be used for other non-broadcasting services. This additional spectrum is called the “digital dividend.”

• DIGITAL TV continued on page 15

# TATT to bring virtual solutions to T&T's telecom needs

The Internet is one of the most powerful tools for communication and gathering information. With this in mind TATT in the first quarter of 2010 is redesigning its Web presence. The new website will be modern, dynamic and most importantly, an interactive tool.

“Our approach is to make the website cater to the needs of all our clients,” explains Sally Montserin, Information and Document Management Specialist at TATT. “And by clients we mean anyone who makes use of telecommunications and broadcasting in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as those from abroad who might require licensing or other services from TATT.”

The new website includes resources for both consumers and providers of telecommunications and broadcasting services to solve problems, find information and carry out business related to the sector. Users can submit complaints, apply for licences and even register equipment.

For example, if you have an unresolved dispute with your telecommunications service provider you can register the complaint with TATT through the site. Or if you are interested in offering Internet services you can apply for a concession.

“I think that’s the major attraction people will find in the new website,” Ms Montserin says. “They will have the convenience of being able to do all these things online.”

TATT’s current website was created in 2004, not long after the organisation was established. The site’s purpose was to



*Sally Montserin, Information and Document Management Specialist.*

provide information about the organisation, including the latest news and publish policy documents for public consultation (public consultation is a major part of how TATT develops many of its policies).

But as TATT developed and mapped out its role, a new, expanded online presence was required.

“After we did our strategic plan, we found that the functionality of the existing website did not facilitate all of our requirements,” noted Ms Montserin.

## WEBSITE FEATURES

- Complaint submission (consumer and broadcast content)
- Licence applications
- Concession applications
- Equipment certification applications
- Document viewing and finding
- Subscriptions to RSS Feeds
- News
- Information on TATT
- Online surveys

“We therefore decided to redesign it to incorporate the needs of all our clients.”

The new website will be attractive, with greater use of pictures and imagery. Prominent tabs will make navigation easy to understand and simple to carry out.

An important mandate for the development of the site was that it should be accessible to everyone, including persons with disabilities. Efforts are therefore being made to ensure that it is compliant with current accessibility standards.

TATT will retain its current web address, [www.tatt.org.tt](http://www.tatt.org.tt).

# Know your **RIGHTS** Find **SOLUTIONS**

*Are you unhappy with your television, Internet or telephone service?*

*Bryan Khan,  
Research Officer  
with the Pricing,  
Policy and  
Research  
Division.*

As a consumer of telecommunications and broadcasting services in Trinidad and Tobago you have rights and the means to make sure your complaints are heard and responded to. TATT is currently developing a consumer rights and obligations policy to make sure that the public knows the level of service they are entitled to and the avenues through which their service problems can be corrected. This policy will benefit not only telecommunications and broadcasting services consumers but also the providers themselves, by making them more accountable, responsive and efficient.

**What is a consumer rights and obligations policy?**

A consumer rights and obligations policy sets the minimum standards a purchaser or potential purchaser should expect in the areas of quality, customer assistance, information and waiting time for a good or service. The policy also outlines rules and obligations for individuals entering into a transaction or service agreement.

TATT's consumer right and obligations policy is specific to the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors, thus it deals with standards of service in areas like Internet, mobile and fixed line telephones, subscription-based television (cable and satellite TV) and free-to-air radio and television broadcasting.

"Consumer rights are not absolute. The marketplace is not just to serve the best interest of consumers. The market has a set of conflicting interests which as regulators the TATT has to balance. We need to have a mechanism in place to discuss the obligations of consumers."

# TATT drafts Consumer Rights and Obligations Policy

Besides formulating the policy, TATT's other goal is to ensure the public is aware of it as well as the means through which they can seek solutions to their complaints.

"In the context of being a consumer, the general public may not necessarily be educated about avenues available to them in terms of complaining and getting redress for whatever problems they may be having," says Bryan Khan, Research Officer with TATT's Pricing, Policy and Research Division. "So a large element of the policy and the whole role of consumer rights is public education."

## Why is a policy necessary?

Societies develop consumer protection agencies and consumer rights policies to ensure businesses operate fairly in the marketplace and don't seek to take advantage of customers. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago's telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, the policy is being designed for that reason as well as to be part of TATT's overall goals to liberalise and regulate the sectors.

"The concepts of supply and demand must be sufficiently working in order for market liberalisation to achieve its goals,"

explains Mr. Khan. "On the supply side we can say service providers are necessarily efficient and dynamic in their behaviour because they are commercial entities and they behave strategically and of course must be efficient because they are disciplined by the force of competition. But on the demand side we see that the consumers not only have to demonstrate dynamic behaviour by responding to the quantitative factor of prices, but they must also be responsive to qualitative things such as the quality of service that they receive. That's where the role of consumer rights comes into play in the context of market liberalisation."

The goal is to build a culture of consumer participation.

A consumer policy that specifically helps the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors become more efficient is also important because they are more than just areas of commercial activity. Development in these sectors is important for overall national development:

"When we are dealing with telecommunications and broadcasting we're not just talking about a commercial sector that exists in isolation. They have important implications for social progress

and cohesion, democratic participation, access to information, and all sorts of important social, cultural and political issues," Mr. Khan said.

## Consumer rights are not absolute

Even though protecting consumers' rights and making sure consumers are able to voice their concerns and find redress are important, these are not the only considerations in creating a consumer relations policy. The rights of the consumers should be balanced against their obligations as participants in commercial transactions.

"Consumer rights are not absolute," Mr. Khan says. "The marketplace is not just to serve the best interest of consumers. The market has a set of conflicting interests which, as regulators, TATT has to balance. We need to have a mechanism in place to discuss the obligations of consumers. In terms of this document the obligations put forward here largely already exist in service agreements and even TATT's regulations but they are included to acknowledge that there is a balance between rights and

# Fresh start for Consumer Rights Policy

## What is the status of the consumer policy?

TATT first drafted a Consumer Rights and Obligations Policy in 2005. However, some of the matters dealt with in that original draft were subsequently included in the "Universality Framework for Telecommunications Services in Trinidad and Tobago." This document deals with providing universal access to basic telecommunications and broadcasting

services. TATT has since decided to rework the consumer rights and obligations policy to ensure relevance to the current scenario.

"A lot of the elements which were dealt with in the original draft were subsequently dealt with in the Universality Framework," Mr. Khan says. "In that context the scope has changed very much since then. The current draft consumer policy is very much a fresh start."

The policy was developed through analysis of the specific sector conditions in Trinidad and Tobago, examination of international practices and looking at the types of consumer complaints TATT receives.

The draft document is currently being consulted on with industry stakeholders – the service providers in telecommunications and broadcasting. This will be followed by public consultation.

# 'Cyber Danger' for T&T Secondary Schools

In commemoration of World Telecommunications and Information Society Day (WTISD) 2009 TATT produced a drama/discussion programme on DVD entitled *Cyber Danger*, which dealt with issues surrounding the use of the Internet by young people.

The programme, which was designed to educate youths as well as parents and guardians about how to protect themselves from cybercrimes and other related cyber issues, was distributed to all secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago.

The programme premiered on local television on June 19, 2009 and continues to be aired periodically.

*Cyber Danger* is also being used in workshops focusing on cyber security for youth audiences at the Caribbean Telecommunications Union's "ICT Caribbean Roadshow". The Roadshow is intended to raise awareness among the public and private sectors, civil society and academia of the innovative approaches needed for the effective use of ICTs in government, business and social development.

*Cyber Danger* consists of a 45-minute dramatic presentation about the dangers associated with careless Internet use and a discussion between youths and a panel consisting of several professionals. The dangers highlighted in the programme include credit card theft, the threat of online sexual predators and the loss of career opportunities due to the posting of inappropriate photographs on the Internet.

The panel is comprised of Curtis Seegobin, IT Administrator, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad



*Students of North Gate College, St Augustine look at the programme with one of their teachers, Mrs. Natasha Smith.*



*Students of Upper Level Institute Chaguana look at the programme.*

and Tobago; Sergeant Amos Sylvester, Cyber Crime Unit, Trinidad Tobago Police Service; Marina Torres, a Development and Education Specialist and Sheba Mohammed, Policy Analyst, Ministry of Public Administration.

The programme was moderated by local television and radio personality Hans De Vignes and the panellists answered several questions on the lasting effects of posting inappropriate information and photographs on the

Internet, even through so-called secure social networking sites.

Prior to the premiering of *Cyber Danger* on television, TATT produced a live call-in programme on local television the evening of Monday May 18, 2009. This programme was aimed at educating parents and guardians about dangers in cyberspace and involved discussion surrounding current threats faced by young people who use the Internet.

• CONSUMER RIGHTS from page 5

## DRAFT CONSUMER RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS POLICY POINTS

1. Consumers' Right to Essential Services
2. Consumers' Right to Information
3. Consumers' Right to Efficient Service Activation
4. Consumers' Right to High Quality Service
5. Consumers' Right to Privacy
6. Consumers' Right to Fair Billing Practices

7. Consumers' Right to Protection from Unfair and Unethical Business Practices
8. Consumers' Right to Complaint Redress
9. Consumers' Obligations
  - Consumers must adhere to service agreements
  - Consumers must not tamper with service providers' equipment



Even though major advances have been made in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, consumers will still often have concerns and complaints about the services offered. TATT has made complaint redress an important part of its development plan for the sectors.

*Pamela Benson, Chairperson of the Consumer Complaints Committee.*

# Finding solutions for the consumer

## The Consumer Complaints Committee

The Consumer Complaints Committee (CCC) is a three-person panel that acts as an arbiter for hard-to-settle disputes between telecommunications and broadcasting service providers and consumers. The Committee is chaired by a member of the public and includes a member of TATT's Board of Directors and a senior manager. TATT also provides a secretary to assist the Committee in its functions.

The members of the CCC are Chairperson Pamela Benson (former Executive Director of the National Library and Information System Authority), Hayden Newton (TATT board member) and Cheryl Johnson (TATT's Senior Manager of Communications, Public Relations and Consumer Affairs).

The CCC can also call upon a panel of experts in various fields to assist it in resolving some matters.

"What the Committee can also do, depending on the nature of a complaint, is call upon an expert witness. This can be for the sake of fairness on behalf of the provider or to assist the consumer in resolving his or her complaint, or even to advise the Committee itself," explains Mrs. Johnson.

The Telecommunications Act Section 18 (1) states that subject to the provisions of this Act, TATT may exercise such functions and powers as are imposed on it by this Act and in particular "... (q) establish a consumer complaints committee to collect, decide on and report on consumer complaints, such reports to be included in the Authority's annual report."

• CONSUMER COMPLAINTS continued next page



## How does a complaint reach the CCC?

The CCC is meant to be the final body for complaint redress and will only become involved in a matter if other attempts to resolve it have been unsuccessful.

Mrs Benson explains: “There is a process. First, the complaint is sent directly to the service provider by the complainant. If it is not dealt with there, then it comes to the complaints department of TATT. In most cases the matter is resolved at that level. If not and depending on the nature of the complaint, it then comes to the Consumer Complaints Committee.”

## What complaints come to the CCC?

The CCC deals with certain matters which are difficult to resolve, especially those that fall outside the normal contractual relationship between service provider and user.

“We deal with troublesome complaints,” says Mrs. Johnson, “these are complaints that can’t be dealt with through TATT’s Legal & Regulatory Division or do not relate to non-compliance or breach of the service provider’s concession.”

Examples of these types of dispute include complainants who are affected by the activities of a service provider but are not themselves a customer of that provider or the matter is not directly related to the service being provided.

In one matter a complainant sought redress from a service provider because work undertaken by that company damaged the power lines in his community and interfered with his ability to study for exams.

“There are lots of cases where there have been some loss to a person due

to the activities of one of the service providers where it is unrelated to the service being provided. It is not within a service contract. This is consequential loss,” Mrs Benson says.

Even though the decisions of the CCC are binding, it is not primarily an authoritative body. The Committee seeks to bring providers and complainants together to find a fair solution for grievances.

“It’s dispute resolution,” Mrs. Benson says. “It’s not going to be like an inquiry full of legal people. And we have designed our procedures so that the claimant will not be intimidated by too much legalese. We recognise that the claimant is going to be an ordinary member of the public who is going to represent himself.”

“We have dealt with some complaints. We have spent most of the time in developing our procedures and deciding how we are going to operate,” she said.

## CCC already at work

Since its formation in 2008 the CCC has had 13 meetings and dealt with several matters. So far meetings with service providers have not been required. The CCC’s work also consists of formulating its mechanisms, policies and practices for dispute resolution.

“The Committee has been handling matters. At each meeting we have discussed some cases and come to conclusions. In the absence of regulations we felt we needed to be very careful in what we did. But we have dealt with issues and through correspondence with the service providers we have been able to have some matters regularised,” Mrs. Benson says.

TATT views the CCC as a vital tool for ensuring that grievances of consumers of telecommunications and broadcasting services are heard and responded to. This responsiveness is viewed as necessary for the development of broadcasting and telecommunications in Trinidad and Tobago.

“In service industries the standard of service and the ability of the consumer to have redress are always very important if you are going to have a really efficient and effective service,” Mrs Benson says. “It is the question of making the consumer as comfortable, as happy and as well served as possible.”

# TOWARDS A PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE



From left: ICT Open Forum moderator Dennis McComie stands with the panellists – educator Valerie Taylor, UTT Professor Emeritus Kenneth Ramchand, and CEO of Gayelle The Channel, Christopher Laird. TATT's Deputy Executive Director Cris Seecharan rounds out the group.

***Should Trinidad and Tobago have a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)? How will it be funded? How will it maintain its independence? These and several other questions were asked at TATT's second ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Open Forum titled "Is There a Need for a Public Broadcasting Service in Trinidad and Tobago?" The forum was held on July 22 at TATT's offices in Barataria and was attended by broadcasters, educators, entertainers, members of the media and the general public.***

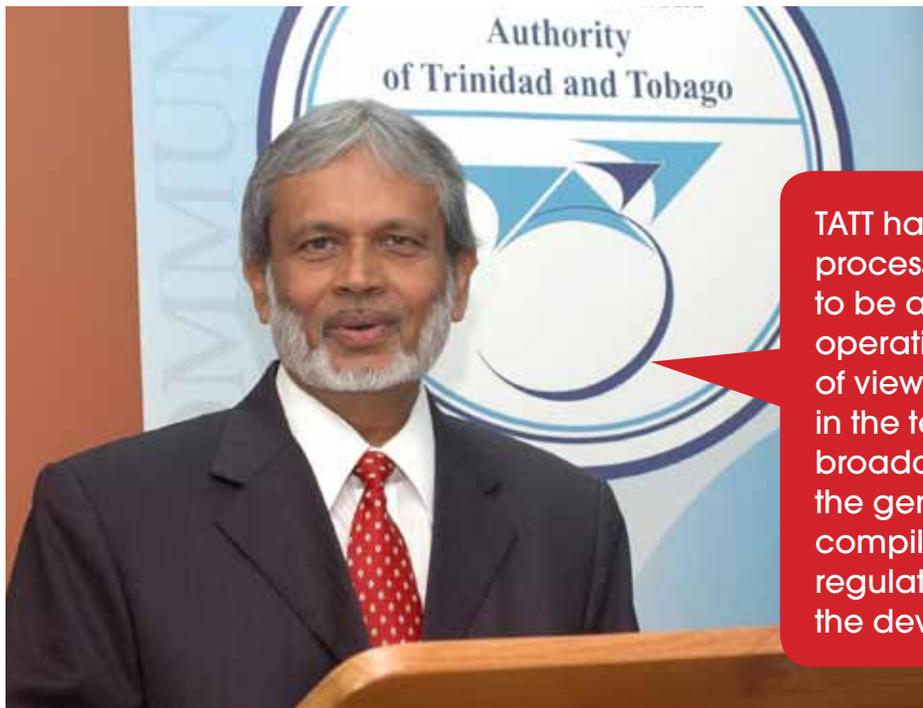
## The ICT Open Forum

The ICT Open Forum is TATT's quarterly gathering to discuss topical issues relevant to broadcasting and telecommunications in Trinidad and Tobago. The forum serves a two-fold purpose: (1) to raise public awareness of specific areas of ICT development in Trinidad and Tobago, and (2) to disseminate information to and receive feedback from stakeholders on relevant

policies and regulations for regulating the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. The first ICT Open Forum, which was held in April 2009, addressed the topical issue of local content in the broadcasting sector and was aptly titled "Should Measures be Established to Encourage and Increase the Proportion of Local Content in Domestic Broadcasting. The discussion was extremely productive and assisted greatly in the development of

a position paper on the issue.

In fact, Cris Seecharan, TATT's Deputy Executive Director, at the start of the PBS Forum stated that "Comments received at that forum from persons from within the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, including some of our attendees today, have been extremely valuable in finalising the TATT's position paper on the issue of local content in broadcasting."



TATT has always held the process of public consultation to be a critical element of its operations, allowing for a variety of viewpoints from professionals in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors and indeed the general public, resulting in the compilation of a comprehensive regulatory framework to guide the development of the sectors.

Cris Secharan, Deputy Executive Director of TATT.

## What is a Public Broadcasting Service?

Panellists at the ICT Forum perceived public broadcasting as any form of electronic medium – whether television, radio or any other – that is either partially or wholly publicly funded. There was general consensus among panellists that a non-profit motivated PBS may be more beneficial to society because such a broadcaster can focus attention on content that is educational, uplifting, participatory and generally in best interests of the society.

Professor Kenneth Ramchand, Professor Emeritus at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) and a member of the panel at the PBS Open Forum, stated: “The benefits that would accrue from a PBS would make it a major instrument for social change and development.” This may be juxtaposed with commercial broadcasters, which Professor Ramchand identified as having “...all kinds of constraints to work against them and possess goals apart from those of the public.”

Another panellist, Educator and Education Consultant Valerie Taylor, identified what, in her opinion, are several features of a PBS, namely:



Cynthia Reddock-Downes, Executive Manager Finance, Accounting and Human Resources of TATT, addresses the forum.

1. Being partially or wholly publicly funded
2. Independent of vested interest
3. Addresses the needs of the society
4. Includes programming that involves creative risk
5. Impartial
6. Caters to all members of the society
7. Concerned with national identity and community as well as the quality of programming as opposed to ratings

Ms. Taylor stated that while many countries have a PBS, the form that it assumes in each country may vary and therefore may not meet all the criteria set out above. She cited the British Broadcasting Service (BBC), created in the 1920s and copied by many European and colonial countries, as a famous example of a PBS, as well as *Sesame Street*, one of the most popular children’s programmes to be aired in Trinidad and Tobago, as a PBS-produced programme.

Christopher Laird, Chief Executive Officer of Gayelle The Channel and the third panellist, identified funding as one of the major defining characteristics of a PBS. He stated that different funding models inclusive of donations, a specific PBS tax and even direct funding by the government have been used in various countries to fund PBS. However, while Mr. Laird recognised that a PBS can use one, all or some of these funding models, he argued strongly that the model of funding adopted can have a major impact, especially on the independence and content of a PBS.



Forum participants make their voices heard.

“The more worthy the cause, the less the viewership, it will be a challenge to raise money. How do you fund (a PBS) and keep it independent. Regardless of how worthwhile the model, it has to be funded. Somebody has to pay.”

## Is there a need for a PBS in T&T?

The panellists and the majority of those in attendance agreed that there was a need for a PBS in Trinidad and Tobago. Some of the potential benefits of a PBS identified by panellists and participants included – fostering national identity, providing educational and instructional content, counterbalancing the influence of foreign media, providing quality content with high market value, fostering national development and providing a space for local creative content.

Professor Ramchand envisaged a PBS as an important device for fostering national identity, especially among young people who, in his opinion, are constantly bombarded by foreign, (specifically US-based) content:

“I believe that we urgently need public radio as an educational tool,” he said. “People respond so easily to canned images from imported sources. They do all the imaging and thinking for you. A PBS can help the knitting together of society and language. Education, culture, developing a self-image as against the image of our self, a PBS can help foster that change.”

Professor Ramchand further reemphasised that a PBS could play a critical role in national development: “A PBS can address current problems. A PBS can develop civic consciousness. A PBS can become a kind of local government.”

Christopher Laird envisaged a PBS as a crucial alternative to market-based broadcasting.

“You really cannot calculate the value of a PBS based on audience numbers and cash. There is certain content, especially cultural content, which will not draw a large audience. If it is not on a PBS then it will simply not be there.”

One of the participants pointed out that many local practitioners in the creative aspects of broadcasting would find outlets for their work through a PBS. Currently many of them have few avenues to practise their craft in Trinidad and Tobago and many are forced to go abroad.

“We are losing many of our young, talented videographers,” she said.



• PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE continued next page



From right – Rawle Harvey TATT’s Consumer Affairs Representative, Dennis Mc Comie, programme moderator and a forum participant.

“People respond so easily to canned images from imported sources. They do all the imaging and thinking for you. A PBS can help the knitting together of society and language. Education, culture, developing a self-image as against the image of our self, a PBS can help foster that change.”

*Professor Kenneth Ramchand*

# Challenges of a PBS

Even though the majority of attendees at the ICT Open Forum were in favour of a PBS, many saw it as a major challenge to implement successfully and some were even doubtful that it could be done. Potential difficulties included finding funding, independence from government, encouraging viewership and even ensuring that the PBS would be maintained over time.

John Reid, President and Chief Operating Officer of Flow, commented that worthwhile content often was not popular among audiences and would be difficult to fund:

“I can give you numbers of what any person is watching at any time,” he said. “The more worthy the cause, the less the viewership, it will be a challenge to raise money. How do you fund (a PBS) and keep it independent? Regardless of how worthwhile the model, it has to be funded. Somebody has to pay.”

Mr. Laird said he was concerned about the independence of the PBS in general – from both government and private influence:

“How do you make it independent? That is what I am most pessimistic about. It is very hard to do that in our [Caribbean] societies. In your news, in your general content, there are people who will say ‘if you are not for me you are against me’.”

## BENEFITS

1. Provide space for local content
2. Provide for quality programming over profitability
3. Promote national identity
4. Promote national development
5. Emphasise education
6. Employ locals in creative broadcasting.

## CHALLENGES

1. Sourcing funding
2. Maintaining independence
3. Attracting viewership
4. Maintaining the PBS over the long term.

Ms. Taylor questioned if the resources would or could be put in place to ensure that a PBS could last not just one or two years but for 10-plus years and beyond:

“How? Do we have the wherewithal? Do we have the infrastructural support, political and public independence, first-class

management and personnel?”

In general though, despite the difficulties, the consensus was that a PBS would be a positive development for Trinidad and Tobago.

“There are no easy answers,” Mr. Laird said, “but ‘no’ is no prescription.”

## How close are we to a PBS?

This country still has some way to go before the establishment of a Trinidad and Tobago PBS becomes a reality. The mandate to establish a PBS is laid out in Section D of the Trinidad and Tobago Government’s “National Policy on Broadcast and the Broadcasting Industry”. TATT, as regulators for the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors, is responsible for developing a framework for the implementation of a PBS, in accordance with the Government’s policy. TATT is currently drafting a document titled “Proposed Framework for Public Broadcasting in Trinidad and Tobago”. It is envisaged that feedback generated through this second ICT Open Forum will play a major part in the development of the document, which when completed will be published for public consultation.

# TATT joins the Caribbean ICT Roadshow

Whether through economic partnerships, political cooperation, shared laws or even cultural exchange, Caribbean partnership has long been one of the goals of Trinidad and Tobago. Consistent with this, TATT is participating in the Caribbean ICT Roadshow.

## What is the Caribbean ICT Roadshow?

The Caribbean ICT Roadshow, spanning the period July 2009 to November 2010, is a series of lectures, presentations and forums designed to educate and demonstrate the transformative power of information and communications technology. The Roadshow is hosted by the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), a regional intergovernmental body dedicated to facilitating the development of the telecommunications sector in the Caribbean.

The CTU describes the ICT Roadshow as having been created to “foster a spirit of innovation in the development of ICT-based practical solutions, to raise awareness and to encourage harmonisation of efforts in the adoption of ICT solutions for inclusive economic and social development.”

Each Roadshow is held over two-and-a-half days and includes key aspects of ICT development in industry, regulation, government and society. The programme consists of lectures, technology demonstrations, hands-on workshops, case studies, youth-focused initiatives and stakeholder consultations. The Roadshow is targeted towards ICT professionals, the private and public sectors, leaders, youth and the general public.

Grenadian Prime Minister, Tillman Thomas and Dr Denzil Douglas, Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, attended the Roadshow events that took place in



*Nalini Mahadeo, Regulatory Officer.*

their respective nations.

The ICT Roadshow was launched on July 28, 2009 in Grenada and will be concluded with a regional symposium scheduled to take place from November 14-18, 2010.

## TATT at the Roadshow

“We are participating in a number of ways,” explains TATT Public Relations Manager Cheryl Johnson. “The main way, of course, is that we are one of the sponsors of the Roadshow. We are also participating through both technical presentations and by providing resources for youth workshops in the area of cyber security.”

Besides its primary content, the ICT Roadshow also includes a component directed at raising telecommunications awareness among young people.

“Trinidad and Tobago seems to be ahead of a lot of countries in terms of the maturity of our regulatory framework and the approach that we take to regulating the telecoms and broadcasting sectors.”

• **ICT ROADSHOW** continued next page



Curtis Seegobin,  
IT Administrator.

“The presentation looked at what parents really don’t know about ICT, but particularly focused on Safety on the Internet. It dealt with issues such as security, identity theft, cyber security, with particular emphasis on children and their interactions on social networking sites; the dangers of giving out too much personal information, cyber stalking, cyber bullying, viruses and hacking.”

For the Roadshow held in St. Kitts and Nevis in late August, TATT was represented by Regulatory Officer Nalini Mahadeo who gave a technical presentation, and IT Administrator Curtis Seegobin who contributed significantly to the CTU’s youth forum.

Ms. Mahadeo, who was also in St. Kitts for the Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (CIGF), gave a presentation titled “The Regulatory Agenda in Trinidad and Tobago,” which dealt with Internet protocols and the challenges and opportunities they present to regulators.

She said, “One thing certainly that stood out based on my presentation, and the question and answer session that followed, is that Trinidad and Tobago seems to be ahead of a lot of countries

in terms of the maturity of our regulatory framework and the approach that we take to regulating the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors.”

Mr. Seegobin provided assistance to the CTU’s presentation for young people. Titled “What Parents Don’t Know,” it included slides, a skit and a question and answer section on telecommunications and the Internet, focusing mainly on dangers related to their use.

“My focus was the youth section,” he said. “The presentation looked at what parents really don’t know about ICT, but particularly focused on safety on the Internet. It dealt with issues such as security, identity theft, cyber security, with particular emphasis on children and their interactions on social networking sites; the

dangers of giving out too much personal information, cyber stalking, cyber bullying, viruses and hacking.”

TATT sees the Roadshow as an important tool for fostering the growth and evolution of regional telecommunications and intends to be an active participant for the remaining visits throughout the Caribbean.

“It’s about an exchange of knowledge,” says Ms. Johnson.

### Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)

The CTU is a Trinidad-based regional organisation that focuses on the development of telecommunications in the Caribbean. Its membership includes CARICOM and non-CARICOM states, private sector organisations and non-governmental organisations.

**Mission:** “To create an environment in partnership with members to optimise returns from ICT resources for the benefit of stakeholders.”

**Vision:** “To position the CTU to be the prime catalyst facilitating regional cooperation, economic, social and cultural development of the peoples of the Caribbean through the provision of efficient and advanced information and telecommunications services.”

Country	Dates	Activity
Belize	24th-26th February	Follow-up Workshop
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	23rd March	Executive Lecture Forum
Montserrat	24th March	Executive Lecture Forum
Montserrat	21st-23rd April	Roadshow
British Virgin Islands	16th-18th May	Roadshow
St Lucia	31st May -2nd June	Roadshow
Jamaica	27th 29th June	Roadshow
Grenada	14th-16th July	Roadshow
St Maarten	15th-18th August	Roadshow
Barbados	27th-29th September	Roadshow
Trinidad and Tobago	14th -18th November	Roadshow

## Digital TV –

- ✓ More channels
- ✓ More providers
- ✓ More choice
- ✓ Better service

The digital dividend can be used to facilitate additional broadcasting and telecommunications providers (wireless cable, Internet and mobile telephone). In its digital switchover earlier this year the United States auctioned the available spectrum.

Government auctions not only allow new entrepreneurs to enter the broadcasting and telecommunications markets but give consumers more choice, better service and lower prices through increased competition.

Benefits of the digital switchover include:

1. Higher video and audio quality High Definition Television (HDTV).
2. Interactive services, closed captioning and electronic programme guides (EPGs) similar to cable TV, as well as pay per view.
3. Reinvigorating broadcasting by improving programming and reception capabilities (i.e. no fuzzy pictures or ghosting).
4. More programme channels offered broadcaster (i.e. more viewing choice).
5. Revenue generation through the digital dividend.



The International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the United Nations' specialised agency for regulating broadcasting and telecommunications, has advised that all countries move to digital television by 2015.

### Trinidad and Tobago making the transition

Mr. James states: “The analog to digital switchover brings a wide array of benefits to everyone – Government, broadcaster, consumer. It’s a change that is happening globally and it’s one we would like to have achieved sooner than later because we would like to capitalise on the benefits.”

At present TATT is completing its Framework document for the digital switchover in Trinidad and Tobago. This document is being drafted to facilitate consultations with local television broadcasters and major stakeholders. Of specific importance is the digital standard that we will adopt. Currently there are three main standards: Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB) (the European standard), Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC)

(the US standard), and Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting (ISDB) (the Japanese standard). The standard is crucial because it determines both what transmitting equipment the television stations will use and what Digital-ready televisions and set-top boxes consumers will be required to buy.

“We have to determine which standard is the right fit for Trinidad and Tobago,” Mr. James explains.

A key aspect within this process is consumer awareness. The public will either have to acquire digital-ready televisions or digital-to-analog set-top boxes. A public awareness campaign which is to be effected by TATT will be important for consumers as well as electronics retailers to ensure they not only purchase the digital-ready equipment but that the equipment matches the correct digital standard.

After TATT’s draft digital switchover Framework is completed it will be issued for public comment and stakeholder feedback.



# Annie Baldeo is TATT's Employee of the Year

TATT hosted its Sixth Annual Christmas Dinner, Dance and Awards Ceremony on Sunday December 20, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Port of Spain. The event, which was well attended, provided management and staff an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate achievements of TATT over the last financial period, and it was also an opportunity for staff and other specially invited guests to enjoy and share some Christmas cheer.

One of the most anticipated events of the evening was the announcement of the winners of the 2009 Employee Awards. Starting in mid-November, TATT's employees became engaged in the election of persons who they felt best embodied the TATT's core values. After an exciting two-stage process of nominations and voting, the following employees emerged victorious and received awards in these categories:

- Customer Service** – Mr. Adrian George
- Professionalism** – Ms. Corinne Philip
- Integrity** – Ms. Avion Edwards
- Innovativeness** – Ms. Gweneth Arnold

Winners in each category received units from the Unit Trust Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago and a commemorative trophy.



*From left to right - Corinne Philip, Adrian George, Annie Baldeo and Gweneth Arnold.*

Using the same process, employees were also asked to elect the one person who they felt best embodied all of the TATT's core values as the Employee of the Year.

The coveted award for 2009 went to **Ms. Annie Baldeo**. Annie also received a gift of units from the Unit Trust Corporation of Trinidad and

Tobago, a commemorative trophy and the Employee of the Year Challenge Award.

The Senior Management Team of TATT congratulates all nominees and winners of the 2009 Employee Awards Programme and encourages all employees to continue living the Core Values.



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