



**Office of the Deputy Chief Secretary and Secretary of Finance and Economy
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TOBAGO**

Question. Does the THA have the right to reallocate funds for other projects?

In response to Senator Wade Mark's comments at the Public Administration and Appropriation Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 10th April 2019 regarding the Tobago House of Assembly's (THA) utilisation of its Parliamentary Appropriation please note the following.

The Assembly, similar to all Government Ministries can reallocate and redistribute their Parliamentary funding to effect and complete their work programme within any fiscal year. This is in accordance with Ministry of Finance and Planning Circular dated February 17, 1982: ALL Ministries and Departments are allowed to redistribute or reallocate its Parliamentary Appropriations among various items of Expenditure, in an effort to achieve their key strategic objectives without Parliamentary approval. This is done primarily by utilization of the mechanisms of virement and/or transfer of funds.

This is a well-known fact and established procedure within Ministries and the Tobago House of Assembly. Parliamentary approval is required when a variation of appropriation is sought. This is usually considered during the Mid-Year Review in Parliament.

It is within this context the Executive Council determines and approves the Tobago House of Assembly's 'Priority Areas' to which funding is reallocated in keeping with its policy mandate.

Additionally, Act No. 40 of 1996, Section 25 outlines the Responsibility of the Tobago House of Assembly. It states:-

(1) "Without prejudice to section 75(1) of the Constitution, the Assembly shall, in relation to Tobago, be responsible for the formulation and implementation of policy in respect of the matters set out in the Fifth Schedule"

***(2) “For the better performance of its functions, the Assembly is hereby empowered to do all such acts and take all such steps as may be necessary for, or incidental to the exercise of its powers or for the discharge of its duties*”**

Further, Section 34 (1), of the THA Act states ‘inter alia’ that:-

“The Executive Council shall be responsible for the carrying out of the functions of the Assembly ...”

In this regard the Executive Council is empowered to determine how its Parliamentary Appropriation is allocated in keeping with its policy mandate and strategic direction.

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