



Ashley Taylor - President

## President's Message

### IMPACT OF COVID-19

The onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has negatively impacted economic, medical and social structures globally. The fallout from a trade perspective has been decreased consumption significantly, leading to reductions in imports and exports.

Trinidad and Tobago has not been immune and this fallout poses a significant threat to operations of the Port and Industrial Estate and the economy as a whole. To ease the economic impact affecting the business sector, PLIPDECO had taken the decision to waive storage rent charges for containers, general cargo and warehouse cargo for the period March 20<sup>th</sup> 2020 to April 30<sup>th</sup> 2020. Further, three (3) additional rent free days had been offered to the existing five (5) business days for the period May 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This was applied to import containers, import general cargo and storage rent at the Less than Container Load (LCL) Warehouse for import cargo.

Internally, in an effort to minimize the spread of the virus, the Corporation implemented several preventative measures, which include: increased cleaning and sanitising of all areas; temperature scanning of vessel crew members, visitors and employees; screening of documents for vessels and crew berthing at the Port facility; the requirement for all staff members and visitors to wear masks; work from home arrangements for non-operational staff; staff rotation arrangements; the utilisation of remote meeting options and increased capability for online payments.

Management is cognisant of the threat posed to the organization's sustainability, business continuity and profitability and is closely monitoring the environment to make adjustments to its business operations as necessary.

### PERFORMANCE AT THE PORT OF POINT LISAS

In 2019, the Port handled 175,376 TEUS, compared to 170,951 TEUS for the same period in 2018, a 3% increase overall. The improvement was attributable to an increase in imports and exports by 3% and 6% respectively. Transshipment recorded a 15% decline but did not impact the overall throughput significant as it only represented a 9% of overall volumes. General cargo tonnage handled in 2019 was 348,052 tonnes compared to 371,954 tonnes for same period in 2018. This was mainly attributable to decreases in the major categories of cargo.

For the period January 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Port handled 124,174 TEUS, compared to 125,293 TEUS for the same period in 2019, a 0.89 % decrease overall. Both imports and exports declined by 1%. However, transshipment would have increased by 2.6%. General Cargo tonnage handled for the period totalled XXXX tonnes compared to XXXX tonnes in 2019, an XX% decrease overall.



# President's Message

## INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the major projects undertaken in 2019 was the construction of the Gabion Basket Retaining Wall at the Estate and Facilities compound. Other projects included: high mast towers and light repairs; installation and storage of racks at the LCL Warehouse; ramp repairs at the LCL Warehouse; fender repairs on Berth 5; repairs to the reefer yard and the construction of an electrical kiosk.

Infrastructural projects which commenced in 2020 included:

- Berth 5 Crane Rail Drainage to reduce impact of rail corrosion (completed 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2020).
- Inspection Pit for checking of equipment fleet during planned and unplanned maintenance procedures (completed in May 2020).

## OTHER PROJECTS

- Remote monitoring for the cranes (completed in June 2020).
- Offsite Storage Facility for the temporary storage of containers (on chassis), chassis and general cargo requiring open storage (launched on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020).
- Fuel management system for fuelling over 70 pieces of port equipment that utilise diesel from the fuel storage facility (expected completion date is end October 2020).

The main infrastructural projects for 2020 will be the rehabilitation of Berth 5 in order to prevent further degradation of the Berth's structure and repairs to the RTG storage bays.

## EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

In its thrust to continuously improve productivity and deliver the highest level of service to its stakeholders, the Corporation proposes to acquire 1 Empty Container Handler and 1 Manlift with a maximum reach of 185ft.

## TECHNOLOGY

The COVID-19 pandemic has mandated businesses to find creative ways using online solutions to carry out their day to day activities. Fortunately, PLIPDECO's implemented an online appointment system prior to the pandemic, therefore the transition was smoother and further complemented the requirements to adhere to the protocols provided by the Ministry of Health and World Health Organisation (WHO). Non-trade customers are encouraged to utilise this service by liaising with their respective Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers (NVOCCS) or Shipping Agents to schedule an appointment via PLIPDECO's LCL WebTracker System.

Other technological projects include:

- Upgrade of the NAVIS Terminal Operating system to version 3.5.14 for enhanced functionalities which will bring improvements to data analysis for Planners and the Operations team.
- Dashboard Reporting System was established to facilitate access to key decision-making information and reports. This was rolled out initially for the Engineering and Maintenance Department and other departments have been brought online.



# President's Message

- NAVIS Asycuda Interface project which is ongoing.
- Installation of additional CCTV cameras as a further enhancement of the Company's security and surveillance monitoring capability.
- Automated Gate System for In/Out Gates. It is anticipated that several benefits will be derived from this new system including: faster processing time and increased efficiency resulting in savings for stakeholders; improved security and minimal dependence on human interpretation of documents; improved accuracy and detail in data capture; reduction of human face-to-face interactions, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ability to integrate with the NAVIS Terminal Operating System. Virtual meetings were held with various stakeholders during the months of August and September to apprise them of the system and garner feedback.
- Implementation of a new RFID based access control card system for employees and port users (the implementation date is scheduled for November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020).

Other enterprise systems such as time and attendance, labour management, leave management and inventory and maintenance management systems are also due to be upgraded or changed.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Corporation recognizes the importance of continuous training and development of staff, and certification where applicable. For the period 2019 to present, extensive training was conducted in various areas including: Defensive Driving, Equipment Operations, First Aid/CPR, Foreman, Supervisory leadership and so forth. Additionally, twenty (20) of the Corporation's management team and other staff completed training in Project Management. This training was undertaken to assist them in the planning, implementation and close-out of projects.

## **NEGOTIATIONS**

Collaborative working relationships between Management, the Unions and employees remains at the forefront of the Corporation's objectives. Prior to the end of 2019, the Corporation successfully bargained with both Unions, reaching agreement on percentage increases for salaries and wages applicable to staff members. This resulted in progressive outcomes for both the Corporation and the Unions, as employees' remuneration was brought in line with the current periods of the Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Continuation of negotiations in 2020, aimed at concluding the non-cost items, have been impacted by the developments of COVID-19. However, the Corporation remains committed to the negotiations process and will resume discussions with the Union on non-cost items, in keeping with the guidelines issued by the Government of Trinidad & Tobago.

## **RE-CERTIFICATION/ACCOLADES**

The Caribbean Information and Credit Rating Services Limited (CariCRIS) has evaluated PLIPDECO's level of creditworthiness in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean and has reaffirmed the assigned ratings of A+ to PLIPDECO. This represents the sixth consecutive rating of A+ for the Company. PLIPDECO is also proud to have received the Caribbean Shipping Association's Port of the Year Award for 2018.



# President's Message

## WAREHOUSING AND LOGISTICS

The medium to long term vision for the Corporation has evolved and will continue to evolve. PLIPDECO remains steadfast to its core strategy of transforming itself into a major logistics supplier and have leveraged the Port as a base for providing its warehouse and logistics services. The energy sector is a major focus and a special energy sector tariff was developed and rolled out to the energy companies to provide services specific to the industry.

The Corporation also introduced an Offsite Storage Facility on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This new service is designed for customers who require a facility for the temporary storage of containers (on chassis), chassis and break-bulk cargo requiring open storage. The benefits include: ideal location on Paria Drive – within 2km of the Port of Point Lisas (next to the LCL Warehouse and Container Examination Station), a fully fenced and secured area with lighting, 24/7 security & CCTV camera monitoring, controlled gate access, open storage area of 3,130 m<sup>2</sup>, operating from 0700 – 2300 hours (Monday to Friday - access outside these hours is available upon request).

The Corporation was proud to celebrate its 54<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. On behalf of Board of Directors and Management, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our employees and valued stakeholders for their dedication and continued support. Let us continue to make the company stronger by finding innovative solutions to the challenges we face with the new normal caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.