



## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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### MEDIA RELEASE

24<sup>th</sup> July, 2017

#### PSC CLEARS THE AIR ON PRISON BREAK INVESTIGATION

The Public Service Commission (PSC) notes with concern, claims which lacked balance, objectivity and in parts accuracy, made in an opinion article published by the Express Newspaper on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017 regarding its role and pace in investigating the Port of Spain Prison Break, in which inmates Allan Martin, Christopher Selby and Hassan Atwell escaped from the Port of Spain Prison on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2015 and which resulted in the death of Police Officer, Sherman Maynard.

The PSC was informed of the jail break incident on the 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 by the Commissioner of Prisons (COP) and as a result of an internal enquiry was advised that Mr. Wilbert Lovell, Prisons Supervisor, Mr. Lancelot Duntin, Prisons Officer II and Mr. Mervyn Pierre, Prison Officer I should be held culpable. Consequently, the said officers were suspended from duty on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2015, the 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2015 respectively, in accordance with the powers delegated to the COP by the PSC (Delegation of Powers) Legal Notice 105 of 2006. The COP further recommended that the said officers be interdicted from duty in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 89 of the PSC Regulations, pending the outcome of the allegations of misconduct which were made against them.

The PSC wishes to advise, contrary to the Express article, that the officers are currently interdicted from duty on one-half (1/2) salary pending the outcome of the disciplinary charges which were preferred against them. The matter is also before a Disciplinary Tribunal, which has been requested by the PSC, to treat the matter with **urgent priority** so that it could be completed expeditiously.

The PSC also reminds the public that the Regulations allow for redress at every stage and must follow the course of natural justice by giving the parties charged, the opportunity to make representation in their matters. The PSC is satisfied that while this process is time-consuming, it is regarded as being necessary, fair and transparent - values which the PSC upholds unreservedly.

The PSC understands the severity of the incident and empathizes with those who have been and continue to be affected. We wish to assure all concerned that everything is being done to ensure the investigation continues apace, according to Regulations and due process, so that it ultimately results in outcomes that are fair.

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