

Linette A. Gibs

Subject: FW: Verslag cc ob 2019 layout (FINAL)
Attachments: Verslag cc ob 2019 layout (FINAL).docx

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN			
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Par.	J	B	GR

From: Nancy R. Guishard-Joubert
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2019 5:03 PM

From: "Lieveld, Wilgo" <Wilgo.Lieveld@sintmaartengov.org>
Date: 5/13/19 5:00 PM (GMT-04:00)
To: "Sarah A. Wescot-Williams" <Sarah.Wescot-Williams@sxmparliament.org>
Cc: "Ann A. Groen-Gumbs" <Ann.Groen-Gumbs@sxmparliament.org>, "Nancy R. Guishard-Joubert" <nancy.joubert@sxmparliament.org>, Garrick Richardson <Garrick.Richardson@sxmparliament.org>
Subject: FW: Verslag cc ob 2019 layout (FINAL)

Dear all,

Bijgaand nota naar aanleiding van het verslag.

Wilgo F. Lieveld
Director of the Cabinet of the Minister of Finance



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Sent: Monday, May 13, 2019 4:56 PM
To: Lieveld, Wilgo <Wilgo.Lieveld@sintmaartengov.org>
Subject: Verslag cc ob 2019 layout (FINAL)



MINISTER OF FINANCE - SINT MAARTEN
MINISTER VAN FINANCIËN - SINT MAARTEN

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To: Parliament of Sint Maarten
Attn: Chairlady of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah A. Wescot-Williams
Wilhelminastraat #1
Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

Date: May 13, 2019
Reference no.: DIV # 3163
Subject: Draft National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of
Country Sint Maarten for the year 2019
Annex(es): 1

Dear Chairlady,

Please find attached the note following the final report on the above-mentioned proposal.

I trust to have informed you sufficiently.

Respectfully,

Perry F.M. Geerlings
Minister of Finance

National Ordinance Budget 2019 in connection with decisions made by the state council of ministers

The Parliament in its meeting of the Central Committee had an exchange of views with the Government on the Draft National Ordinance stipulating the budget of the country for the year 2019. The Parliament considers the draft to be sufficiently prepared if the questions asked below are answered in time for the public meeting so that the draft can be discussed in a public meeting. The members of the United Democrats faction have the following questions.

The faction has taken note of the draft. The faction indicates that while it saw some good things in the budget, it is not necessarily balanced. To begin with, the Ministry of Finance receives the bulk of the money in a time that tax compliance will have absolutely no impact on our economy or the labor market.

The faction is of the opinion that it can actually negatively affect the growth. There is a need for tax reform and a need to upgrade the system, but the amount (NAFI. 80 million) is quite a lot compared to other Ministries in a time such as now.

Also, interesting statements are made in this budget on for example page 34, under 3.6, "Raming gewone dienst meerjarig". It is stated that "3 years after the economy has bounced back to a pre-Irma situation". This statement opens up all kind of opportunities for discussion such as indexation for pensioners and civil servants.

Education once again is left behind. VSA is getting much needed assistance when looking at the Kapitaaldienst for investments. The faction finds that TEATT seems to have taken a backseat in this budget, especially where it pertains Capital Investments. The faction would have liked to see more investments to assist the tourism sector in maritime, upgrading of the software for permits and the ICT of those departments.

At a first glance the faction is really happy with the monies for Capital Investments reserved for the Ministry of VSA. These monies will be used for equipment of our ambulance and to ensure that the staff of first responders are better equipped to assist the public. This is good and necessary. And then there are Ministries such as the Ministry of Education. The faction wonders when the day will come when we will give the Ministry of Education more attention. Under investments for the Ministry of General Affairs, the faction is seeing 7 new Minister vehicles.

Under investments for the Ministry of General Affairs, the faction is seeing 7 new Minister vehicles.

- How urgent is this investment really?
- Are all the vehicles right now in the same condition that all of them need to be replaced at a tune of \$50.000 each?

There are 2 vehicles that has to be replaced immediately. Two ministers do not have a vehicle and are currently renting a vehicle. The other 5 vehicles will be placed to keep the uniformity of the ministers' vehicles. The old ministers' vehicles will be placed back in to the car fleet and replace the vehicles that are more than 5 years old this is where we save on the

cost to maintain vehicles that are over 10 – 15 years that are still in the governments car fleet.

The amount of \$ 50,000 is an estimation until a public tender is done to purchase the vehicles.

Then there is the matter of the 37 cost cutting measures. When looking at this proposed budget, the faction wonders to what extent parts of these cost cutting measures were implemented last year and which parts will be implemented in 2019.

- How much do we expect to save based on these cost cutting measures?

Currently, none of the cost cutting measures have been implemented. The COM decided to allow the legal affairs department to review the measures to determine if legally they could be implemented. We are still awaiting the report from the legal affairs department

The faction reminds Government not to forget the Police Function book and the entire Ministry of Justice.

- From where will the monies come for all the retroactive placements when this takes place?
- And if this is happening today, where is the budget for this?

The focus of the faction will be in these debates primarily on the financial decisions that will impact civil servants and the people of Sint Maarten. Ministry of General Affairs The Government ICT department, is one of those departments that has been under attack for a while now due to many ransom virus attacks. There have been ongoing discussions as to how to upgrade the system to avoid these viruses.

- Can Government indicate whether parts of this investment, approximately NAFI. 2.5 million, will go towards insuring our ICT system is protected from such viruses?

Firewalls are in place, Virus protection is in place. However the requested budget was cut and part of the requested budget was for hardware to secure the system in addition to the firewalls.

With budget cuts in mind, there is one department within the Ministry of General Affairs which the faction has been closely monitoring and that is the Department of Legal Affairs. Since 10-10-10, every 3 or 4 years, there seems to be an influx of new persons because most of the expats are persons that come from Holland. The agreement is typically that every 3 or 4 years they have to leave.

- Has the Government budgeted for the influx of new personnel at Legal Affairs in this budget?
- Will the focus finally be to fill the department with mostly locals or are we once again focused on external non locals to fill these positions?
- If so, how much money does Government intend to spend on expats in this budget?
- Has the Department head or SG sought assistance from the Division of Study Finance to get an overview or idea as to how many young Sint Maarteners are or have recently studied or completed their studies in the Law fields that maybe we can have those come home?

As the Finance minister indicated, the personnel expenses were reduced to stay within the parameters advised by CFT, but this department is one of the departments that has our top priority to fill any vacant positions.

Everybody can apply for positions and will equally be taken into consideration. I wish that more local persons/graduates would apply. Up until now persons who apply are either from The Netherlands or Suriname. Recruiting is being done in close collaboration with P&O. There is a representative from P & O in the selection committee. Budget is reserved based on the function book/formatieplan. Based on the LMA and policy for recruiting staff budget is reserved in collaboration with our Financial Controller.

The expat policy has been changed. New staff is not eligible for expat regulation. New staff can be eligible for arbeidsmarkttoelage, if their previous salary meets the criteria.

Presently there are 6 students pursuing legal studies. One study financing recipient recently graduated as a notary and returned to the island

The Fire Department has been crying for better equipment for years now and the need for better equipment became evident with the dump fires.

- Can Government indicate how much monies will be invested for the equipment for the Fire Department?

The fire department received a truck, bus and a container with rescue equipment from the brandweer Nederland.

The faction would like an explanation on the cut in the budget of the Fire Department.

- What has this department received in terms of the reconstruction funds in the early recovery stage considering the cut in our budget for this department?

Under Emergency Recovery Project, the following activities are foreseen: four new fire trucks, brush fire fighting vehicle, rescue and other support equipment, command vehicles, safety gear, communication systems, repair & extension of the fire station, emergency fuel storage. These activities have a total budget of USD 8,315,000 and are currently in different phases of implementation.

Some of our students are lucky enough to have been offered the incentive that Government will pay up to 50% of their study loan once they are employed by Government of course. Interesting is that it is not automatically granted to all Sint Maarten students.

- Can Government indicate how much money is budgeted for the payment of study debts of employees on an annual basis?

And how much money is actually paid out every year?

There is NAf 155,000 budgeted for student debts. In 2017 and 2018, there was NAf 145,584 and NAf 93,300, respectively paid out.

- Is Government seeing any trends where it pertains to this incentive? Are we employing or/and granting any locals these incentives?

The faction has some concerns as it relates to the 7 vehicles for the Council of Ministers.

- To what extent would now be the best time to purchase these vehicles? And in what conditions are these 7 vehicles?

- Are all of them to be replaced right now? Are all of them down? What is the situation that there is an urgency to have them replaced all at the same time to a tune of NAFI. 600.000?
- Especially as we are looking at the state of vehicles of other Government departments. Is this purchase necessary at this point in time?
- What does the Council of Ministers consider vehicles that are strong and long lasting? What type of vehicles does the Council of Ministers have in mind to purchase at \$50.000 per vehicle?

Same as above. There are 2 vehicles that has to be replaced immediately. There are two ministers that do not have a vehicle and are currently renting a vehicle. The other 5 vehicles will be placed to keep the uniformity of the ministers' vehicles. The old ministers' vehicles will be placed back in to the car fleet and replace the vehicles that are more than 5 years old this is where we save on the cost to maintain vehicles that are over 10 – 15 years that are still in the governments car fleet.

The rebuilding and remodeling of the meeting rooms of the Council of Ministers.

- This investment too is one that the faction wonders to what extent it is crucial at this point in time?

There would be some renovations to the kitchens.

1. Is now the best time to invest in a state-of-the-art meeting room?
2. Does the Council of Ministers really need NAF 800.000 to renovate and furnish the meeting room and the kitchen?

The elucidation indicates that the meeting room and waiting area for the Council of Ministers / Ministers is multi-functional. The amount proposed needs to be seen as an investment of basic necessities that will eventually reduce overall costs within government:

1. Receptions and gatherings hosted by the Council of Ministers or individual Ministers can take place in-house. Renting outside locations will therefore be kept to a minimum as well as renting from service providers such as sound, audio, chairs and tables;
2. Similar applies by upgrading our kitchen facilities. The costs related to the outsourcing of catering services will be reduced.
3. Equipping the meeting room with the basic ICT and communication tools such as tele/videoconference equipment can positively affect the travel costs for ministers in particular and staff in general. It also improves efficiency and productivity: less travel time, faster means of communication.

Currently, the meeting area does not meet the basic standards for meetings to be as effective as possible. Seating in the waiting area, and audio and visual equipment in the meeting room - which has acoustic deficiencies - is needed to ensure a minimum standard of service for the high-level guests and dignitaries that the Council of Ministers / Ministers meet(s) on a regular basis. Most equipment will have to be shipped from abroad which also affects pricing.

To put it in perspective. The Ministry of Education will be given NAF 1 million which should be sufficient to build 4 new class rooms which is pence compared to NAF 800.000 going into renovations and furnishing of the meeting room.

As it relates to Personnel matters; a number of persons have not been placed in their rightful scale going back a number of years now. Some due to the article 8 saga. Others because they are still in their aanloopschaal not by any fault of their own of course.

- How many persons per ministry are yet to be placed in their proper scale?
- And how much would this cost Government once persons have been placed throughout this year and have been budgeted seeing that for many persons placement has to be retroactively paid?

promotion	Cost	Ministry
5 persons	10,740.00	VSA
12 persons	30,000.00	FIN
5 persons	7,488.00	VROMI
9 persons	34,824.00	OCJS
6 persons	7,932.00	TEZVT
10 persons	32,580.00	AZ

The faction notes that VDSM is now under the budget of Parliament.

- What is the reason for that? The faction takes note of a change in name of the Security Service Sint Maarten (VDSM). VDSM is a name actually used in a law. The name has been changed to Directie Veiligheid.
- What implications does this name change have for the service?
The new name only relates to the change towards the "independent financial status" for VDSM conform "Comm decision 130918 dated 14 September 2018 (DIV nr 8141-18). "Stafbureau Algemene Zaken" has changed to "Directie Veiligheid". The name change has no legal consequences in relation to the Landsverordening Veiligheidsdienst Sint Maarten.
- And could Government, taking into account the confidentiality of that particular service, give some general information on the "herinrichting" or reconstruction of the building for NAFI. 640.000?
The VDSM has handed in an amended advice on March 19th 2019 based on remarks of DMO and SG Min.FIN.
The advice has two options namely 1. rent or 2 rent to buy. The advice is sent to PM and Minister of Finance to be reviewed. The (VDSM) financial consequences for 2019 are limited depending on:
a) the chosen option within the advice and
b) the start date related to the new building (expected start October / November 2019).
- What is the budget for the Integrity Chamber and is there any indication that the Integrity Chamber is properly funded?

The 2019 and 2020 expenses of the Integrity Chamber will be financed for 100% by the Dutch Government (Trust Fund).

In 2021 this will be 50% and as of 2022 Government will have to cover / budget 100%. It is however worth mentioning that the Integrity Chamber in accordance - with their applicable Ordinance - will manage their organization independently and similar to other High Councils of State Government will have no budget authority

- How much money is budgeted for payment of former Members of Parliament in 2019 and where is this post?

In Chapter 2 of the budget (Parliament, High Councils of State and Special Entities), page 1, capture: "Wachtgeld ex-gezagsdragers" an amount of NAf 166.296,- is budgeted

- The faction would like a further elucidation on the topic of "Wachtgeld" en "Pensioenen" for politicians.

Furthermore, the faction would like an explanation pertaining to the calculation in the budget.

1. In accordance with the Ordinance: " Landsverordening tot regeling van de uitkering en het pensioen voor politieke gezagdragers Pensioen ex-gezagsdragers".

Former Parliamentarians and Ministers are entitled to a compensation (so-called Wachtgeld) which in length and amount depends on their term as MP or Minister.

In Chapter 2 of the budget (Parliament, High Councils of State and Special Entities), page 1, capture: "Wachtgeld ex-gezagsdragers" an amount of NAf 166.296,- is budgeted for former MP's

Within the budget of Finance (page 25), capture: Wachtgeld ex-gezagsdragers – Ministers" an amount of NAf 432.496,- is budgeted for the former Ministers

2. Based on aforementioned ordinance also the pensions of former MP's (Federal Government) and Ministers

An amount of NAf 1.144.629,- is budgeted, see page 1, capture: Pensioen Ex-Gezagsdragers. It is worth mentioning that in previous budgets above mentioned compensations for former MP's and Ministers (also NA period) were not separated from the civil servant pension payments nor was the "wachtgeld" separated from the bezoldiging within the Ministries and Parliament.

This amongst others was an important adjustment in the budget which will enable a better analyses of personnel related expenses and increase transparency.

- Can Parliament receive the budgets of the High Councils of State (Council of Advice, General Audit Chamber etc.) to compare what they send in and what is now in this budget?
- How is the amount under Council of State (Raad van State) used, disbursed or paid?
Thus far no disbursements have taken place. An amount of 254.000 is budgeted and disbursement will take place on request of the responsible member of state in accordance with internal procedures
- What is this amount for? It most likely has to do with our member.
- The budget post "noodrampen", 1.2 under General Affairs; is this some type of policy with respect to this or is it too early for that to be the case? **Answer:** Again this is an emergency fund after the assessment of Hurricane and looking at the areas in which need improvement, it was decided that a special fund under the PM, who is responsible for disaster management and the chair of the Emergency Operation Center that these monies would be used to create a growing fund for specifically and solely for disaster management. All monies used need to be vetted by the SG, and all relevant departments, including

controllers. This is known by the financial controllers both past and present. Having it under the prime minister does not result in by passing the procedures. The policy that will be worked on will regulate the usage of these specific funds and the procedures.

- Is it correct that we received NAFI. 1.2 million?
- Pertaining to the issue of the cabinets of Ministers and under some Ministries a Staf bureau where there are significant increases. The faction would like an explanation there.
Increases is due to the Emergency Budget was placed by the prime minister budget and extra personnel needed for the cabinet.
- The reductions in the Departments of BAK and Foreign Affairs are considerable, 30% vs. 21%. In addition to the personnel, is there any other issue with respect to these drastic decreases? Perhaps a change in approach?
As the minister of finance indicated that all vacancies was removed to stay within boundaries proposed by CFT. Both of the departments had vacancies that were removed, which resulted in a decrease.

The faction understands that the Government is trying hard but hasn't been able to make a connection between the budget, NNRP and the Trust Fund to give a total overview of what happens where. Furthermore, where the Government program is concerned, every Ministry should be able to highlight from within the budget, what of these items policies, new or old, are actually in conformity with the Governing program. For example, there is an increase in the budget for USM.

- What is the plan underlying that increase?
The increase is to facilitate the process for the implementation of the model for the funding of Higher education programs.
- And is it in the direction of what the Governing program states with respect to USM?
The Ministry is in the process of developing a model for the funding of Higher Education programs, such as those offered by USM in accordance with the governing program. In anticipation of this new policy an increase in the subsidy for USMF has been included in the 2019 budget.

The St. Maarten Development Fund is at the same budget it has been for several years. The faction would like to know what the request was of this entity to Government in terms of receiving a budget.

- Can Parliament receive the Fund's plan?
SMDF requested NAf 7.8 million. At the time of the initial preparation, the amount submitted for SMDF was the amount available at the time. The SMDF's plan will be presented to the Members of Parliament
- Can Parliament receive a breakdown of the categories of SLA's related to the budget? More specifically a breakdown in terms of service. For example, which ones are in the legal sphere, financial sphere and ICT sphere?
The ministry of finance has accounting service SLA's with the High Councils, which includes General audit Chamber, Parliament and Council of Advice.

Ministry of Finance

Since last year the Government has been referring to 37 cost cutting measures. This list contains different types of measures, some have to do with cuts on salaries and others on hiring consultants. Can the Government indicate whether this list or which part of this list has been executed so far? How much has the implementation saved Government so far? And how much do we expect to save in 2019 based on the measures on this list?

The faction would like the Government to be a bit more creative with the collection of taxes. Government cannot have issues with persons who owe a few years of taxes while the Government is 4 or 5 years late with processing of tax returns. There is a need for monies to come in, however in the current state that we are in, the faction is sure that some monies could be better spent by pumping it back into our community.

- Would Government be open to having companies that owe taxes adopt a school meal program for the number of years that they owe?
This is not possible as it will become uncontrollable and unfair to other taxpayers who were compliant
- Those that Government just can't get to pay. Perhaps they are willing to put back into the economy and schools and community rather. Can some of the monies collected via taxes go directly towards pumping it back into our economy?
- And can the Tax Office be lenient to persons or entities who owe some years of taxes if Government is late with processing the returns for more than 3 years?
The collection policy contains an aspect called, postponement of payment, where taxpayers are granted an extension on the legal term of paying in 1 or 2 months. This was also published locally
- Can we not take NAFI. 20 million from that approximately NAFI. 80 million that will be invested in the tax reform system to pump it into the economy?
- The unions are asking for a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for almost 10 years of being stagnant. Can some of that NAFI 80 million go towards that?
- Can some of that NAFI. 80 million go towards the increase of pension for our senior citizens?
- Or can some of the monies be invested in small business programs to assist with the small shops around the corner to basically get back on their feet?
Capital expenditures cannot be used for personnel cost In accordance with amongst others the Accountability Ordinance, Capital funds cannot be used to cover operational expenses. Funding operations with loans will lead to non-repairable financial shortages. In addition, adjustments of pensions must go through a legislative trajectory. (AZ)

The faction is happy to see that the persons that are working in the Tax Office and the Receiver's will be provided with updated software and programs to work with and assist them with their work.

- However, will any of these monies go directly towards the hiring of cashiers? In the months of January and February of every year, persons have to purchase their number plates.
There are currently 8 cashiers at the Receivers office. Unfortunately, the function book does not permit the hiring of additional cashiers. Part of the financial reform and improvement is creating the possibility of making online payment. This will allow persons to make payment without having to go to the receivers office.

And for a few years now you can purchase them in town or in Simpson Bay. If persons don't renew their plates in time, they run the risk of getting fined. However, there are 2 cashiers down in the Simpson Bay area. But for a very long time it was only 1 cashier. Because it's 1 person, if you go too late in the afternoon they would close up and go home because they are working alone. They would work through lunch but go home earlier. For some people that's an inconvenience on that side of the hill. Is there anything budgeted for the hiring of more personnel at the Receiver's to have at least 2 or 3 in the Simpson Bay area given that 1 should be sick, you still have 2 there? There are 2 now and perhaps it was a matter of someone being on sick leave or not.

- How much monies will the Ministry of Finance invest this year to ensure that there will be more than 1 cashier for the processing of number plates?

- The stickers purchased along with the number plates, will be taken up in the 2018 or 2019 budget?
Purchase of stickers and plates were taken out of the 2018 budget
- Can Government give an overview of the amount of projected monies for consultancies in the 2019 budget per ministry?
The pertaining overview is attached to the budget documents as submitted to Parliament (page 124-126).
- The faction would like some explanation on the operation of the pool of experts/expertise that will be made available and coordinated by the SOAB. Can Parliament be included in making use of the pool of expertise?
Yes, parliament can be included to make use of the technical pool certainly when it comes to supporting parliament with legislation

Because Parliament's budget for legal assistance at a time that we need that more than ever is very low. Parliament has a lot of matters on its table that need a lot of in depth looking at, legislative and otherwise. Overall the faction notes a drastic increase in Rechts- en ander deskundig advies.

- advance to school boards The faction would like to know where the bulk of that increase is.
Part of these consultancy fees are for the execution of the Law program that is being offered in collaboration with the University of Curacao, which was previously included on the budget of the Finance Ministry.

Government receives annual monies or dividends from its Government owned companies such as BTP, GEBE and Harbor. These monies are often used to cover Government's annual budget deficit.

- Can Government indicate how much monies Government has received from its Government owned companies post Irma?
Government did not receive dividend from Government owned companies in the post Irma period nor is this budgeted for in 2019. There is an income item called dividend Centrale Bank, however CBCS is not a GOC. In this case dividend is used as a synonym for the (share of) yearly profit (of CBCS) allocated to St. Maarten. This in accordance with article 40 of the "Centrale Bank-statuut voor Curaçao en Sint Maarten"
- How much does Government expect to receive in 2019 from each Government owned company that gives?
- Have some of the Government owned companies indicated the need not to pay out their dividends but rather invest in their company?
The Concession Fee is established by law (AB 2015 no 9), hence a legal obligation that must be reflected in the budget. In the case of GEBE a settlement agreement is being drafted in which the outstanding Concession fee will offset the outstanding (utility) payments to GEBE, after which a reasonable amount remains payable to Government. GEBE will also receive the necessary disbursements from the Trust Fund once that particular project is engaged
- For example, GEBE who is still in a rebuilding phase. Did they indicate that they will not pay?
- The faction refers to a sentence in the elucidation where it states that the 92.4% of the shares in the Stichting Administratiekantoor GEBE have to be divided. This needs to be corrected.
- In how far has Government received the annual reports of the Government owned companies?
- And what year has Government received?
- If later then what Parliament has received so far (2016), can Parliament be provided with copies?
Attachments were sent to parliament

The faction states that around the world, especially in America, there are a lot of public societies that are allowed to buy Government bonds for example to build schools or bridges.

- Why can't Sint Maarten follow that model of having investors buy Government bonds to build the country up?

Persons and Institutions are allowed to subscribe via their local bank when bonds are being offered via the Central Bank for Government (see <https://www.centralbank.cw/government-loans> . Because Holland has a standing subscription with St. Maarten, and because the rates are low in Holland, Holland offering in terms of bond yields do not be attractive enough for local banks to consider participating in these offerings.

Government Bonds would raise the debt of the country and are prohibited by Rft that only allows lending for the government capital account in general. As explained, Cft but also IMF etc. are of the opinion that a debt quote of 40-45% is sustainable for small and open economies like ours.

We will be above set mark by the end of 2019 and without negotiations with parties involved will not get permission to go higher than that. Rebuilding our country is first of all our own responsibility towards our people and secondly we are able to do a lot via the Trust Fund made available by the kingdom

- The whole matter of liquidity assistance in the context of the budget procedure. Where it comes to liquidity and the PJIA, can Government explain what not having an approved 2019 budget would mean?
- How are we fairing by receiving reports from subsidized organizations especially those that are non-governmental (per ministry)?

In accordance with the Subsidy Ordinance and initial advance of 90% of the requested and approved subsidy is paid evenly throughout the year. The remaining 10% is awarded based on approved annual report reports.

- Have these institutions submitted their reporting over 2018? How is the reporting of institutions that receive subsidies about the management of their budgets? How does that take place?
- How far is Government with its annual accounting/accounts of 2017?
- The salaries that are included in 2017, are these the up to date salaries or are these salaries that still have to be booked so to speak?
- Can Government explain the item "tijdelijk personeel"? Some chapters have it at nil while others have an amount listed.

This is budget item is related to hiring of Interns (Stagieres) within the different departments.

A few years ago, a previous Minister of Finance presented to Parliament a draft national ordinance that did not go through the legislative procedure yet to establish a Development Bank as well as to change several ordinances (such as the ALL, tax ordinances, loterij en hazardspelen verordening) "to increase Government's revenue structurally".

- Are these changes part of the Government's plan?
- What is Government's view on these changes?

Ministry of Justice

For the faction the Police HR matters are one of the most important matters throughout these

budget debates. Many police officers have found themselves taking Government to court because of promotions and monies owed. Even when winning the cases, Government has been reluctant to pay out what is entitled to these police men and women because of the limited funds or administrative backlogs. Now the Minister of Justice has promised that he will ensure that the Police Function book and their rights will be established as soon as possible and that it is in its final stages. Is this taken up in the budget for this year? What is the expected amount that Government would have to pay to the Police staff once placement is finalized?

- And what guarantee will the Police have that they will receive their monies once they are placed in their proper scales?

The monies will have to come via a budget amendment on a later date.

- Where in the budget can we find where monies are allocated for retroactively paying them for their new placements or rightful placements?

Once the function book is approved we will present a payment plan to payout the workers. As previously mentioned the monies will have to come via a budget amendment.

- The faction would like an explanation on the budget of the Raad voor de rechtshandhaving. How is the reporting by this type of institution including the Raad voor de rechtshandhaving with respect to the use of their budget?

The "Raad voor de Rechtshandhaving" like any other entity submits their budget request. In their request an elucidation has to be given what they will be spending the budget on, just like the regular departments within government. The following year they have to fulfill the requirement and provide their annual report with an explanation on how the budget was spent.

Is the reporting up to date?

Yes it is up to date.

Ministry of Education. Culture, Youth and Sports

- In the opinion of the faction Education has been forgotten about. The faction didn't see the subsidy for the Charlotte Brookson Academy of Performing Arts (CBA) in the budget. This school is a school providing education on an academic level but also caters to performing arts. Can Government indicate how much subsidy CBA will receive in subsidy in 2019 for the performing arts subject?

The Charlotte Brookson Academy for the Performing Arts has a budgeted subsidy of 2 Million Guilders in the 2019 budget. The subsidy to CBA is in accordance with the Lump Sum compensation received by all Secondary schools offering CXC education. There are no special provisions in subsidy for the performing arts. However CBA is expected to use the funds allocated to facilitate the delivery of its education program.

- The faction has been unable to locate a budget post for this on pages 38 till 50 of the budget. Would this subsidy fall under the Department of Education or maybe under the Department of Culture?

The subsidy for Charlotte Brookson falls under the Department of Education budget post number 44302-6110-60024

After the hurricane, one of the things given to the schools (primary schools, public schools) was meals for the students provided by the Red Cross. Children going to school hungry was unfortunately one of those situations that was happening before Irma but thereafter this program was put in place. It was much appreciated by many parents. Back in 2014 there were a variety of meal programs in our schools, in particular our public schools and after Irma again the Red Cross carried it out.

- Can Government indicate whether this program, the breakfast program from before, is still running? Is that of the Red Cross still running at this point as well? **The School Feeding Program, executed immediately after the passing of Hurricane Irma, was an initiative of the Ministry ECYS in collaboration with the Netherlands Red Cross with the assistance of the French Cantine (Caisse Territoriale des Oeuvres Scolaires , CTOS). This Program was in effect from October 27th, 2017 until July 6th, 2018. Through this Special Program 23 schools were provided with a daily breakfast and lunch. The was budgeted at EUR 1,000,000.- and the costs were covered by the Netherlands Red Cross. This Special Program has ended and the Schools have returned to their regular School feeding programs which consists of a sandwich and a drink on a needs basis.**

How much is Government contributing to the meals program, if any at all?

The meals program carried out by the government is on a needs basis consist of a sandwich and a drink.

- If not, can an arrangement be made or can we have any allocation on this budget for meal programs for the students of the public schools? **Students in the public schools in need of a meal can obtain a sandwich and a drink and the budget allocation is covered under the various Public Education post listed as "Voeding" post numbers 43421-6320 projects number 68001 through 68009 totaling NAf 24.810,-**

Maybe we can make arrangements with companies that owe taxes, they can perhaps adopt a school for a meal program instead.

The Sint Maarten Vocational Trade School. This particular point in the Capital Investments is one that the faction has an issue with. Back in 2017, a bidding process was done for the building of these class rooms. Someone was awarded the project. This was in late 2017. Yet it is on the Capital Investment of 2019.

- **The capital investment of 1 million in this budget is to complete 4 classrooms, bathrooms, and to upgrade fencing and parking at SMVTS.**

Can a clarification be given whether this is a new bidding process that is going to take place or is this the same project from back in 2017? **There is no new bidding process**

- If so, is it not on the budget of 2017? And if so, why is it on the Capital investments of this year's budget? If so, is it not on the budget of 2017? And if so, why is it on the Capital investments of this year's budget? **It is ongoing, but the renovations at the SMVTS is being executed in phases. The elements that have been mentioned related to the completion of the 4 classrooms, bathrooms and to upgrade the parking and fencing area are a part of the new phase.**
- School bus transportation has been one of the financial challenges of the Ministry of Education. This is something that they have been dealing with for years. They are waiting on a bidding process, which should have taken place before, but basically the faction would like to know the amount of monies being spent on bussing right now. And while an official bidding process is yet to take place, more cuts have been made for the prices of some routes and in particular that of Colebay. Can Government indicate whether that is indeed the case

and based on what such cuts were made?

In 2018, roughly NAF 4,114,464.- was spent on school bussing. This is a 6% decrease from 2017 due to the improvement in the quality check process of invoices. We have no knowledge of any deliberate budget cuts or the removal of bus service in the Cole Bay area. A total of NAF 4.3 Million is budgeted for school bussing in 2019.

- For example, there is an increase in the budget for USM. What is the plan underlying that increase? Then increase is to facilitate the process for the implementation of the model for the funding of Higher education programs.
- And is it in the direction of what the Governing program states with respect to USM? The Ministry is in the process of developing a model for the funding of Higher Education programs, such as those offered by USM in accordance with the governing program. In anticipation of this new policy an increase in the subsidy for USMF has been included in the 2019 budget.
- Plan oprichting instelling voor juridische opleidingen; is there some indication for the plan for this "opleiding"? Is it to be more than a lawyer's education? Is there any information already available?

The Council of Minister took a decision on June 12 2018 to approve the Commencement of a Law Program offered by the University of Curacao via an agreement vetted by our legal affairs department and subsequently signed between the University and our Government. The law program commenced since the latter part of last year 2018 and is ongoing at this moment.

- The faction misses in the policy priorities references to the Governing Program where some of the policy items can be found back. Perhaps an indication can be given of such? Yes, the major key priorities of the governing program in the field of education, culture, youth and sport are included in the budget 2019. The draft budget 2019, as stipulated by law, was submitted before the publication of the government program, therefore I initiated the budget based policy process, that includes the linkage with the key government priorities.
- Reference was made to the Council of Education and Labor and it is specifically mentioned that one of the priorities is the monitoring of the Council of Education and Labor. Can Government provide an update regarding this Council and its functioning? Have there been any reports from the Council?

The profile of the (ROA) Council of Education and Labour members is currently being finalized so that the Council can be appointed.

- Are there any recent reports and recommendations from the National Sports Institute (NSI) where sports on Sint Maarten are concerned?

We currently have the 2018 financial and social report from the NSI. The recommendation for 2019 is to continue with their subsidy to ensure that sports programs relating to school sports and district sports and the maintenance of the facilities can continue.

- School bus transportation has been one of the financial challenges of the Ministry of Education. This is something that they have been dealing with for years. They are waiting on a bidding process, which should have taken place before, but basically the faction would like to know the amount of monies being spent on bussing right now. And while an official bidding process is yet to take place, more cuts have been made for the prices of some routes and in particular that of Colebay. Can Government indicate whether that is indeed the case and based on what such cuts were made?

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Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

With all that our country has gone through after the passing of hurricane Irma, even looking at the number of sexual abuse cases that have surfaced in the recent months, the faction is missing a budget that takes socio, emotional matters seriously. The faction has sung this tune for a while now where it pertains to offering proper social help for our people. Social help for prisoners being released and putting them back into the community.

- Do we have anything in the budget to ensure that they get counseling?
- The minute they are convicted and go to Jail they lose their rights to health insurance and the like. Is there anything in place now within this budget to cover those things for a certain period of time when they come out? That eventually they can get back on their feet and can go back into the community.
- What are the plans of Government for labor taking into account that the economic activities spurred by the hurricane are diminishing?

Answer VSA: A project proposal for psycho-social care following a disaster (development of framework) is currently being prepared by the Ministry of VSA and will be submitted to the Council of Ministers and subsequently the Steering Committee to be funded via the Trust Fund. This project proposal will not be limited to MHF (which is mainly focused on providing psychiatric care), but will cover the broader spectrum of psycho social assistance. The framework will outline the different types of assistance needed immediately after disasters to address post-traumatic stress disorders. It will include not only psychiatric care but also training of professionals, first responders, as well as community representatives.

In addition, once persons are released from prison, they can apply for financial and medical aid.

With regard to the diminishing economic activities spurred by the hurricane, the Ministry approved the incidental labor policy, a fast track program to allow for the increased construction activity and to allow for the rebuilding of Sint Maarten.

This policy is currently being reviewed which may result in it being tweaked to ensure that the present and projected situation is taken consideration. In addition, the Ministry will continue to ramp up inspections in order to ensure compliance.

Answer TEATTT: The Vision of this Minister of TEATT is that we understand the current economic conditions and are keenly aware of the circumstances, hence the Ministry is working tirelessly to facilitate the re-opening of the airport, seeking the attracting the establishment of U.S. Pre-Clearance, attracting airlift, the financing for the airport, the re-opening of hotels is being encouraged, the supporting of fiscal reform, the promotion of events to ensure that SXM has economic activity, the controlling of businesses and the encouraging of all parties to assist and support government in these challenging times of our economy by means of keeping the island clean, shopping around, reducing crime, encouraging law-abiding citizens both young and old, in order that the economy and the people of SXM can return to the days of glory and Pre-Irma.

With respect to the branding, the destination has identified with the northern side committed to the MOU that the areas for branding will be:

1. Dutch French One island two destination many cultures
2. Culture heritage history
3. Culinary

4. Luxury (Villa vacation, weddings honeymoon food lovers)
5. Island Hopping

While the above-mentioned outlines the vision, the reality of many economies is that the Capital does NOT automatically serves as the Night life and/or Tourist capital of the country. For example, the Night life & tourist area of Miami is mostly the Miami Beach and NOT downtown Miami. Therefore, the reality is that market developments has considered Philipsburg as the commercial district mainly for retail businesses with restaurants catering mostly for cruise tourists. While the Simpson Bay areas has developed into the Tourist Area and Night life for both Tourists and Visitors.

Key Areas for our tourism development

- Reopening of the airport
- Rebuilding of the hotels
- Market Research and Data Collecting
- Revision Tourism Master Plan 2020-2030 Midterm plan
- Diversification of the tourism product: Marine Trade Industry, cultural tourism, Sports Tourism, Business Tourism (MICE market, special events), Creative Industry (Orange economy),
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Product Development and Visitor Relations
- Driving Tourism Volume (i.e. AirBnB, Special events, Marine/Yachting Ind., Cruise Conversion)
- Development of Tourism legislation and policies and regulations for a sustainable well balanced tourism product

Ministry of Tourism. Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

The airport is currently in negotiations with the World Bank and another possible investor. Would there be any consequences to the monies that the Government has already injected in PJIA if PJIA chooses not to proceed with the World Bank but with the other investor? Would such a choice have any effect on Government's 2019 budget?

- The faction doesn't see much going on in the Ministry of TEATT. What will Government do to stimulate the economy?
The Ministry of TEATT has developed an Economic Recovery Plan and they are also working on an Economic Development Plan and an Investment Policy & Strategy. The above-mentioned are or will be developed in closed collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, specifically the dept of Fiscal Affairs with respect to the Financial Incentives. Once these plans are final, it will be made public.
- Currently the Ministry's budget is NAFI. 25 million. If it were to be increased to NAFI. 30 or 40 million, what is the procedure? If Government have a plan of approach also for the difference of NAFI. 15 million, how will Government synchronize that to get it approved?
If the Ministry would like to increase their budget, they will submit same to the Ministry of Finance, specifically the dept of FBB, they will then handle the request. The decision as to whether or not it will be taken into account is handled within and by the Ministry (or Minister) of finance. Ultimately, the CoM will decide and/or has the authority to make the final decision before Parliament is presented with the budget for approval.
- What are the plans for the Gaming Control Board? Situation surrounding casino controllers. A considerable amount is mentioned in the budget for the repayment of casino controllers. What is the status of this? Are there any bottlenecks with the casino controlling? What are Government's plans if any? What do casino controllers do?

The Ministry is currently preparing an advice to engage the services of GLI (Gaming Laboratories International) which provides testing, certification and professional services to the global gaming industry to draft legislation, rules, procedures and technical specifications including a staffing plan for the Gaming Control Board. This advice should be completed and submitted for decision making within the next 2 -3 weeks.

- The matter of payment of lottery and casino businesses. Can Parliament receive a status of the collection, including the number of businesses falling under these categories as well as the branches of these businesses?

This amount collected must be answered by Min Fin. There are a total of 7 lottery licenses in circulation.

- Can the statistics be provided per year for the last 5 years to include the existing licenses, requests, grants and whatever changes to the policy of public transportation in general for the last 5 years?

An overview of requests submitted from Jan 2015 to date is available and submitted to parliament.

Public Transportation requests received:

Year	Bus	Taxi	T	G	R	Help/Asst.
2015	9*	39*	8	3	32	207
2016	6*	50*	13	6	32	197
2017	1*	11*	13	6	3	199
2018	5*	4*	45	18	0	235
2019	0	1	15	5	0	38
TOTAL	21	104	79	33	67	838

**Includes transfers from deceased license holder to surviving family member.*

Public Transportation Licenses granted and issued:

Year	Bus	Taxi	T	G	R	Help/Asst.
2015	0	1 (Transfer from T)	0	0	49	147
2016	0	1	2	3	22	193
2017	0	0	12	1	18	221
2018	0	0	43	21	0	238
2019	0	1 (Transfer from deceased)	16	2	0	21
TOTAL	0	3	73	27	89	582

- What are the plans for the market areas and how are these progressing?
Initial discussions have taken place as it pertains to the Simpson Bay and Philipsburg

Marketplace Project which is a priority for the St. Maarten United Christian Democratic Coalition and the Ministry of TEATT as well as the Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure (VROMI) which Minister Giterson has full responsibility for.

In the Simpson Bay area, my colleague and I met with vendors and explained that the intention is to build a permanent structure complete with water and electricity. The parking will be appropriately regulated, and the bathroom facility will be improved.

The Simpson Bay market vendors were told about the need to ensure that they adhere to the necessary regulations. The plan is to relocate the vendors during the construction process to temporary locations still to be identified

I am confident all can agree, to support this venture going forward as well as the concerted control efforts in line with getting this country back on track economically as well as an attractive Tourist destination, where Order, Cleanliness and respect for our environment (both in terms of garbage pollution and excessive noise disturbing the surrounding area) is an integral part of running a successful business operations.

Going forward all due diligence will take place inclusive of a public bidding process.

- There is an approved amount for enterprise recovery as part of the Trust Fund. Does the Ministry of TEATT have a MSME (micro small medium enterprise) enterprise policy? What does it entail? Has the coordination between the Trust Fund and the Ministry of TEATT regarding such started?

Yes, the Ministry do have a MSE policy of 2014. This policy is presently being reviewed by the Department of EVT considering the current conditions of the economy. This policy is on the government's website.

The Ministry has met with representatives of the WB on this subject matter. We are available and have agreed with the WB to assist wherever we can with this project.

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

- How much money does the Ministry expect to collect for the big business permits? Such as buildings and restaurants that are being build now.

The projected revenues for building permits for 2019 is ANG 1,195,500. The amount for building permits can never be specifically estimated and is very much dependent on the economic state of the country and the confidence of investors in the country. The amount estimated appears on the low end, considering some expected important large-scale private investments, such as the development of the former Great Bay Beach Hotel, and possibly also other resort properties that appear to be now redeveloping. The exact amounts of these cannot be predicted at this time.

- How much money does the Ministry expect to spend salvaging the boats in the Lagoon in this 2019 budget?

There are no reservations made on the budget of 2019 for the removal of shipwrecks. At present, there is the project to be funded from the Recovery Trust Fund for the removal of about 100 estimated shipwrecks located on the Dutch Side of the Simpson Bay Lagoon. An amount of US\$ 3 million is provisionally reserved on the Emergency Debris Management Project from the Recovery Trust Fund for the removal of shipwrecks from the lagoon.

- Is the Ministry responsible for the maintenance around the Bell property around the flagpole? If so, how often is maintenance done at this tourist attraction? And is it

coordinated with TEATT? Which Ministries really cover these expenses? When will this project be completed? How much will it cost? It is actually very dangerous how the tourist has to climb up the hill there. Where in the budget does it reflect the completion of that project if it is there at all? Do we have any insurance on that specific project so that in the event does happen and a tourist decides to sue, are we covered?

The maintenance for this project is not reserved under the budget of VROMI. Because the responsibility of this project doesn't fall under VROMI but under the Ministry of TEATT.

- The Ministry of VSA got NAFI. 1 million for calamities and stuff of that nature. VROMI looks like it got NAFI. 150.000 for external expenses. Knowing the serious situation of VROMI, including housing repairs and the dump solution, why is that amount so low?

The total amount reserved on the VROMI budget for calamities is ANG 936,711. The budgets for calamities are reserved under several line items, whereas in total an amount of ANG 352,500 is reserved for calamities when the EOC is activated and ANG 584,211 is for regular calamities under the respective operational areas of the Department of Infrastructure Management. It should be noted that in the event of serious calamities, other sources of funds will likely need to be made available, as this amount may be insufficient to cover the expenses usually associated with management of serious calamities.

The Government has recently joined the Caribbean Risk Insurance Facility, which offers financial payouts to governments in the event of disasters, which can be used for certain calamities.

- The faction misses in the VROMI budget, how Government plans to tackle our road infrastructure from a sustainable point of view. Can Government give some explanation?
- The faction would like to know what the amount for the Rent Committee (Huur Commissie) is based on. There was to be an update of the Huur Commissie law. Is that something in the making? What is the current status of the Rent Committee? And are there any bottlenecks being encountered? The faction points to a possible bottleneck being the outdated law based on which the Committee needs to function. What are Government's plans if any?
- A large number of vehicles have been listed for the VROMI Ministry among others. But yet the VROMI Ministry has a serious issue with transportation means to carry out its duties amongst others inspections. Of the car listed in the overview Parliament has received, how many of them are operational?

An overview is attached of the state of the VROMI vehicles as per March 2018. The ministry has a need of about 35 vehicles to effectively perform its duties. In March of 2018, VROMI had about 12 vehicles that were in a roadworthy state. Since that time there have not been any additions to the vehicle fleet of VROMI, only further deterioration. Given the types of functions that VROMI performs, the ministry cannot rely very much on the compensation of employees for the use of their personal vehicles. We are aware that in the ERP project, which includes a component to restore the capacity of the Government apparatus to effectively perform its duties, there is a provision for the purchase of several vehicles for VROMI, however the status with that is at this moment unclear.

It should be noted that in addition to the regular vehicles of VROMI, in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, VROMI received several heavy equipment items to assist in the cleanup efforts. Some of these equipment are in good condition and function well, however it should be noted that, because the equipment was mostly second hand, a large amount of these heavy equipment items are no longer functioning. Because the equipment are European

specs, there is a difficulty in acquiring the repair and spare parts as well as qualified professionals able to repair the equipment.

- Reference is made of GEBE's shares not being yet rectified. Can this be explained?

The transfer of GEBE were finalized, giving St. Maarten a 100% ownership as per January 1st, 2014

The member of the Sint Maarten Christian Party faction has the following questions. The faction with interest has taken note of the draft national ordinance.

Ministry of Finance

- Mention was made in the presentation of the Minister of Finance of a negative amount of NAFI. 2.5 million in expenses based on cost cutting measures still to be determined for 2019. Can the Government indicate what these measures will entail?

No, currently they are not executing work for government

Mention was made in the presentation of the Minister of Finance of a lowering of the budget for roads and waterways. As it stands right now, we still have the issue of a lot of roads that need to be repaired and seeing that we are approaching the hurricane season, we will definitely have to make sure that our waterways and canals are clean of debris. Can Government give an indication what this lowering of the budget for those particular areas will do to the ability of Government to maintain the roads and the waterways?

- The faction also notes a budget post in the budget for NAFI. 1 million for ATS. That is a very good development seeing that ATS has enabled SZV to deal with a lot of their collections and improve in the collections of their fees. Are they already doing work?
- Is ATS presently already part of the Government and assisting with the collections of taxes?

No, currently they are not executing work for government

Mention was made in the presentation of the Minister of Finance of a lowering of the budget for roads and waterways. As it stands right now, we still have the issue of a lot of roads that need to be repaired and seeing that we are approaching the hurricane season, we will definitely have to make sure that our waterways and canals are clean of debris.

- Can Government give an indication what this lowering of the budget for those particular areas will do to the ability of Government to maintain the roads and the waterways?
- In the budget the Personnel cost is at about 45% of the total budget. Can Government give the last rationalization analysis of Personnel cost and indicate what has been done with those recommendations?

Indeed a large portion of the budget is spend on personnel. This indicates that attention has to be paid to the development of these costs. ARS, SOAB, IMF and Cft commented on this topic in the past. Many improvements were implemented but not everything could be solved. This is one of the triggers that lead to the development of a holistic plan of approach to eliminate all of the shortcomings of our financial management

- What have been done with the recommendations from the Audit Chamber? What have been done with the recommendations from SOAB?
What have been done with the recommendations with regards to Personnel cost by IMF?

Furthermore, the Minister of Finance clearly defined in his presentation a lot of the measures that would have been taken by countries facing crises that we have faced, were not taken and that in large part due to the fact that we received liquidity from the Netherlands. With that in mind, what is the minimum liquidity balance Government needs to guarantee uninterrupted Government operations?

In accordance with discussions with CFT in 2018 Government would like to have 3 months (120 mln.) but due to liquidity restraints this is not possible at this time

The members of the National Alliance faction have the following questions.

The faction has taken note of the draft and indicates that it is seeing a trend of a threatening behavior of approving the budget or else. When Holland says jump, we say how high.

The faction would like to bring some conditions to the Government on behalf of the people of Sint Maarten:

- the first one being that the Government actually gives a clear plan of approach on how it plans to deal with the Post Office workers;
that the Government hires a dedicated IT person or team to deal with the tax situation and also give a 3-month plan on how they plan to deal with it;

that the Government establishes a dedicated Calibration department within the Ministry of Economic Affairs so that our consumers and our businesses can stop being ripped off;

that the Government gives a clear indication (date) as to when the finalization of the Function book will take place;

that the Government gets the fine books for the controllers so that they will be able to do their task. Because a few months ago, in October or November, Parliament was informed that the fine books would be ready by December 1, 2018;

The fine book is a joint project between the Inspectorate of TEATT and the OM (Public Prosecutor's Office). However, it is the OM that has to develop and approve it including establishing the amount to be paid for various offenses. Due to technical difficulties, the OM needed a longer period of time than anticipated to make the necessary IT changes to its internal systems to incorporate a fine book for TEATT.

Coincidentally, on Monday, March 18th a meeting was held with the OM and the Inspectorate of TEATT wherein the completed fine book was presented and will be implemented within short. The delay has not stopped the work of the Controllers of TEATT as PVs have been written and fines issued by the OM since last year due to a close collaboration between the OM and the Inspectorate of TEATT.

- that Government gives Parliament a 3-month plan how it plans to tackle the roof repair situation seeing that Parliament was informed that Government only completed 7 roofs. The faction doesn't want to hear what the St. Maarten Development Fund, Red Cross or Yellow Cross did but rather how much money Government is planning to invest in this for 2019? And also, how much money the Government is putting into the Mental Health Foundation (MHF)? The Director and staff of the MHF is basically crying out for assistance. It is a problem that affects everybody; that Government comes with a plan of approach for the shelters. After a lot of back and forth, Parliament received a tour of the shelters in October and was told about water tanks that could hold 10.000 liters of water will be put on the ground as well as a 16 KVA generator with a diesel tank of 100 liters. What is up with these

plans? What is the plan for the upcoming hurricane season?

Previously, the Mental Health Foundation received a subsidy which was dependent on Government's available cash flow. To ensure that access to this basic care is not jeopardized, psycho social care via MHF is being paid by SZV through a preliminary budget agreement, pending the legislative process of adjusting the tariffs which will lead to a more sustainable and controllable financing structure.

- Because last year the same question was asked and the answer was "we are not ready" and here we are again a few months shy of another hurricane season. What is the plan?

According to the "rampenplan" the Minister of VROMI is responsible for identifying locations that can be used as shelters and ensuring that shelters are available. However, VSA is responsible for shelter management and as such has a keen interest to ensure that viable buildings are available.

The plan is on short term 8 shelters will be renovated and upgraded, 2 are planned to be built by with EU funding and another larger one with funding from the trust fund Ultimately the idea is to have shelter possibility for more than 2000 persons.

The faction would like an explanation or reaction from Government on each of the abovementioned conditions. if these conditions are not, the faction would have a very difficult time approving this budget. The faction would like a guarantee from Government that a local CFO will be hired to fill the vacant position at the airport.

- Can Government give its views on hiring a local CFO?

Going through the budget the faction sees a lot of zeros but also changes that could have been made. For example, there is NAFI. 20.000 budgeted for the TEATT Stafbureau while in 2017 only NAFI. 1000 was spent.

Why didn't Government cut there instead of sport tourism? With these types of things Government can save NAFI. 500.000. The faction recommends that Government let's all Ministries look over the line items and to realistically look at the budget post and say how much did we spend in the previous years?

- And if we really need to increase the budget, what policy are we attaching to this? The faction agrees with comments made by the Council of Advice that legibility, availability and elucidation of the budget need improvement.

Structured planning is needed in getting it on time to the Council of Advice and the other entities for a proper perusal and proper advising procedures to take place. Constantly requesting the Council of Advice for "spoedadvies" is not a good look for Government.

The budget needs to be more policy oriented and policy aligned in accordance with article 14 of the Accountability Ordinance. The faction would like to receive an elucidation per Ministry of the aforementioned.

- Why wasn't Government aware that article 25 Rft could have been used in the initial submission of the budget?

Mention was made of being in deficit/arears many years before hurricane. Minister Gibson was trying to save NAFI. 20 million per year and if not for the hurricane, this would have been done totaling NAFI. 60 million by the end of 2017.

- These savings were intended for arrears at APS and SZV/ etc. Was this done or not? And if not, why not? Was this used as liquidity support post hurricane?

A surplus realization of Budget 2016 was earmarked to settle the SZV/APS arrears. However, the draft Financial Statements show a deficit of approximately NAF 8 mln. Government was therefore unable to pay / settle the total amount of NAF 60 mln towards its payment arrears so therefore an affordable amount of NAF 22 mln. could be paid in SZV arrears.

At current NAF 20 mln is earmarked for APS arrears. Given our current liquidity position it is considered wise to hold on to these reserves until the (backlog in) liquidity support is received by Government

Ministry of General Affairs

- A draft training plan was presented to Parliament in 2018 for the IT department. This came about after the Government IT infrastructure was attacked several times by ransomware attacks and ransom and fines had to be paid. There is a list of workers in the department that had to do the training.
- Have these civil servants in the meantime been given the opportunity to do the training? And if not, when is it the intention of Government to start these trainings?

Preliminary security training is scheduled for 2qtr 2019.

- The faction would like a copy of the development operation agreement that has been signed and proposed by the World Bank.

There is no DPO agreement thus a copy cannot be given. There is a letter accepting the DPO mechanism but it's just a letter.

- What are the fees attached to this for the World Bank?

If this question relates to DPO, there are no fees because that has not been finalized but what I can provide is the administrative agreement which I have given Parliament a copy of. Information regarding WB fees are in that agreement

- Can an overview of all court cases per ministry be provided and the outcome thereof?

Indeed the question was asked to provide the outcome of the court cases. However, government cannot provide the specific outcome of the verdicts to parliament, since we need to respect the privacy of the individual. Next to that, as mentioned the amount of court cases is above 1000 and are spread all over the organization. So even if it was possible, it will take a very long time to collect and analyze all the verdicts and to present them to parliament. Parliament need also to keep in mind that not all verdicts are final, since some are in appeal at the higher court in The Hague (Hoge Raad). Based on the above, government will request more time to think of a way to inform parliament on the outcome, for example to mention a percentage of cases lost and win by government.

Government is awaiting the decision of parliament how you want government to proceed, with this particular question

- It is rumored that the World Bank has rented or is about to rent a building down by the old Carl & Sons, where the Labor Department used to be housed. Is that the case?

Yes

- The NRP is down at that location. Any building that the World Bank is renting, who is responsible for paying the rent?
- Is it the World Bank that will be paying the rent or the Government?
- If it's the World Bank that is paying the rent, will they be paying the rent from the Trust Fund money?
- Previous Governments saw the reduction of the Government vehicle fleet as a cost saving measure. Steps were taken to implement policies to reduce the fleet and move towards compensation of civil servants who needed to use their own vehicles. This came with a drop in maintenance fees. Has this Government implemented any type of policy where the Government owned car fleet is concerned?
- And is that then why we are seeing increases where that is concerned?

There is a car fleet policy available. The facility department is currently working on improving its car fleet management. At the moment, 40% of the car fleet is older than 5 years. This leads to a lot of maintenance cost.

- The vehicles have a 5-year policy but according to the faction the jeeps that the Ministers use are not 5 years old yet. Can this be explained?

2 of the 7 will be replaced immediately, for reasons mentioned already. The other 5 will be placed in the car fleet (of the organization) and replace the vehicles that are over 10 years old. This is where government will save costs in maintenance, as maintenance fees are high

- How can money be saved with this purchase?

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- It was also mentioned that the Minister of General Affairs and Minister of VROMI need replacement vehicles. The faction would like to know what happened to the Land Cruiser of the Minister of General Affairs? What happened to the 2 vehicles that were in operation in the Ministry of General Affairs? Specifically, the Audi and the Toyota Jeep 4 Runner.

This question was answered already.

- Is there a policy that the Audi shouldn't be used every day?

No, but the PM made the decision to use it in a car pool for dignitaries, this has also been the modus operandi in the past.

- Travel budget for the Ministry was NAFI. 149.000 for 2018 and NAFI. 47.000 so far for this year (January, February and March). Does this include the staff and other delegation members or just for the Prime Minister?

The travel budget consists of travel expenses for the minister and some delegates.

- With regards to the shelters, how far are we? What does it mean that the plans are ongoing? What are the concrete plans?

The NRPB has informed me that the tender for the repairs of the shelter locations has been closed and that the received bids are currently being reviewed by the appointed evaluation committee. It is

expected that the winning contractor will be notified in the coming weeks and that the works can start shortly thereafter.

- It was stated that the Ministry of General Affairs doesn't have consultants, yet a name of a company was mentioned. Can this be clarified?

My 'no' answer was referencing to the question of consultant for the cabinet of the minister. However, as mentioned before, The Ministry of General Affairs, department Dcomm has a consultant, namely, MEDPRO

- What are the tasks of these consultants and the task of these consultants?
- Which projects and tasks/services are being carried out based on the 2019 budget?
- Are the buildings that we owned reflected as assets within our budget as well as inventory value?

Yes, it's reflected in the budget as an attachment on the list of Assets. Assets are recorded by the Ministry of Finance

- Is the insurance that we pay for these properties reflected in the budget and where?

Yes, it's reflected in the budget as an attachment on the list of Assets. Assets are recorded by the Ministry of Finance

- How much was paid out in advance for the damaged property of Government including schools and other buildings?

Last year the government received advances from the insurance company (approximately US 6 million)

- How much was paid out already from that advance to school boards?

From insurances, a total of 3.67 mln. USD were paid out to (4) schools) as an insurance advance pay-out and for repairs of (6) public schools.

- When will repairs to schools start and when will they be effectuated?

The public school repairs are in the process of procurement by the Ministry of Spatial Planning (VROMI). Subsidized School board have carried out small repairs and are awaiting Trust fund and insurance monies

- What contingency plans are in place while schools are being repaired to be able to house the students?

The contingency plans will be finalized once all assessments are made of the buildings to determine which spaces are available for use.

- What is the total payout of the insurance projected to be?
- And is this going to be reflected in the budget?

The faction would also like some clarity on the insurance payout and exactly how much was paid out for the Library based on the damages? How much money was received based on the damage to the Library? What was the assessment (not the general payout) from the adjustor (whether from Henderson or Smith and Olov)?

For the calendar year 2017 – 2018 the Government budgeted an amount of subsidy for Philipsburg Jubilee Library Foundation to the tune of Fls. 1,097,100.00. So that is the amount of subsidy that the Foundation receives from Government. As far as the insurance payout to the Philipsburg Jubilee Library Foundation is concerned:

a. The preliminary damage assessment of the Library amounted to \$ 555,170.07.

b. However, a more recent adjustment indicated that the assessed damages amounted to \$ 783,600.00. Please note that this assessment amount is still in discussion with the insurance company. As the Prime Minister already indicated: when the report is released on April 4th we will be able to know the exact amount of the damage claim.

- Is World Bank Trust Fund money being used to repair the Police station? What of the Police station is being repaired?
- The Fire Department received a container of equipment from the Netherlands. What is the status of the equipment? Because the equipment seems to be over 10 years old.
- Can the budget post for "Rampenbestrijding" be clarified? Is the necessary equipment for the members of the EOC that were missing right after Irma in place for the upcoming hurricane season? Is it reflected anywhere in budget 2019?

Ministry of Finance

- The faction refers to the freeze of vacancies except for critical ones and would like to know what all the critical vacancies are right now within the Government, per Ministry. So, a clear-cut overview of the critical vacancies and the status thereof.

Not all ministries distinguish between vacancies in critical or non-critical so this question cannot be answered clearly. However, the minister of Finance in cooperation with the Minister of General Affairs will try to develop a tool in this respect that all ministers could and should use for budgeting vacancies in the future, including the circumstances in our labor market and solutions to improve the possibilities to attract the right people into civil service.

- The faction also mentions the freeze hiring of consultants unless approved. How much consultants were hired within the last year up to now (2018-2019)? How much was spending on consultants during 2018 per Ministry?
The faction would also like to know the specific tasks of these consultants. Do these consultants work in the cabinets? And if yes, is this the norm?

Like all ministries, the ministry of Finance uses consultants during a year to perform certain tasks or projects. That is the price we pay in being understaffed and not able to attract enough people with the right education and experience ourselves. Furthermore, the budget of NAf. 4

million for the 'pool of external expertise' is put in the draft budget under the Ministry of Finance while it is still unclear which ministries will make use of the facility that will be managed by SOAB. The idea of a pool originates in the Governing Program of this Government.

The amounts from the pool used by different ministries will be re-arranged to those ministries via a budget amendment or, for the last phase of the year, in the annual accounts. And finally an amount of NAf 1 million is budgeted for hiring ATS, the audit team consisting of people

from SBAB and SZV to strengthen compliance for tasks income purposes

A Curacao based company, namely Bearing Point, was granted the bid to restructure our whole tax system.

- Is Bearing Point a Curacao based company or Sint Maarten based company?

BearingPoint is a Dutch Caribbean company with local offices in Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao and Sint Maarten. The Sint Maarten office was established 5 years ago.

- And if it is a Curacao based company, how did they rank in terms of bidding and when did the bidding take place?

The bidding process is not finalized as yet this is a confidential process. Therefore, I cannot share information until a decision is taken by CoM and a final advice is approved

- If Sint Maarten company or various Sint Maarten companies also took part in the bidding and they were also close in terms of rank, they should have been given preference. Because once they get the money, they have to pay taxes here. Basically, all we are doing is contributing to Curacao's economic development and not ours.

The faction points out that mention was made of the reorganization of the Tax Office and the financing of it by the Netherlands.

- How does this relate to the recent news of a tender being awarded to Bearing Point?

After the hurricane the then Government came with a roof program where money was to be pledged here and there. A Member of Parliament at the time criticized that funding would be going to a Florida based company to import the material. The argument that was made about the NAFI. 3 million shows similarities with the current situation with Bearing Point where NAFI. 12.3 million was awarded plus NAFI. 2 million extra for consultancy fees.

- How did the bidding process go? What relations are there within the Ministry, Bearing Point and individuals?

The bidding process is not finalized as yet this is a confidential process. Therefore, I cannot share information until a decision is taken by CoM and a final advice is approved.

- How much do we expect to generate from the NAFI. 85 million investment in the Tax Office?

The Plan of Approach Reform Tax Department outlines the revamp and reform of the Task Department as well as the projected income developments. In addition, risks assessments, is part of this plan, therefore these risks will be closely monitored. Appropriate measures will be taken if necessary.

- What is your return of investment or expected return of investment?
Persons are receiving tax assessments for deceased family members. This is very inefficient. Where is the disconnect within Ministries in sending information to each other?

There seems to be an attack on small businesses in this country and also certain individuals concerning the Tax Office of recent where they send out a barrage of assessments and letters to individuals concerning filing taxes of 2015.

- Did Dorris Lucinda Henson Hickinson file her taxes for 2012, 2013 and 2014 seeing that she received a letter where she is being requested to file for 2015?

We are not at liberty to discuss private tax matters publicly, and hereby again remind individuals or their families that it is their **obligation** to provide the tax office with the necessary information when there are changes

The budget has about NAFI. 3.8 million more than it should according to the Kingdom Council of Ministers (Rijksministerraad). The faction requests for Government to provide documentation indicating opinions from CFT on this matter.

- Can Government verify what if any payments were made to Minister Ferrier himself when he was in office that does not fall within his salary payment?

We don't know about any kind of such payments. If anyone has information that should be checked, please provide the ministry of Finance with that information Besides Salary only Travel allowance was paid.

- The Minister of VSA once mentioned that the Minister received vehicles. Were these vehicles paid for by Government or were they a donation to the Ministry of VSA? And if they were from whom? Government shouldn't be keeping any secret donations given to them. How did the Ministry of VSA acquire those vehicles?

12 double cabin trucks were received from BZK based on a lease agreement

- The Minister of VSA once mentioned that the Minister received vehicles. Were these vehicles paid for by Government or were they a donation to the Ministry of VSA? And if they were from whom? Government shouldn't be keeping any secret donations given to them. How did the Ministry of VSA acquire those vehicles?
- Can an overview of all items that were purchased in 2018 to today such as furniture and vehicles be provided? Who in Facility would be able to provide this overview?
- What is our tax compliance currently and how was this amount calculated?

The average Tax income in % of the GDP in St. Maarten is approximately 4 to 5 percent lower than our Caribbean Kingdom partners.

This fact is an indication of our tax compliance.

Taken into consideration - the different tax rules within the Kingdom - this shows that the Tax revenue (to GDP) can increase with at least 3%, which is a conservative estimation.

Bear in mind the different tax rules within the Kingdom, real compliance is at least 3% of the GDP.

- The faction would like to also see NAFI. 90 budgeted for the purchase of Mullet Bay seeing that the Central Bank stated that it is only worth \$50-55 million.
- Who decides on the budget of Parliament? Who makes the necessary adjustments?
- Are there any vacancies at the Treasury department? How many fte's are there in that department? Is there any other way that the department can get support?

There are no Fte's vacant in treasury. When necessary temporary personnel is hired

- The faction can't understand the NAFI. 5 million concession fees for GEBE seeing that the management of GEBE indicated that they have financial challenges. How realistic is it that the Government will receive NAFI. 5 million in concession fee from GEBE? Has Government had any talks with GEBE pertaining to their ability to pay this amount?

The Concession Fee is established by law (AB 2015 no 9), hence a legal obligation that must be reflected in the budget. in the case of GEBE a settlement agreement is being drafted in which

the outstanding Concession fee will offset the outstanding (utility) payments to GEBE, after which a reasonable amount remains payable to Government. GEBE will also receive the necessary disbursements from the Trust Fund once that particular project is engaged

- The same goes for other Government owned companies where Government has budgeted that it will receive dividends/concession fees.
Line items that are supposed to be for small business support are at NAFI. 0. How is it possible seeing that the Government program even mentions small businesses but when you look at the budget it is not reflected there?
- Also, no mention for support for Qredits. Are they still depending on World Bank? Is it coming from the Kapitaaldienst? Does this Government plan to support Qredits in any way in 2019?
More than half of the list of Capital Investments was already on the list of 2017. Why were many of these investments that had been budgeted already in 2017 not executed?

The Ministry is cognizant of the need to ensure SME's development and not just their establishment. Additionally, from surveys and dialog within the business community, two main issues were predominant, which are access to financing and the need for capacity building support. Considering this, the ministry continues to lend subsidy support to the financing institution Qredits which to date have supported some 173 businesses with soft loans amounting \$435.5 million dollars since its establishment. Additionally, the Ministry is at present collaborating with the WB to make additional funding for SME's available, especially for the businesses that were affected by the Hurricane Irma. As it pertains to the capacity building component the Ministry is considering the establishment of a Business Development Center that will geared at providing the necessary assistance to new and existing businesses for their establishment and development. Given the financial constraint Government at this time, the details of the Business Development Center will be further worked out, along with the possibility to include the "One-Stop-Shop" window for investors, whereby this entity will also facilitate gov't as the Investment Promotion agency. These efforts will be the focus in 2019 to work out the details with the intention that the economic conditions will improve during 2019 so that in 2020 we can allocate budget specifically to finance these operations.

- And why are they still on the budget? What is occurring with funds coming from Capital Investments and what with funds from other loans?
- And what happened to insurance monies received?

The faction points to the concern of the Council of Advice where it pertains concrete income generating measures. The faction echoes the sentiments of the Council.

- Can Government give an explanation about the realities of the budget and the actual expenditures?
- Are the 2018 line items actual expenditures or what was projected to be spent in 2018?

Same goes for 2017. This information is important to be able to make comparisons.

A department can have a line item with an amount attached to it in the budget. The department goes over to making up an advice to access these funds and is then told that there is a liquidity problem.

- Has that been one of the reasons why many hiring processes were not finalized in the years they had to be finalized?

As elucidated in my opening remarks:

Did we cut heavily in the budget to come to that point? No, we didn't have to. The Cft advise on personnel expenses proved to be factual correct. There were many mistakes in the budgets per ministry when compared to the actual salary system. The personnel expenses originally were overstated grossly which was corrected in the current draft budget. Furthermore, in the personnel budget was also included a total of approximately 160 vacancies, a number that no government of Sint Maarten has ever been able to attract in one year. Keep in mind that there always will be some people leaving that also have to be replaced. In the end our budget department (FBBB) and other civil servants involved suggested to cut the amount for vacancies for the time being and investigate the real developments by the end of the first half-year 2019 in order to decide on a possible budget amendment that might be needed when successful in attracting new people"

So is there a link between having a liquidity issue and hiring processes not finalized?
Well I actually would hope so but lack the data to verify this for the year 2018.

In the preliminary year-end report of 2018 (4e kwartaal Uitvoeringsrapportage), which is imposed by the Kingdom Law Financial Supervision 2018, an underspending in the Personnel costs of almost NAf 26 mln was reported...

In the (preliminary) results of 2017 an underspending in the Personnel costs of more than NAf 14 mln was reHence a trend that did not go unnoticed (by especially the CFT) and without a clear cut explanation and moving forward justification de Operational budget (Gewone Dienst) Budget 2019 would not be approved by the CFT.

As result of an action plan executed under my direct supervision the ministry of finance assessed/reviewed the personnel costs (Actual vs Budget) per ministry per department and per line item (a very tedious and time-consuming assignment). And in consultation with the ministry controllers adjusted the inconsistencies and in addition corrected the inflated personnel budgets there were applicable
Cutting personnel cost is actually human beings providing services.

- Is that one of the reasons we are having issues now?
- It was stated that cuts in Personnel cost were easily done because many of these things were fictitious. Can Government explain how this was easily done?

Cutting personnel cost is actually human beings providing services.

- Does this mean Government is willing to cut these services?

Government needs to explain how all these easy cuts in personnel don't translate in a cut in services to the people of Sint Maarten.

- How many of the policy priorities in this budget that can be found in the back of the book can actually be found in numbers?
- Ownership of buildings and rent agreements are not clearly elucidated in this budget.
- How much money was spent on Ministers' travel per Ministry from January 2018 to date?
In 2018 there was an overall underspending on the travel budget of: NAf 300K (Budget 2,7 mln vs actual 2,4mln.)

1. Travel Expenses Ministries in 2018	Boeking
Total Ministries	2,355,694
PAR - Parlement en hoge colleges van staat	333,480

MINAZ - Ministerie van Algemene Zaken	473,661
MINFIN - Ministerie van Financien	134,094
MINJUS - Ministerie van Justitie	780,998
MINOS - Ministerie van OCJS	75,084
MINVA - Ministerie van VSOA	125,745
MINTT - Ministerie van TEZVT	387,662
MINVM - Ministerie van VROMI	44,970

2. Travel expenses Ministers Jaar: 2018	Boeking
Total Ministers	668,162

- Can a copy of the letter from Government to the Kingdom Council of Ministers requesting the use of article 25 RFT be provided?
-
- Is there somewhere perhaps in the getallenboek where the loan amounts can be seen?

Ministry of Justice

- Can Government provide the partnership agreement signed with the Minister of Justice of Holland in October 2018?

Copies have been provided to Parliament.

- Can copies of all agreements that have been signed with representatives of the Dutch Government since January 2018 be provided (RST etc.)?

Copies have been provided to Parliament.

- Can Government explain the conflict that has been playing out in terms of the electronic supervision (ankle bracelet) in the media? Which company did Government contract first for the ankle bracelets?

There is currently no conflict with regards to the electronic supervision/monitoring. The company that was hired back in 2014 is Fennix.

- And which company is now providing them? Has the agreement with the previous company been officially ended and are there any outstanding fees?

The company name is Comprehensive Security Solutions Inc. The agreement with the previous company has been officially ended. There are no outstanding fees.

- The building that was once Sarimar was bought by Government. Was there a board representing Sarimar when that building was sold?
If there is a board or was a board, who are the board members or who were the board members?
Was a real estate company hired to sell the building to Government and what was the commission to that real estate company?

The old Soremar building was bought by Government from Soremar real estate NV in 2016. The sale was handled by two former ministers of justice and their respective cabinets. We were unable to find any documentation regarding a commission but seeing that it was bought by a real estate company one would expect that there was no commission.

- When will the police Function book be completed? Can Government specify what the critical vacancies are within Justice?
 - The Police function book will be completed this year. The critical vacancies within the ministry are:
 - Federal Detectives Unit: **6**
 - Judicial Affairs: **2**
 - Immigration Department: **6**
 - Customs Department: **29**
 - Court of Guardianship: **5**
 - MOT: **10**
 - Prison: **28**
 - Police: **60**

- How many consultants are working in the cabinet of the Minister and is it the norm that consultants work in the cabinets of Ministers?

There were 3 consultants working in/ for the cabinet. Currently there are no consultants working in/ for the cabinet.

- Mention was made that there are currently 3 consultants working in the cabinet, 2 of which are sole proprietorships. Can the names of these sole proprietors be given?

Jessica Weeks and Migdala Clarinda

How much were they paid and for what services?

What exactly does Government expect to get done with the NAFI. 17 million listed in the Kapitaaldienst in relation to the prison? Especially in comparison to the NAFI. 84 million for the Ministry of Finance for the Tax Office. Did the Minister fight for his budget?

Ministry of Justice			
Nieuwe indeling kantoren	Grenshospitium	250,000	
Forensisch Lab (soremar gebouw)	KPSM	315,000	
Verbouwing (soremar gebouw)	KPSM	700,000	
Cameratoezicht	KPSM	2,000,000	
Afsprakenlijst herstel en verbetering gevangeniswezen	Gevangeniswezen	5,778,750	
Computers (20x)	KPSM	80,000	
Mopier (print/scanner) (2x)	KPSM	10,000	

Docubox	KPSM	100,000	
Ufed met laptop (incl. applicatie)	KPSM	20,000	
APIS (per jaar 100)	KPSM	400,000	
BMS	KPSM	4,900,000	
Golf Karts (2)	KPSM	4,000	
Voertuigen (10x)	KPSM	330,000	
Bagagescan	Douane	610,000	
Scan Mobiel	Douane	1,220,000	
Computer apparatuur	Douane	120,000	
Golfcarts - haventerrein (2x)	Douane	20,000	
Dienstauto's (10x)	Douane	610,000	
	Total	17,467,750	

My view regarding this budget is that it is a “nulmeeting” or a baseline that assist us in structuring the ministry with a comprehensive year plan and annual budget as well as a multi-annual plan in line with a multi-annual budget and both being in line with our governing program. We have hired and filled the position of section head -planning and control and with SOAB we are busy with policy based budget. Our objective is to get a realistic budget with room for incidentals.

- Given the report of the Public Prosecutor in the newspaper today, does Government really believe that Member of Parliament Heyliger should spend 60 days in Bonaire? Is Government familiar with the international prisoners transfer program?

Yes, but I am more familiar the extradition process and its complexities and multiple stops – even to transfer an inmate/suspect to northern side or vice versa. The cooperation agreement within the “kingdom” would be applicable in this case seeing it is not international.

- Holland is signatory to this program/treaty since January 1988. Was the Minister aware that MP Heyliger was to be transferred from the Philipsburg prison cells to Bonaire? And if yes when? Can all the officials involved in the transfer that fall under the Minister then move without his authorization?

As previously answered during the MPs line of questioning – the answer was NO. According to the PG – he was in the air already and did not inform me in order not to compromise me or the office. It is not customary for me or any minister to react to any investigations whether they are open or closed.

- Did the Public Prosecutor contact the Justice Minister in the Netherlands knowing that MP Heyliger would be transferred to Bonaire? The plane had to land in Curacao, did the Minister of Justice of the Netherlands contact the Minister of Justice in Curacao?

Our Penal Code endows the Public Prosecutor Office with the, so called: “opportunity principle” (opportuiniteitsbeginsel), which could be further explained as a monopoly on prosecutorial activities attributed to said office. The prosecutor can thus decide if, how and when to go through the process of investigation/prosecution and is only bound by the law and the procedures found therein. More so, according to the Cooperation Agreement Detention Capacity of 2014- obligates the PG to only contact the minister of justice of the receiving country. The process in all countries that are signatory to the cooperation agreement as previously mentioned is equal and thus bypasses the Minister of Justice of the requesting country.

- Did the Minister of Justice of the Netherlands contact the Minister of Justice in Sint Maarten? Did the Minister sign off on the transfer?

I have never signed any transfer for any MP

- Do all international transfers in terms of information to the authorities in the host country follow proper procedures?

Already answered.

- Have all international treaties been followed correctly?

That is for the judges to decide after the lawyer(s) and the prosecutor have presented their case.

- How much money has been spent to date on prisoners overseas?

From November 2018 Sint Maarten to date the costs for have our prisoners in the Netherlands is EUR 750.000,00

- What would be the difference in terms of cost if these prisoners were housed and home here in Sint Maarten? How many prisoners were released from January to date? Based on the number of prisoners that have been released from January to date, how many convictions in terms of jail time was given to any other convicts in the prison?

Preliminary results indicate that we are about the same. We are in the process of ascertaining a more accurate figure. 19 prisoners were released. We are in the process of developing a prison management system and database to provide real time management information.

- What is the status of the electronic security system at the prison (camera's, smoke alarms etc.)?

The electronic security system is fully operational again. The ministry has put a lot of effort to have this issue resolved.

- Who controls it? Is it the Ministry, prison personnel or third parties?

It has been put in place by a company named CHUBB and is being controlled by the prison personnel.

- Are there any plans to create a ward in the prison for mentally challenged inmates?

We are still looking into the possibility for this in the future. For now we are concentrating on getting the Prison up to par and working with MHF. Based on the JVO agreement - a national coordinator forensic care will be appointed to assess the needs and a proposal for a pilot project.

- There are justice officials who are using private e-mail addresses. This is a major breach of security. What are the plans of the Ministry moving forward to address this issue?

In the ideal work environment all staff should be on one platform with their own email addresses.

- What is the difference/discrepancy between the wenselijkheidsbegroting of the Minister and the actual budget?

There are some major discrepancies between the draft budget and the presented budget. Presented was 88 million and this budget is 77 million so a cut of 11 million.

- Why is Mr. Doran not in the position of Head of Customs? What is the current position of Mr. Doran since his vacancy is a critical vacancy?

I do not believe in publicly debating personnel and personal situations. We have to have some standard of protecting individual's personal information.

- A number of vehicles are parked in the yard of the gentleman who used to accompany the Minister to meetings. What is the reason for these cars being parked there? How many vehicles were received from the Netherlands after the hurricane and how many are in operation to date?

For security reasons the cars are parked in the yard since 1996 –and the temporary office (relocation after Irma) does not have any space for parking.

Customs received 3 from NL – and none are operational today.

KPSM 20 received, 2 returned and 18 remained in service for 6 months. Currently 8 are operational, 5 waiting for parts and 4 totally out of service.

- BAVPol classes 1 and 2 went to court over a year ago. Since the court ruling, have the BAVPol been paid out? If not, why not? What is the intended date to pay those workers?

Bavpol 1 has been promoted to officer per 1st of February 2015. They are waiting to be promoted retroactively to brigadier per the 1st of February 2018.

Bavpol 2 has been promoted to aspirant per 1st of February 2015. They are waiting to be promoted retroactively to officer per the 1st of February 2018.

We are awaiting their evaluations to finalize the documentation.

- Were the personnel cuts indeed easy to make or will these cuts hamper the functioning of Government? Have critical functions also been cut?

Any cut to the budget of the ministry of justice is not easy to absorb given the reality that we provide services that are essential to the safety and security of our population. In order to get a realistic impact we are working with SOAB to establish a policy based budget

- Can measurable policies intentions related to this budget be provided (policy oriented in accordance with article 14 of the Accountability Ordinance)?

Previously answered.

- Can a clearer Multiyear plan be provided?

This is currently being worked on as we are busy establishing a realistic budget given the impact of Irma and unforeseen expenses and deficits that we were faced with.

- The faction notes that it sees exorbitant consultancy fees in the budget. Does this mean that our civil service core is not capable of carrying out the tasks?
Or do we not have them? Or the process to hire them is taking too long?
Over the years there has been a lack of policy and or legislation in order for the Youth detention center to function properly. Have there been improvements in this area projected in budget 2019 to legally take place? As well as preventative measures.
- A total amount of ANG 508.343,50 has been reserved to put the MLC up-to-par. The works at the MLC has already started and should be completed in May 2019.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports

- What is the status of all the sports facilities throughout the Dutch side?
For example, Raoul Illidge, Melford Hazel Sport Facility and L.B. Scot Sport Auditorium. What is their condition?
How much money does the Government plan to put into these sport facilities? Because sport is very important for the development of our youth. Different programs started recently. How much money did the Government receive in insurance payout for the Library?
What happened to the money?
The faction would like to see NAFI. 10 to 15 million in the Capital Investments for education for a solar panel project for all the schools.

Due to limited availability of funds for capital investments and the prioritization of repairs of educational infrastructure, investments in solar panels for schools has not been included in the 2019 budget

- Also a few million guilders for the Library. Furthermore, the faction would like to see NAFI. 1 million for generators for all the schools not only for when electricity goes off but also because they are used as shelters during the hurricane season.
What status are schools operating in right now?

A tour of the schools which was postponed from last year is scheduled to take on Thursday March 28, 2019 and Friday March 29, 2019.

- The faction noticed a NAFI. 500.000 cut for afterschool programs 2018- 2019. Was the NAFI. 1.7 million that was budgeted in 2018 not put to use?

The extra ANG 500.000 that was reserved in 2018 under 'The Community Schools' was for the continuation of the School Feeding Program. These funds were not utilized as the Special School Feeding Program, which was scheduled to end on February 2, 2018 was extended by the Netherlands Red Cross until July 6th 2018.

- Are we able to cut NAFI. 500.000 for afterschool programs after we deemed it in 2017 as something very important to make serious social changes within this country?

The 500.000 was related to school feeding and this is now done on a needs basis.

- Was an assessment done?

Given that this Special Program was to meet the needs of students immediately after the Hurricane, this additional amount of Fls. 750,000 was reduced by Fls. 500,000 in the 2019 budget. Schools however continue to provide their regular school feeding programs.

- This is a serious alarming development. How many afterschool programs does this affect?
This amount was projected for school feeding under this budget so the cut does not affect the regular after school program.
- How many students does this affect?

This cut does not affect students in the present afterschool program.

- How many afterschool teachers will be affected by this as well?

The delivery of Afternoon School Programs will not be affected by this budget cut in 2019.

- The Ministry's budget would cut by NAFI. 5 million. The Minister is taking a 10% cut in salary, yet there is a huge increase of the budget post "Rechts- en ander deskundig advies" for the Minister for consultancy fees at the tune of NAFI. 1 million. Why are such fees needed by the Minister whilst we can cut half of that of youth programs?

In the previous 2018 budget an amount of 1 million guilders was on the budget of the Minister of Finance for the establishment of a Law program. This program commenced in 2018 and considering this activity falls within this Ministry the amount was transferred to the budget of the minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

- What exactly are these consultancy fees for third parties for?

Part of these consultancy fees are for the execution of the Law program that is being offered in collaboration with the University of Curacao, which was previously included on the budget of the Finance Ministry.

- The cabinet of the Minister also saw an increase of NAFI. 100.000. The faction would like to know why.

The budget of the Cabinet of the Minister does not have any increase of 100K.

- There is a new line item for the Staf bureau called "Bezoldiging vacatures" for NAFI. 400.000. What is this intended for? Where did it come from? Was it moved from somewhere else?

The amount allocated on the budget line " bezoldigings vacture" of 400K is a lump sum for the prioritization of vacancies in the budget. This amount will be used where necessary when negotiating salaries for incoming personnel.

- The personnel budget of the Department of Education was cut with NAFI. 467.000. Was this part of what was called the fictitious employees that we would not be able to hire? Or is this for much needed personnel in order to be able to execute the much-needed changes in education reform?

The cuts in the personnel budget of the Department of Education will affect the level of compensation that can be offered to new staff that are recruited, and the total number of staff members that will be in service throughout 2019. Of a total staff of 15, the department is expected to have a staff of 13 by the end of the year. This is expected to affect the workload of current members of staff and the department's ability to realize priority policies and programs in 2019.

Nothing has been put there to finalize policies to regulate and reduce the amount for school bussing. It is alarming that some Governments are not willing to take cost cutting measures where they belong.

- What is lacking in terms of cooperation with the Ministry of TEATT in this respect?

Although there was an estimated 6% reduction in the costs for school bussing in 2018, further reduction in the costs related to school bussing is not anticipated in 2019 since there has not been a change in the policy. The regulations drafted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport are still in draft form.

- What effect does the budget cut in education reform by NAFI. 600.000 have on the execution of policy and programs intended to bring much needed improvements in education in this current millennium?

The cut in the budget for Reforms in Education means that the Ministry had to prioritize the reform programs that would be executed in 2019. The programs that have been prioritized relate to Higher Education, reforms within Secondary Education, the finalization of the ordinance for Education Supervision, strategies towards the recruitment and retraining of teachers and strategies towards enhancing School Safety and Emergency Preparedness. Programs towards reforms in Primary Education will be executed to a limited extent in 2019

There is also a cut in subsidies for schools and school boards such as SVOBE, FAVE and Catholic schools. And also changes in subsidy to USM. This requires much explanation.

There have been no cuts made to the subsidy for subsidized school boards. The subsidy for subsidized school boards is awarded based on the total number of students enrolled in December of the year prior to the year in which the budget is prepared. Subsidies for some school boards have decreased due to a reduction in student enrollment.

- There was talks of a Financial division for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports because so much money is being subsidized to these entities that you need a better checks and balance. What are the plans of this Government pertaining to this?

The process of having a better financial control through the establishment of a finance department for ECYS was placed on hold due to the reprioritization related to the recovery process after the hurricanes Irma and Maria

- There is a cut in intangible heritage of NAFI. 5.000 and an increase for NAFI. 10.000 for tangible. Are there specific policies attached to these changes?

This year the Department of Culture in Collaboration with UNESCO will be launching the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) inventory list in a campaign called I.R.I.C.H meaning "I Remember Intangible Cultural Heritage. This awareness campaign is to put St Maarten Culture front and center. The decrease and increase in both areas of the budget will not affect the present programs that are earmarked this year 2019.

The Sport Department didn't see many changes, only in personnel. Electricity has gone down for some but remember that a request was sent about 2 years ago to GEBE to reduce the rates to put schools and community centers under a different rate than the commercial rate. GEBE had agreed to do that. This is a way to cut cost for Government.

- Does this mean that we have become smarter, use of more LED? What is causing the drop in electricity bills when we have not yet dropped the rates?

The reduction in utility rates of the schools is an area of concern that will be explored by the staff of the Department of Education.

Another alarming cut of NAF 484.000 for the Inspection, which division is solely responsible to maintain the quality of education in schools. This needs to be explained whether it was inflated. What exactly is fictitious?

The personnel cut is set at the level of the current 2018 budget actuals. This is also taking into consideration replacement for positions in all departments, divisions, and the staff bureau of the Ministry. There is within the staff bureau of the ministry the budget line # 41001.6010 for a lump sum geared towards recruitment purposes across the entire Ministry. The recruitments are based on prioritization by the Minister. In addition if deemed necessary it is the intention to have a budget amendment proposed to address eventual shortcomings.

- How many inspectors are we losing or cannot hire to carry out the crucial execution of inspection in our schools and other tasks?

The hiring process for the needed inspectors has taken place based on the budget allocation

- Can the Government explain the cut of NAFI. 358.000 in personnel cost for the Innovation Department?

The personnel cut is set at the level of the current 2018 budget actuals.

- A cut of NAF 827.000 for the Division Public Education for personnel cost is mentioned. That's a lot. Does that mean that we have less teachers in public education now? Or is that a clean up of some mess that existed? This really needs a lot of clarification.

The budget cut at the Division Public Education is an overall 9.08 percent. The budget of the Division Public Education reflects the staff of the division as well as the staff within all Public Schools.

- The budget post Diverse specifieke goederen; book, toilet paper?
- What is being cut here? How are we able to cut so much from the operation budget of Public Education?

The cut in the operation budget will require the ministry to be efficient in its spending and to make the necessary budget amendments internally

- Maintenance budgets for schools are being cut. Were we underpaying for maintenance while there is so much maintenance needed at schools right now?

The present process of the repairs on facilities will reduce the high cost experienced over the years for maintenance this year 2019.

- It doesn't jive with the reality of our situation. When will schools start to lack or continue to lack with these cuts?

The ministry will have to be efficient in its spending and make the necessary budget amendments internally .

- Cleaning contract for schools for 2018 and 2019 for NAFI. 350.000. This needs to be elucidated. Was a bidding process done?

The Bidding was completed and three cleaning companies were assigned to the Schools since December 1st 2018.

- Was it clear, transparent and with integrity?
Very alarming overview for this Ministry. A total cut of NAFI. 5 million, NAFI. 4 million in personnel and NAFI. 1 million for projects. Why is the NAFI. 1.9 million from USONA for 1 tablet for every child under loans (leningen)?

This is reflected in the Capital Investment because it is an asset however it was not taken up in funds needed for a loan. This was not a loan.

This was not a loan.

- There is nothing in the budget for arts facilities and the Library. But also, nothing from the World Bank.

The Capital investment budget has no funds allocated for the Library or any art facilities . The Ministry has incorporated these areas in the Ministry's " Education Master plan" for the building back better process.

- The cuts in Division Public Education personnel budget. Most of the budget is not for the office staff but for teachers. Can this be clarified?

This is related to the fact that the budget verses the actual expenditure did not correlate and therefore said cut was made.

- There is NAFI. 3.5 million budgeted for sports in the Capital Expenditures. Can a breakdown in detail be provided what this NAFI. 3.5 million is to be spent on?

The monies that have been set aside within capital investment for sports are expected to go towards the construction of a pool. This type of investment will also assist with sports tourism as an official 50m pool that has been approved by the International Swimming Federation (Federation Internationale de natation) will open Sint Maarten to the hosting of official tournaments.

- What tangible can be done with the NAFI. 3.5 million? 4 classrooms for Vocational Training School are being constructed where the old police houses were. On the budget there is NAFI. 1 million for building of 4 classrooms. Can Government explain what happens when the 4 classrooms are complete in terms of chairs, desks, class board and all necessary instruments that a classroom needs to accommodate students?

In terms of materials needed there is currently sufficient classroom material available to furnish the classroom from donations between 2017 and 2018

- So basically, a shell is being built? NAFI. 1 million is not sufficient. Can a detailed schematic breakdown be provided of what the NAFI. 1 million is supposed to do?

- The 1 M Guilders covers:
 - a. 4 Large Classrooms (2 on level 1 and 2 on level 2)
 - b. 2 toilet groups for male and female (1 group on level 1 and 1 group on level 2)
 - c. Storage area on each level
 - d. Covered balcony on both levels
 - e. Staircase to and from both levels
 - f. 30 meter retaining wall and including sewage connection to the main sewage line in South Reward
 - g. Complete fencing around the property
 - h. Parking Area for teachers and visitors

The roof of MPC where the sport facility area is, needs to be repaired. Same goes for Cay Hill basketball court, Cay Bay court, Middle Region court. The faction would like an update on these facilities.

The various out door facilities are being worked on. We were challenged with getting the necessary materials to ensure that the works can be done. Dutch Quarter – The court has been resurfaced and we are waiting on the installation of the rims.

Cay Bay - Works have not been completed as yet as we were waiting on the acquisition of the new basketball rims, back boards and poles

Middle Region - The court in middle region is currently on hold as the Catholic School board responsible for the Sr Marie Laurence school would like to make some changes and it will be more cost effective to work alongside the school to ensure that that area is fixed.

- Can an update be provided of these facilities? Can an update be provided on the Prince Willem Alexander school, which is no longer there, and area?
 - PWAS is a 4 phased project.

- Phase 1 of the PWAS with the construction of 8 classrooms is presently ongoing. The construction is in progress, there were some delays due to administrative and payments discrepancies over the last 2 years and due to additional findings in regards to soil at the location. This has caused delays but all efforts are being made to meet the projected delivery date of July 2019.
- Plans for the School: The other 3 phases (8 more classrooms, Management & Administrative unit, Gymnasium and Home Economics section) will have to be carried out based on available funding from the Capital investment budget. The plan is to have the students returned once the facility can host said students appropriately. Decisions would be taken based on the delivery of the phases. Currently the PWAS students are presently making use of the Dr. Alma Fleming Rogers Care Center in Belvedere.
- How much was the Library appraised for in the insurance payout? What is the amount?

As far as the insurance payout to the Philipsburg Jubilee Library Foundation is concerned:

- a) The preliminary damage assessment of the Library amounted to \$ 555,170.07.
 - b) However, a more recent adjustment indicated that the assessed damages amounted to \$ 783,600.00. Please note that this assessment amount is still in discussion with the insurance company. As the Prime Minister already indicated: when the report is released on April 4th we will be able to know the exact amount of the damage claim.
- What is the Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport's opinion on the fact that schools give detention on weekends? Is it appropriate for children to be in detention on a Saturday and Sunday?

MP Emmanuel asked about schools giving detention, especially in the weekends i.e. Saturdays and Sundays? The Division of Inspection is aware of only one school that gives detention in the weekends. The inspector was told that detention is only being practiced on Saturdays, and not on Sundays. The inspector actually went to the school on both Saturday and Sunday and during that visit observed that on the Saturday that the school was visited, there was only one student there on detention due to the fact that that student had failed to submit homework assignments in a timely manner. During the detention the student had to complete the assignments. The law does not stipulate that detention cannot be practiced by schools, not to mention on Saturdays. The National Ordinance Secondary Education (A.B. 2013 GT no.794) article 27 sub 1 & 2 stipulates that:

1. het bevoegd gezag stelt, de ingevolge artikel 2 met het uitoefenen van het toezicht daarop belaste instantie gehoord, een reglement voor de school vast.

2. Bij ministeriële regeling kunnen nadere voorschriften worden gegeven omtrent de inhoud van dit reglement.

Hence according to the law, the schoolboard is the competent authority and responsible for the organization of its school. The school is of the opinion that the purpose of detention is to correct negative behavior and encourage students to do their best. Based on the Board's experience, detention works in the interest of the students. Students get a chance to complete unfinished work to improve their chances to get a sufficient grade, or get extra classes in subjects that they are failing (Math, English, Spanish). The school prefers to do detention on Saturdays because then it does not take away students' instruction time. Furthermore, keeping students after school hours would be a challenge, since that school board operates two shifts. Important to note is, that up to this date, the Inspectorate has not received any complaints from parents about the practice of detention on Saturdays.

- Capital Expenditures under "Verstreckte studieleningen"; what are exactly the plans for this line item?

Study Financing can be awarded as a grant, in the combination of a grant (40%) and loan (60%) or as a 100% loan. In case where a portion or the full study financing is awarded as a loan, these funds are recorded under capital expenditures budget post

- A motion was passed a few months ago instructing the Minister to come with a solution within 60 days for fighting and bullying. It is 150 days since then, can Parliament receive an update on this motion?

As was said before I answered this earlier as follows: I would like to make it clear that as Minister of Education Culture Youth and sport, that It will always be my intention to report back to parliament and also to carry out Parliament's instructions to the best of my ability. MP Brison you did an excellent job in quoting me as leader of the SMCP. Since 10-10-10 some seventy plus motions have been passed by parliament. However, with the exception of the motions of no-confidence, the results of but a few motions were reported back to Parliament. Parliament requested to receive the Safe School Plan within 60 days, which was not very realistic. I have noted that some of the safe school plans in the USA took 12 months or more to be completed. The preparation of a comprehensive safe school plan on Sint Maarten, involving all relevant stakeholders would take at least twelve months to complete. Furthermore, it is not possible to produce one plan that would be applicable to all schools because of the specificities of each school such as location, school access, layout of school buildings, student population Consequently, it makes more sense for each school to develop its own safe school plan that would not only deal with the violent and aggressive behavior of students but would also include evacuations, emergency management, etc. MP Brison, as a retired Pastor, I believe I know a thing or two about preaching, and as you so eloquently put it, practicing what one preaches. So please take note that the Progress report on the safe school plan, consisting of some 22 pages, was submitted to parliament on March 13th 2019. I am very happy to say that there is progress and when the time comes, I look forward to discussing this report with parliament and together, deciding the best way forward, including a more realistic time frame for me to be able to deliver results we all can be proud of. As far as this relates to the budget, I do believe that some time is needed and we are still a ways off from accurately submitting budget amounts for this project. I am however confident that as we move forward we will make the best of what we have to continue to put policies and plans in place for the protection of our children. The Ministry of ECYS already has a policy document, in draft form, comparable to a safe school policy plan, which is entitled the "St. Maarten National Discipline Policy Planning Framework for Elementary Education". Therefore, instead of re-inventing the wheel, this policy framework can be revised to include secondary education, emergency and recovery management thereby expanding it to become the National Safe School Policy Framework for Sint Maarten. Such a policy framework would require schools to prepare their own specific policies and manuals that deal with several of the elements listed in the Parliamentary motion of November 9, 2018 such as: parental support, positive peer pressure, parental responsibility and public awareness.

- What is the cost, if there are any, attached to this motion?

As far as this relates to the budget, I do believe that some time is needed and we are still a ways off from accurately submitting budget amounts for this project.

- And the solution that has been found? The budget doesn't reflect the results of this motion. There is no budget for parental support, positive peer pressure, rehab program catered to the youth. Can Government point out where in the budget supports these items that were in the motion that is already months late? So, the Minister agrees with all the MP's that voted against the motion because it was very reactive and unrealistic in the timeframe given? Can this be clarified?

In my elucidation regarding the motion I indicated that as far as the policy plan relates to the budget, I do believe that some time is needed and we are still a ways off from accurately submitting budget amounts for this project. I am however confident that as we move forward we will make the best of what we have to continue to put policies and plans in place for the protection of our children.

- The former Minister of Education had a plan to collaborate with the Ministry of TEATI' to promote sport tourism more. Sport tourism is not properly reflected in the budget of the Ministry. This is an area where this Ministry together with the Ministry of TEATI' can bring in income for the island.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport supports Sport Tourism and has collaborated with the Ministry of TEATT regarding a number of Sports Tourism Programs. There were plans to host Football tournaments and a Volleyball tournament in 2018 but due to the damages at the facilities we were unable to host. We are currently unable to host official tournaments due to the damages at the various Sport facilities.

- Is the school bussing issue a concern for this Ministry?

School bussing continues to be a challenge, as the regulations related to the provision of the service is within the competence of my Ministry and the Ministry of TEATT. In 2018, the Ministry saw a 6% decrease in the costs related to bussing due to improvements in the processing of invoices within the Ministry. However, a further reduction in the costs related to school bussing is not anticipated in 2019 since there has not been a change in the policy regulating the routes and means of compensation of school bus operators. The regulations drafted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport for the provision of School Bussing in accordance with the Compulsory Education Ordinance are awaiting the adjustments to regulations which fall under the competency of the Ministry of TEATT.

- Ministry of Public Health. Social Development and Labor
A NAFI. 2.5 million cut for projects. This is another Ministry providing social services for the people of Sint Maarten.

This post was decreased by 2.5 mln budget which were earmarked for recovery projects (Personal Incentives Economic Recovery), which are now being funded through the Trust Fund.

- NAFI. 3 million cut "Overdracht aan het Land". Can Government explain this? Overdracht of what?

This amount was related to the Emergency Income Support project which is now being financed by the Trust fund.

- Cut in social services and noodvoorzieningen at the tune of NAFI. 1.1 million. Are those the people who are no longer needy after the hurricane?
Based on what statistics can we make that cut?

This amount was budgeted for the Food voucher program as an early recovery program.

- Even Government's contribution to SZV is cut by NAFI. 1.1 million. Is Government going to owe them more now?
This contribution is not related to the debt that government has towards SZV. This is the premium contribution that Government has to pay for the formerly employed persons that fall under the ZV insurance scheme

- Were the vehicles leased from BZK, donated or purchased?
12 double cabin trucks were received from BZK based on a lease agreement

- Who was the secret donor?
The donation was given and the respective donor had insisted for his/her name not to be disclosed

- Did the vehicles come from the manufacturers with the GPS installed?

No

- If that is the case, what is the price tag of those vehicles?

See question above was no

- If that is not the case, were these vehicles outfitted with the GPS in Sint Maarten?

Yes they were outfitted locally

- And if that is so, at what cost?

Did a bidding process take place to outfit these vehicles with the GPS tracking system?

Firstly, this is two separate topics that you are discussing. In a press release published February 18, 2018, which I have submitted to Parliament, the Netherlands through BZK presented extended cab trucks to VSA, these are being utilized by the Ministry and these are what the GPS units were installed in. The trucks were received as part of a lease agreement which was a condition of their receipt. In this same release it was explained that "UTS' secure tracking device would be included in all vehicles in order to monitor vehicle use and ensure accountability

<https://www.soualiganewsday.com/local/soualiga-news-today/item/18202-ministry-of-vsa-receives-14-new-vehicles-and-continues-inspections-with-full-force.html>

No, they did not. The GPS was installed locally. Two companies were approached for quotations. The costs consist of a onetime installation fee and then an annual tracking fee. Based on the quotations received and evaluating for total costs and services offered in the package, UTS was selected as their costs were half that of the second.

Can Parliament receive information on the donation of the vehicles to Mental Health?

- What transaction took place with the secret donor turning the vehicles over to the Mental Health?

No, it is a private citizen who made a donation under the condition his name will not be revealed.

Additionally, in a press release on February 8, 2018 it was explained to the public that an anonymous donor provided 3 vehicles to the Ministry which in turn handed them over to the MHF who could make the best use of them and save them \$25,000 annually.

<https://www.thedailyherald.sx/islands/73495-mhf-gets-three-new-vehicles-thanks-to-anonymous-donor>

- Is the Minister a shareholder at Princess Heights? If yes, what decision level does the Minister take at Princess Heights?

No

What is the amount of space required in m2 for hurricane shelters?

Where is the bunker going to be located? Is it an underground bunker or is it a top bunker?

- What kind of bunker is it going to be?
- Are there schematic drawings for this bunker?

Answer VSA: When we think about a hurricane shelter we think about a bunker. Very few windows. Solid concrete structure and able to withstand anything. This was just my vision and was utilized as a means of explaining to the population.

- What exactly does the Ministry of VSA plan to do with NAFI. 4.4 million (Kapitaaldienst)?

Answer VSA: The capital investments are generally for ICT upgrades for various departments, expansion of ambulance resources, information systems, etc.

A more detailed list is available on pages 81 and 82 of the 'getallenboek'

- Mention was made of 2 shelters that would be financed by the EU. When will this happen?
- Are they going to be built or erected?
- Are they going to be placed in containers or in locations? Where?
- If these shelters will be able to house 1000 persons, at what cost for the EU?
- Is there any input from the Ministry of VSA for outfitting these buildings with generators, diesel, first aid kits, blankets etc.?

The timeline for building the EU funded shelters will be determined once the financing agreement is signed by the Prime Minister. The EU has already committed the funds. Once the locations for the shelters has been formally designated, the agreement can be signed. The possible locations are Hope Estate, South Reward and Cay Bay, the final two locations will be contingent on the ease of land acquisition. The EU will support the financing of the shelters as well as technical assistance to the Government with EUR 7 million.

VSA has already provided basic input with regards to the management and the specifics of how a shelter should be set up. This was in line with PAHO and (United Nations Population Fund) UNFPA guidelines.

- Where is the land where these 2 buildings will be located?
- Who will man these buildings in time of emergency, in time of hurricane come June 1*? State secretary Knops stated over a year ago that in case of a hurricane, the Dutch Government would guarantee sufficient hiding places. Are these shelters guaranteed and, where are they?

Answer VSA: These EU shelters will not be built by June 1st however other buildings have been identified as shelters by the Ministry of VROMI and these will be outfitted and managed by VSA accordingly.

- How many shelters has the Dutch Government guaranteed?

State Secretary Knops would need to be contacted for this.

- How many shelters do we have right now? Are they up to date in terms of maintenance? Are these shelters equipped?

Thirteen buildings have been identified as suitable locations for shelters. According to VROMI the public bidding took place for the upgrading of these 13 buildings. The bids received are being evaluated by the evaluation committee after which an awarding advice will be prepared for the awarding of the works. This should be finalized within a few weeks.

- From the 2019 budget, how much money is allocated for the Mental Health Foundation?
- Even though it doesn't come out of the budget but is funneled through SZV. Can the support for the Mental Health Foundation be pointed out in the budget?

Previously, the Mental Health Foundation received a subsidy which was dependent on Government's available cash flow. To ensure that access to this basic care is not jeopardized, psycho social care via MHF is being paid by SZV through a preliminary budget agreement, pending the legislative process of adjusting the tariffs which will lead to a more sustainable and controllable financing structure.

In 2017 the budget for Mental Health Foundation was NAf 4,270,100.00 and in 2018 the budget was NAf 3,917,214.00.

- Are there any consultants in the cabinet of the Minister from January 2018 till now?
- And if yes, how much were the fees? And what were the tasks of these consultants?

In 2018, ANG 44.094,35 has been paid in consultancy fees for VSA. The tasks were: Legal advice to the Minister, as the position for legal advisor was vacant until mid 2018.

Secretariat / administrative support for appeals committees of VSA

Medical Advisor to Ambulance Services is mandatory by law and is filled by a consultant because it is only a .2FTE

Coroner / medical examiner - a medical doctor to pronounce the death of persons in care of Ambulance Services

Legal advisor for the Department of Labour.

- The faction would like a breakdown for the travel of the Minister. Was the trip in January to Italy also paid by the Ministry?
- And if so, was it a work visit and can some more explanation be given? For VSA ANG 125.745

has been spent on travelling for the Ministry for 2018 and ANG 25.300 from January 2019 to now. The trip to Italy was also paid by the Ministry.

- What was actually done in terms of the roofs project?
- How many roofs did Government repair?
- The faction would like to know the exact number. Why is it still taking so long with assessments (a year and a half later)?

What has the Minister of Social Affairs done in securing the wellbeing of people of Sint Maarten for the upcoming hurricane season?

A project proposal for psycho-social care following a disaster (development of framework) is currently being prepared by the Ministry of VSA and will be submitted to the Council of Ministers and subsequently the Steering Committee to be funded via the Trust Fund. This project proposal will not be limited to MHF (which is mainly focused on providing psychiatric care), but will cover the broader spectrum of psycho social assistance. The framework will outline the different types of assistance needed immediately after disasters to address post-traumatic stress disorders. It will include not only psychiatric care but also training of professionals, first responders, as well as community representatives

- Why the name change from National Health Insurance to General Health Insurance?

This to reflect the name indicated in the draft National Ordinance.

- The increase of NAf 1 million for "Calamiteitsbestrijding"; what policies, projects and programs are related to this? What exactly are the plans for this fund?

This increase is meant the reintegration shelter managed by the Dr. J. Foundation.

- Can the Ministry present measurable policy intentions, ongoing and new ones, as related to the budget?.

Please see the policy paragraph within the budget.

- How many functions were not filled in 2018?

At the end of 2018, there were several vacancies that were not yet filled, these vacancies are no longer in the current budget. However, there is a total amount budgeted under stafbureau "bezoldiging vacatures" that can used to fill some of the outstanding vacancies

- How many are extremely necessary to be able to carry out the necessary social services? All

VSA vacancies are considered critical, however special emphasis is on:

- Ambulance staff
- Department Head for Collective Prevention Services,
- Department Head for Labour Department and
- Department Head for Community Development, Family and Humanitarian Affairs.

- What effect will these personnel cuts have in the Ministry's ability to carry out its services? :

Even though the Ministry is faced with budget constraints, the Ministry will continue to provide the best service to the public as possible

- It was mentioned that certain cuts were made seeing that the World Bank was carrying it.
- Can this be elucidated?
- With hurricanes constantly occurring, wouldn't it make more sense to then move the funds to a budget post to be able to deal with it yourself in the event it happens or reoccurs instead of requesting assistance from others again?
- Will the Sint Maarten budget then not ever have an emergency fund of its own under VSA?
- In 2016 there was an audit to be done on the Sint Maarten Medical Center (SMMC). Was this audit done? And if yes, can Parliament be provided with the findings of that audit?
- If not, why wasn't the audit done? What is the status of health care in Sint Maarten?

- In 2017 a company named Van Geeman was hired to conduct an audit. The company was paid €25.000. Can Parliament be provided with the original copies of this report?
- How was the company approached to conduct whatever they were assigned to conduct?
- Who proposed the figure of €25.000? And did they receive this amount in euros or was it converted in our legal tender?

Van Kemanade consultancy carried out the audit of the health care chain in 2017 which was made known to the public via a press release on July 28, 2017. I have also provided this to parliament. Mr Van Kemanade carried out operational audits in various healthcare institutions on the island and came highly recommended by said institutions. For his services Mr van Kemanade charged 13.500 euros. And the money was transferred to his bank account which would have been credited in euros.

<https://www.thedailyherald.sx/islands/68031-findings-of-first-review-of-health-care-chain-released>

Since then and based on the audit:

- SMMC has implemented and activated their Quality department: this has three members dedicated to help SMMC update all policies and protocols, and are currently working on the first two chapters of JCI (Governance, Leadership and Direction (GLD) and the International Patient Safety Goals (IPSG).
- SMMC is in close consultation with the Ministry to review the current establishment procedures for specialists
- SMMC in 2018 gave the Inspectorate a presentation on the status of all the '2012 audit action points', and provided opportunity to do reviews or ask questions.
- SMMC is designing an appropriate training plan to be carried out over 3-4 years for all staff for the transition to the new hospital building which is in line with JCI criteria. The funding for this has been reserved.
 - Patient satisfaction surveys have been expanded to cover more services.
- A staff survey on Patient Safety was performed and is being worked out by the quality department to be implemented.
- On March 23 Van Kemanade conducted a workshop with SMMC medical specialists pertaining to quality management.
- What is the status update on INSO in terms of any buyers?

The Italian Government appointed Extraordinary Commissioners, who will present their program to the Minister of Economic Development on April 16, 2019. Once this program is approved INSO can then be sold. This will occur within two months and will include the entire portfolio of works, employees and know how without any debts or liabilities. This sale will be competitive, open and transparent and should be completed by Quarter 3 of 2019. At this point several National and International companies have expressed interest but INSO cannot disclose these names at this stage in the process.

- Did the Minister of VSA sign any agreement with the Italian Government on his work visit to Italy?
- If no, why then would the Italian Government want to see this project finished?
- What role does the Italian Government play in the building of the Sint Maarten General Hospital?
if INSO is financially sound, why are they selling?

No documents were signed by my person with the Italian Government.

As it pertains to the role of the Italian Government because of the Extraordinary Administrative Procedure INSO is in effect a Government run company. This was explained in

detail via a press release that was published on January 20, 2019 which has been submitted to parliament.

<https://www.thedailyherald.sx/islands/84605-inso-italian-govt-want-to-proceed-with-hospital-project-as-scheduled>

- There is nothing in this budget in terms of the six-month contract, living wage, proposal on the abuse of the six-month contract?
- Where is the proposal right now?
- Given the minimum at what it is right now, doesn't Government think that the minimum wage should be increased to a living wage?
- Why isn't there anything regulated in the budget for the six-month contract?
- Are the civil servants in VSA working on policies for the six-month contract?
- And if they are, what are these policies and where are these policies? **VSA: With regards to the legislation addressing the abuse of the 6 month contract, the Ministry has finalized this and it is presently at Parliament as part of the legislative package dealing with book 7 of the Civil Code. Also included in the Civil Code revision is the Maternity & Paternity leave revision which required SER advice. This has recently been received and so the final meeting in the second round should be scheduled by parliament within short. The living wage has not yet been defined. This would need macro economic research, which has not yet been carried out. It is part of the labor reform that is being undertaken in collaboration with the Labor tripartite.**
- How does Government plan to tackle the loophole of using interns from Holland as workers instead of hiring locals?
- How many interns does the Minister of VSA have employed at Princess Heights? **VSA: Internships or job-training are a mandatory part of most institutions as this provides the students with real life on the job experience in their field. These internship positions are usually offered to all institutes of higher education. Eg NIPA, Sundial as well as HBO / Universities in Netherlands or elsewhere. Interns can be found in Government, NGOs and in the private sector.**

In addition, to real life experience, interns are usually charged with specific projects which regular fulltime staff who are busy with day to day activities are unable to carry out at that time. Interns also come with fresh ideas and concepts that promote innovation in organizations and help all workers to benefit.

The policy of the Ministry of VSA and by extension Government is always to hire locally however, in some cases this may not be possible and for this reason there exists laws to regulate this practice. In addition once Government realizes a demand, it strives to provide training possibilities (NIPA - construction sector training with MIC-IT) and adjust policies (study financing priority lists) that aim to ensure local employment.

Since becoming Minister I resigned as Managing Director of Princess heights and so I am not aware of how many interns there are.

Ministry of Tourism. Economic Affairs. Transport and Telecommunication

- How much money did the Government spend this year on Carnival?
- How much money did Government spend on the recently held Music Festival?
- And how much money did Government spend on the Heineken Regatta?

SCDF Naf. 330,000.00 - Pending (Already approved and to be paid out shortly). (Naf. 20,000 already paid for Uber Soca Cruise)

Heineken Regatta – Naf. 315,000.00 PAID (As per subsidy policy, the remainder Naf. 35,000 will be paid shortly)

SXM Music Festival – Naf. 180,000.00 Pending

- These events are very important to generate revenue for the country and boost our tourism product. But it is also very important to take care of the social ills that we have. When last was the list of Government controlled products implemented by the Ministry of TEATT? And if it hasn't been implemented in the last 2 years, the faction would like to know why not? The list of maximum priced items has not been updated since 2008. It is currently being not being enforced. The methodology to calculate the retail price of goods on the list is based on acquiring data from businesses that import/sell those goods to determine the landed cost. Based on the landed cost a profit margin for the wholesaler and retailer is calculated. Many businesses did not cooperate in submitting to government the necessary information to determine the landed cost of these items and the subsequent request for assistance of the Public Prosecutor's Office was not fruitful.

Given the above-mentioned, the Ministry has been in discussions with the Harbor regarding a new/another system called PCS which is Port Community System, which allows sharing and/or accessing of information to various stakeholders electronically and automatically, with the required privacy, security and personal info among various stakeholders. This system will replace our efforts to pursue ASYCUDA which is more cumbersome, costly and more Customs oriented. The Ministry will have direct access to all detailed information coming and leaving the country.

In the interim, the ministry has been preparing and issuing a monthly price comparison of an expanded list of items (including items on the maximum price list) to show the comparative prices of goods of items across various retailers island wide. The objective and importance of this project is to stimulate competition, provide consumers with information with the hope that they react to price differences so that competition is stimulated which lowers prices.

- In the budget, loans to the airport are included for approval. What is the status of other offers that were made to the airport such as Piper Jeffrey? What happened to that offer? The rumor is that the offer was not rejected but placed on a backburner and the information didn't reach the Members of Parliament because it was shoved under the table. What is the status of those offers? Loans to the airport are included in the budget. What is the status of the different offers?

Minister & PJIAE

- "Rechts- en ander deskundig advies" went down from NAFI. 100.000 to NAFI. 50.000. This is the ministry that creates our policies. The faction knows for a fact that the ministry doesn't have a lawyer anymore. Doesn't make sense that there is no lawyer anymore but the post to pay lawyers gets lowered as well.

Two years ago, some Members of Parliament recommended to increase the sports tourism budget post. It was initially NAFI. 0 and the recommendation was to bring it to NAFI. 100.000. It is budgeted now for NAFI. 50.000. There are more than NAFI. 100.000 requests that come in every year. Some of the money for uniforms can be used for this. Cruise conversion has been on the budget for the last 5 years and never been used. Now that the airport is down and room availability is at 70% at hotels.

What is the realistic plan for cruise conversion? Can't this budget post be used better somewhere else in the ministry where the people of Sint Maarten will have the immediate

effect?

Cruise conversion project Naf 100,000 - being that the room capacity is not up to par as of yet and there has been no program yet, perhaps the funds can be used for other areas such as sports tourism for example. The Cruise conversion program will be launched this year as we are in talks with FCCA and certain hotels for a pilot program The faction doesn't see any money under the line item Consumer Protection Agency. It has actually been removed.

Why?

A huge opportunity is being missed by not putting any money under the e-zone line item under TEATT. Government is projecting higher income from hazardspelen en loterijverordering without having the right legislation in place to do so. So, what is Government basing these income projections on. Is the legislation ready to come out?

The question should be answered by the Ministry of Finance.

- A cut for the Statistics department. Outside entities want to help us but we don't have any statistics. So, the faction can't understand this cut. Can the cut be elucidated?
- Mention was made of it being very costly to establish a new (Calibrations) department. What is the cost? How many persons are needed to man this department? Can this be further elucidated?

Presently, the Inspection dept of TEATT is responsible for ijkwezen (weights and measurements) and thru this department, the responsibility is executed. Naturally, as you are aware, the establishment of another dept. costs more money and given the limited budget and deficits, it does not seem feasible at this present moment for the country and/or Ministry in particular to allocate more limited resources (i.e. money/budget) for the creation of a separate dept. when the responsibility is being executed. Especially, when one should consider that present cost of personnel has been indicated to consume approximately 47% (so almost 50% or half of the income of the country) goes into personnel cost.

- Calibrations amount to 10% of the workload of the Ministry of TEATT, hence it's not necessary to have such department. What formula did Government use to calculate such? Government is of the opinion that such a department is not a priority right now. How does Government set its priorities then (comparing to the purchase of new vehicles for Ministers)? Is consumer protection through calibration not a priority?

Understanding these circumstances of high personnel cost, lack of or limited income, the effort and emphasis of the Ministry & Minister (and hopefully Parliament's support) will be on the creation of jobs which leads to the generation of income for government. In essence, creating the right environment and conditions for the economy to grow and develop. Thereafter, once the economy reaches a level where government's resources are sufficient to allow us to expand and/or create the department.

In closing, when we consider that Tourism is the Linelife and Main Artery that keeps and pays most, if not ALL of our bills, both directly and indirectly, and the meager budget the dept has to execute its responsibilities and the bureaucracy associated with the execution or to be able to execute its responsibility, we will all be promoting for an increase in this aspect because it will lead to additional income which can then facilitate a lot of our wishes.

- Are tint meters calibrated at all? Is there any other Calibration department within Government? Or is only the Ministry of TEATT responsible for calibration on the Dutch side of the island?

Tint meters are not checked/ controlled by the Ministry of TEATT.

- When will the maximum prices be implemented (hasn't been implemented since 2008) and what are the steps that the Ministry has taken since this Government took office to get this done?

The list of maximum priced items has not been updated since 2008. It is currently being not being enforced. The methodology to calculate the retail price of goods on the list is based on acquiring data from businesses that import/sell those goods to determine the landed cost. Based on the landed cost a profit margin for the wholesaler and retailer is calculated. Many businesses did not cooperate in submitting to government the necessary information to determine the landed cost of these items and the subsequent request for assistance of the Public Prosecutor's Office was not fruitful.

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- What is the date that the fine book will be enforced? When will civil servants be able to use this fine book?

The fine book is a tool used to facilitate the application of financial penalty for the commission of offenses. The template for the fine book has been received and will be sent for printing and then put into use. Hopefully, within the next 30 days. Not having a printed fine book at the moment is not an obstacle to carrying out the enforcement of the law as a proces verbaal can be written.

- What are the critical vacancies within the Ministry? Have these vacancies been kept on the budget for 2019 or have they also been swept away with the easy cuts that the Ministry of Finance has made? How far is the hiring process of said persons?

DEPARTMENT	CRITICAL VACANCIES	POSITIONS
TOURIST OFFICE	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section head marketing • Information Officer
DEPT. OF STATISTICS	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fieldwork Project Manager/Researcher
DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTION & CONTROL	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 transportation controllers (Vervoer) • 1 Taxi dispatcher

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Supervisor Taxi dispatcher • 1 Section Head Casino Controller • 1 Supervisor Casino Controller
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION & MARITIME	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section Head Maritime • Policy Advisor Maritime • Administrative Worker • Maritime Inspector • Section head Aviation (April 1st)
POLICY DEPARTMENT	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department head • Secretary • Policy Advisor
TOTAL	19	

Not all vacancies were budgeted for in 2019. The Department of Economic Control & Inspection requested budget for the hiring of 7 critical vacancies. However, this request was not honored and thus the vacancies are not budgeted.

- Presently there are 10 employees within the Ministry of TEATT carrying out controls. However, in the media there was an article published that 3 employees were following a training in Saba. Can clarity be provided on this? Article 34 of the National Ordinance of Calibration refers to penalties while in a recent meeting the Minister mentioned that there are no penalties/no consequences. Can this be clarified? How does the Ministry plan to make amendments to this law so we can work more efficient?

For the sake of clarity, in general, fines are not given for first time violators if the violation is corrected immediately, e.g., device is calibrated immediately by the department or taken out of service until it is compliant. A fine will be issued for recidivists or if it can be demonstrated that there is intent to violate the ordinance.

- Saba has a different law then we have so how is it that the employees went to Saba for the training? So, are they training to work in Saba or training to work in Sint Maarten?

Training in Saba was given by the Radio communications Agency, Department of Enforcement Meteorology and Hallmarking. The training covered the following areas: Legislation and regulations, Recognition of metrological markings, Calculation of maximum permissible error and Applying rules in practice. For the subject of Legislation and regulations the ijkverordening and associated LBHAMS applicable to St. Maarten were used. Consequently, during the practical part of the training called "Applying rules in practice" the rules applied were those applicable to St. Maarten and not the BES islands. The value of the training for the St. Maarten participants was more the practical knowledge acquired.

- Is Government aware of the plane that landed on the airport that took Mr. Heyliger to Bonaire? Was it a registered plane that was allowed to be on the island? Was Government (shareholder of PJIA) aware that during those hours the "kidnapping" of MP Heyliger was taking place? Can Government give an opinion on the extension of his 60 days being in Bonaire?

Foreign registered aircraft cannot operate commercial service between Sint Maarten points within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. However, noncommercial foreign flights do not require approval from the Minister. They only have to file a flight plan.

- Can Government indicate when the signage for the roads will be replaced for the safety and protection of road users?

This question should be answered by the Ministry of VROMI, considering that road signage is the responsibility of that Ministry.

- The law amendment of the Permit Ordinance that was approved in November 2018 by Parliament concerning permit holders being penalized if they sell alcohol to under aged persons. The draft was sent to the Governor and the Governor sent it back for Government's take prior to signing. Over 3 months later, what is the stance of Government on moving this piece of legislation forward which has been approved by Parliament and which have positive consequences for the protection of our youth? Is it correct that the original law cannot be found?

This advice is presently at the Minister of Justice office. Ministry of TEATT will be advising within shortly in order to realize and support this initiative regarding changing the age of the drinking age.

- When last were the bingo balls and the lotto balls checked? And how often are they checked? How is it stipulated by policy or by law? Isn't it a task of the Ministry and why hasn't it been done since 2009?

The priority for the department is performing controls on weights and measuring devices on establishments that are critical to the general public like gas stations, pharmacies, supermarkets, LPG and ULG bulk wholesalers, buffet restaurants and medical service providers. The last check on bingo balls was in 2009. Given the fact that Gambling is a luxurious choice of a consumer, it is not considered as a priority control to check the balls of a Bingo game.

Lottery balls were checked in 2016 and 2018. They are checked every 6 to 12 months and are scheduled for control in 2019. Below is the control plan for Weights & Measures for 2019.

Establishments	Frequency of controls
Airport	4x
*Air cargo companies	2x
Buffet (take away) Restaurant	2x
Laundromat	1x
Pharmacies	2x
*Supermarkets	1x

*Fuel Dispensers	4x
Courier/Express Couriers	1x
Jewelry Stores	1x
Marina	2x
Freight forwarding companies	2x
Medical establishments	1x

- When last were the scales of the Customs, Police and Coast Guard checked?

Scales used by the Police and Customs are checked upon request by these entities. This is a similar practice to that of Curacao as these scales are not used for commerce. Thus far, no requests have been received by the department from either one of these entities for the scales to be checked.

- Is the tint meter to check the tint on car windows also supposed to be controlled by the Ministry of TEATT?

- Tint meters are not checked/ controlled by the Ministry of TEATT.

- Is the Business license department fully equipped and staffed? Are there any vacancies there? If not, what is being done to tackle this issue? How much did this department generate in 2018? And what was the projection for 2019?

The Business license department currently has no vacancies. However, the department has 3 staff members on a/o. Those functions cannot be filled.

The amount generated from licenses must be provided by the Ministry of Finance, who is charged with the collection of business license fees.

- Has the policy for number plates been updated at all in the past 2 years? Can Parliament receive a copy of this policy? Any changes, do they come with any budget changes whether on the income or expenditures side?

The number of vehicles based on license plates should be addressed to the Ministry of Finance, because the revenue from the inspection of vehicles is collected by Finance.

- A number of gaming businesses are having challenges opening bank accounts in Sint Maarten. These are businesses with licenses that Government issued. How does Government see itself intervening in making sure that at least these businesses would be able to establish bank accounts so that they can deposit the daily revenue into a safe, secure system? What is Government's position on this? What other policies than the Gaming Control Board that should be put in place, are there in terms of checks and balances?

It is not up to the Minister of TEATT, but the Minister of Finance to tackle this issue which has been provided for his response.

- The Ministries of ECYS and TEATT have been collaborating throughout the years on and off to bring integrity to the manner in which school bussing is being handled. How is the collaboration going to continue?

The Ministry has communicated to the Ministry of Education in 2018 that more than just an amendment to the national decree on public transport is needed in order to regulate school bussing. They were advised to proceed with the handling of their respective LBHAM in the interim.

- Is the increase in consultancy fees the Ministry's way of coping with the cut in personnel costs? How many consultants are there in the cabinet of TEATT? And if so, what are their tasks? How much was paid out in consultants? And is this the norm within the cabinet?
- Response will be provided by the Minister.
- Is there a maximum price for bread? And the weight of the bread? When last was this controlled and checked? If the maximum price of bread is NAFI. 2,35, can Government clarify why wholesome bread is being sold for NAFI. 8 to 10?

The maximum bread prices are (after the baking):

- Naf 2 for white slice bread (500 grams)
- Naf 2.50 for sliced brown bread (625 grams)
- Naf 1.80 for long white bread (Lard bread) (500 grams)

The price of bread not included in Table 1 of the Annex of the National Decree on the Price of Bread is not controlled. Additionally, the maximum price only applies to bread baked locally on the island, not imported bread which would be applicable to brands like Holsum.

As can be seen from the past 4 months of checks, Carrefour is the only supplier who 1) is selling a type of bread and of a weight that is regulated by the Prijzenbesluit brood; which is white sliced bread.

The maximum price is NAF 2.00 for 500g. They are selling it at NAF2.50. The other suppliers are selling various types of bread at weights not regulated by government. Therefore, the established maximum price by LBHAM is not applicable. In my opinion to enforce upon one establishment for this doesn't make sense; especially given the relatively small change in price over the past 19 years amounting to NAF0.50. The issue of whether government wants to expand the list of bread types and weights that fall under maximum price is a different discussion.

- After the hurricane, because of the casino closures several casino controllers were put to do other work in the Ministry. Some of them are doing calibration work.
- Do they have a besluit instating them?
- Are they moved officially over or are they casino workers doing calibration work?

The function of any controller under Ministry TEATT is generic. All controllers under the respective sections, Inspectorate TEATT, fall under Controller B. This includes inspecting of businesses, animals, goods and services. The relevant training is then needed, which the casino controllers has executed. This department is designated by law to carry out calibrations. Hence the reason why a separate department is not needed, The Inspectorate TEATT have the qualified personnel already executing this responsibility.

- There are cuts amounting to NAFI. 3 million in this Ministry and the budget for this Ministry has not grown over the last 5 years. Does Government agree that investing in the economy will create more revenue?
- There are 3 vacancies namely 1 department head and 2 policy advisors. Have these ads already gone out? How long have these positions been vacant?
- Who is currently the acting department head of EVT?

I would like to clarify that there are only 3 vacancies at the department of EVT and these are budgeted. I misspoke when I mentioned that there were 6 vacancies in total at the department. I also indicated which vacancies there were namely, the dept head, the secretary and a policy advisor.

The position of secretary became vacant in December 2018 and the position of Policy Advisory just became vacant. The Ad for the Department Head has been published several times over 2018. Due to limited responses, we decided to publish the ad again until March 31, 2019.

- There is NAFI. 40.000 available for the Small Hotels Association. What is the plan for this budget post? Will the monies be given to the association or has Government received plans from the association in terms of marketing? How is this money going to be allocated and executed?

2018 Naf. 40,000 - subsidy to the St. Maarten Small Properties Association (SMSPA has been allocated towards:

- a. Local regional, and international marketing of the destination and SMSPA members,
- b. Development of the SMPSPA website
- c. Development of community outreach programs
- d. Customer Service Trainings
- e. Purchasing of office equipment, furniture, and fixtures,
- f. CTO membership and to attend tradeshow

A meeting will be held with the SMSPA to discuss activities for the 2019 subsidy.

- What is the procedure now for getting a lottery booth? What is the procedure for branch licenses for lottery booths? Every lottery booth on the road, do they have branch licenses? Do they need a branch license? How many branch licenses has Government given out? Does Government know that there are random lottery booths on the island in different structures? Does Government think this adds to the beautification of our island? How many lottery booths do we have on the Dutch side? How many controls were executed on these booths over the last 6 months? How many were found in violation? What happened after they were found in violation? How much had to go? What are our laws pertaining to lottery booths on the island? Is there any difficulty within the Ministry pertaining to lottery booths? If a lottery booth is visited right now and there is no branch license, would this mean that the inspectors are not performing controls? Wouldn't it also mean that Government is losing much needed revenues?

During the 3rd Quarter 2018, approximately 20 controls were carried out on lottery booths, where almost 70 lottery sales points were identified by the Inspectorate of TEATT.

Currently the Ministry of VROMI is busy regulating the permitting of these booth locations. After this process has been finalized, TEATT will be able to process requests for branch

licenses for the specific, approved locations of these booths. The Ministry agrees that it does not add to the beauty of the island, which is why an inter-ministerial approach has been taken to regulate the random placement of lottery booths. As per 3rd Quarter 2018 almost 70 lottery sales points were identified by the Inspectorate of TEATT.

- The Ministry of VROMI is seemingly working on allocating spaces for new lottery booths. How is the Ministry of TEATT issuing branch licenses before the Ministry of VROMI has done its part?

No branch licenses have been issued to lottery booths. Once the proper building permits have been issued, the branch licenses can then be requested and issued.

- The Ministry is working together with its French counterpart on having one website for the country; 1 website, 1 message, 1 marketing. This could potentially save cost. At the end of the day it is still 2 different countries. A new domain would be needed because right now the Dutch one refers to the Dutch 34 spelling while the French one the French spelling. What kind of domain would Government use?

The website is back live. Government of Sint Maarten/STB owns the website domains and has the login information. Sint Maarten government through the STB is in full possession of this information www.vacationstmaarten is live at the moment but it has been decided according to the Dutch/French MOU signed in February 2018, that a common multilingual website will be developed.

- Every popular name that has Sint Maarten in it is already gone. How many domains does Government have registered right now under the Ministry?

The branding will be the two logos and a common domain will be chosen.

- The faction would like to know of them by .com, .nl and .sx. When were they registered? Wouldn't it be very difficult to get the new domain to the top of the GOOGLE list? Who handles the tourist website for Sint Maarten? Is it a local company or a foreign company? What is the name of the company? Was the proper bidding process followed while awarding this bid to this company? Is there a policy or what is Government's opinion on awarding bids by giving local companies preference?

The tendering will be open to national and international companies. The ministry TEATT/STB is very aware of local institutions that are able to execute the task. If the local institution meets the criteria and presents the best proposal then that local company will be chosen. There will be a committee comprising of Dutch and French side tourist offices, and ministry.

- What is Government's opinion on the "hulp chauffeur" system right now?

This will be addressed as part of the implementation of an aforementioned plan. The vision is to do away with Help/ Assistant drivers and to instead introduce certified Public Transportation operators.

- There is NAFI. 205.000 budgeted for a public transportation assessment. Can this be elucidated? We need a public transportation system due to demand. And how does Government plan to address it? Increasing the amount of T's and G's on the road without a proper policy is not going to work.

I would like to clarify a misconception that the Traffic Assessment is not the same or it will not address the Public Transportation (PT) issues that you are referring or alluding to but presently, we have someone within the dept of EVT that is specifically working on a Plan of

Action for 2 major parts of Public Transportation namely, the regulation of Taxi's, T's & G's and the Buses. It is the intention to review the recommendations and then determine how we can proceed with the implementation. We have already done all the ground work and now it's about reviewing the plan, approving it and then focusing on the execution of the plan. It may contain hard and/or difficult choices but we hope that we can count on the support of all those that want to see major changes.

- Does signage for example digital billboards fall under TEATT? And if so, is there any policy currently?

This question should be answered by the Ministry of VROMI, considering that road signage is the responsibility of that Ministry.

- Does the Ministry plan to hire a lawyer?

The Department does have one lawyer/ legal advisor. We are in the process of hiring another but some formalities need to be finalized first in order that we can have the budget to replace the legal person.

- Having 6 vacancies in the department of EVT is drastic (3 budgeted, 3 not budgeted). This is a very Important department. Does Government think it's urgent to have these vacancies filled?

Please note, as indicated previously, the cuts were decided by the Ministry of Finance and NOT the Ministry. However, we looked into the matter and the cuts in the personnel cost was related to 2 persons that were formally working at the STAT dept but have now been transferred to another depts within the Ministry, thereby allowing for the reduction of the budget associated with these persons. Both functions were above formation so they could not be replaced as a budget neutral vacancy.

- Has the Minister evaluated the SG TEATT? If so, is the Minister satisfied with the performance so far? Does the Minister think that it's only necessary to evaluate employees and not those that work directly under the Minister

No, however it is the intention to do so. Subsequently, sentiments of the performance would be known after.

- What are the plans for the market area and restrooms there? Is there any collaboration with VROMI to get town on the level it should be? Is there any collaboration with the Trust Fund?

The Ministry of TEATT is aware and concerned about the developments surrounding the availability of public restrooms at the market and their cleaning. Ministry of VROMI is in charge of handling the contracts for the cleaning of these bathrooms. This matter has been forwarded to that Ministry for further elucidation.

- How many permits were issues to import and export animals over 2017 and 2018?

In 2017, there were 1101 permits issued to import animals and 12 permits to export animals.

In 2018, there were 1132 permits issued to import animals and 23 to export

- How much revenues were collected for these permits?

No revenue is collected for this service, but this has been taken up in the draft amendment to the Fees Ordinance (leges verordening), which is being finalized by the Ministry.

- Are the gas pumps at the gas stations checked by the controllers of the Ministry of TEATT?
- Who controls the GEBE meters (electricity and water 35 meters)?
- Is it the same inspectors that carry out the calibration? If not, who deals with this?

Firstly, given the sheer number of water and electricity meters that the GEBE company has in operation, it is not possible to physically check all of them in any reasonable timeframe nor does the law require it. The purpose of providing calibration services in this case is to provide an independent, competent authority who can test the operation of a sufficient number (sample) of new meters to ensure the model meets the specified requirements, test against the requirements to be met by remanufactured meters from supplier stock and lastly test against requirements to be met by meters operating on the provider network. The follow up training to conduct these types of tests will be done in June 2019 in The Netherlands after which the equipment to test water and electricity meters will need to be purchased. Currently water and electricity meters are not checked by the Inspectorate.

- It was stated that controlling the GEBE meters would be too much work for the controllers but that they are doing a course in June. So, does this mean that after June they will be checking on and on and off basis?

Yes, we can do this after June, once the appropriate equipment has been purchased. Keen note must be taken that GEBE all meters will not be “checked” but rather calibrations of a meter will be done when a complaint is received based on a meter reading, upon installation of new meters or reintroduction of a meter from existing inventory back into the network.

- Which Capital Expenditures cuts would the Minister like to see back in his budget?

This will be submitted in writing, but a little over Naf 5.5. Million is needed for amongst others: personnel in the STAT department, a school bus management system, the revitalization project to name a few.

Purpose	Dept	Amount (Naf)	type
Staff	STAT	205,141	Personnel
	STAT	65,500	Material
tablets	STAT	55,000	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)
	Insp.		
Eco. Control	TEATT	40,000	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)
Schoolbus mgmt	Insp.		
system	TEATT	568,040	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)
Equipment	Meteo	450,000	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)
vehicles		126,000	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)
Revitalization*		4,000,000	KD (Kapitaal Dienst)

Total		5,509,681	
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Revitalization of Commercial Districts entail:
 Philipsburg Vendor Market Rehabilitation
 Beautification and Green Spaces
 Taxi terminal & Info Center
 Placement Signage inc. Historical/Heritage signage
 (collaboration with other Ministries)
 Repairs and Improvements of Lighting in Philipsburg and Boardwalk
 Implementation of Camera Surveillance

- Does Government think Front Street and Back Street should be fixed especially seeing that Carnival is around the corner?
- Does Government think the lookout point should be fixed?
- According to the Government, was the SXM Music Festival a successful event?

I believe The SXM Festival was a success. The 5-day event has brought visitors and EDM lovers from all over the globe pre and post event. . Vacationing on the island spending for accommodations, visiting restaurants, and entertainment establishments and excursions on both side of island. A post meeting is being confirmed with the organizers as we speak in order to discuss the results of the Festival and to collaborate and start working on next year's festival and to move forward with a more targeted and result oriented plan of action. Further information surrounding the supported event is being obtained and once compiled will be provided in a report which can be provided to the House of Parliament.

- How are we going to support any future event if we don't have the budget for it?

Through the development of an Event Policy which is currently being drafted. This Event Policy will guide as to the types, the requirements and the conditions to which entities/events can qualify for support. The idea is to manage the already scarce resources and ensure that the economy and the country as a whole benefit from these expenditures. Even though the events should become self-sufficient in about 5 years. budget post 4420180032, investment promotion.

- What are the plans for this?
- What is the idea for this line item?

What are the plans for SM development budgeted at NAFL. 140.000?

- Cruise conversion has been on the books forever. Are there plans currently? If not, it is suggested to refer it to e-zone development.

The Cruise conversion program will be launched this year and the amount is acceptable as a start-up as we are in talks with FCCA and certain hotels for a pilot program that is a call to action booking generated and cost effective project that will have impact

- Is Government satisfied with inspections taking place on the island?

The garages were controlled last year and many of them have a chamber of commerce registration however, they are still required to have a Hinderance Permit from VROIMI. The controlling of these businesses for their Hinderance permit is done by VROMI.

- What is being done to tackle the containers in Sucker garden? Were there fines implemented the last time? Were the fines paid? Who do these containers belong to? Is it the port or regular citizens of the island?

The garages were controlled last year and many of them have a chamber of commerce registration however, they are still required to have a Hinderance Permit from VROIMI. The controlling of these businesses for their Hinderance permit is done by VROMI.

- Has the BLISS program been finally implemented fully in the Ministry? And if not, why not? What is the timeline?

The Ministry has started to implementation or roll out of CRM, not BLIS. BLIS is the Business License Information System which is only related to the dept of Economic Licenses. CRM is for the other administrative processes of the organization. We have begun trainings with the various depts. and we are looking to make it mandatory for all depts. to use the system. However, it should be noted that NOT ALL advices processes are currently available in CRM and not ALL Ministries use it so while we can use it however, advices that have financial consequences cannot be sent to the Ministry of Finance so it will still be needed to be printed once it reaches the Staff Bureau. But we intend to make it mandatory to implement it in 2019, hopefully by the middle of the year.

- What is the timeline to have AIMS fully implemented?
We indicated in our answer, that it will be implement by mid-year, so July 2019
- What were the findings of the checks conducted today on the bread (March 22, 2019)?

The price of bread not included in Table 1 of the Annex of the National Decree on the Price of Bread is not controlled. Additionally, the maximum price only applies to bread baked locally on the island, not imported bread which would be applicable to brands like Holsum.

And what is the maximum price?

- Naf 2 for white slice bread (500 grams)
- Naf 2.50 for sliced white bread (625 grams)
- Naf 1.80 for long white bread (500 grams)

Holsum Bread!! Price??

- Can Parliament be provided with the reports of the last 3 months on the controls? Is the system to track the busses an intention for 2020 as it is not in this year's budget (Capital Expenditures)?
The Ministry has communicated to the Ministry of Education in 2018 that more than just an amendment to the national decree on public transport is needed in order to regulate school bussing. They were advised to proceed with the handling of their respective LBHAM in the interim.
- Has the Ministry of TEATT given the Ministry of Finance advice that lowering the profit tax and having tax holidays will boost our economy? Or is this just an opinion of the Minister?

Considering that the Economy falls under the ministry of TEATT, however, it is incumbent on all ministries to play their role towards the growth and thrive as stated. Since the economy has overarching bearing on all ministries and sectors it is imperative that we are ALL on the same.

Let's take for example, the Ministry of Finance; Given our current economic state the necessary shocker that the economy needs at this time, the instrument and legislation to administer such is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance, through fiscal reform. The tax incentive for businesses, the lowering of profit tax to create an economic attractiveness, the granting of tax holiday and the lowering of the income tax rates to stimulate both investments, thereby creating jobs and increasing the disposable income of residents which will spur the economy and thereby generate more income for government.

Ministry of Public Housing spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

- what is the status of the Rent Committee?
- What is their function exactly and what is their current status? Are they functioning?
- How much is Government subsidizing them, if Government is subsidizing them?

The Rent Committee currently functions as normal. There is no subsidy paid to the Rent Committee. The compensations for the members of the Rent Committee are currently paid from the budget of AZ. The operational expenses of the Rent Committee are paid from the budget of VROMI. For 2019 an amount of ANG 22,500 is reserved for the operational office expenses of the Rent Committee, under the budget of VROMI. There are currently discussion underway related to improving the functioning of the Rent Committee.

- How much money has the Government spent on roofs?

In the budget of 2018, the Government of Sint Maarten spent an amount of ANG 356,000 on the repair of roofs.

Clarification:

The amount of ANG 356,000 does this concern the 7 roofs?

Answer:

Yes.

- What is the update on EnviroPower and EnviroGreen? What is the plan of the ministry in relation to that?

Answer:

This will be looked into because this is not a question of clarification, since there were no questions asked earlier about this subject.

- Can an overview be provided of the amount of building permits requested and finalized from 2015 to date?

Based on the information from the Department of Permits, I can inform you that there were a total of 566 permit applications finalized between 2015 and 2018 thus far, of which 547 permits were issued and 19 permits denied in that period. By finalized I mean that the evaluations were completed and the permits issued or the permits denied and the applicant informed accordingly. There were many more permits processed, whereas it was left further for the applicant to finalize the process, by for example paying the costs for the permit to collect the permit. In many cases, the process was not finalized because the applicants neglected to complete this process.

In 2015, of 218 requests, there were 181 permits finalized.

In 2016, of 248 requests, there were 160 permits finalized.

In 2017, of 267 requests, there were 181 permits processed, of which 143 finalized.

In 2018, of 301 requests, there were thus far 148 permits processed, of which 82 finalized.

- Can an overview be also submitted of the number of requests submitted to Domain Affairs and finalized from 2015 to date?

Based on the information from the Department of Domain Affairs, I can inform you that since 2015, there have been 219 long lease cases finalized. By finalized I refer to cases for which the decrees have been signed off, and it is then the responsibility of the (prospective) lease holder to complete a transaction with the notary. These pertain to issuance of new long lease, extensions, approval for transfer and change of purpose. The amount is broken down as follows:

2015 - 71

2016 - 54

2017 - 28

2018 - 59

2019 – 7 (thus far)

- Was the NAf 356.000 that was spent in 2018 for the 7 roofs?

Clarification:

The amount of ANG 356,000 does this concern the 7 roofs?

Answer:

Yes.

- The total time to fix the roofs is 2 years. When does Government plan to start?

Yet NAfI. 0 is budgeted for roof repair in 2019. This is quite disturbing to the faction.

The budget 2019 does not include any reservations for the repair of roofs. There is a project on the Recovery Trust Fund for the repair of roofs on Sint Maarten, at the moment with a provisional reservation of about US\$ 7 million. There is a possibility that this amount can/will be increased.

- How does the Government plan to move forward with this?

This project is currently being tendered from the Trust Fund budget. That is the reason it is not incorporated on the budget of country.

- What is the update on Enviro Power?
- And what is the update on Enviro Green?
- What is the difference?

Answer to all three above questions:

MP Doran asked this question as a clarification to the first set of questions that were asked. However there were no questions asked previously on this topic, so I am not sure what needs to be clarified. There were several meetings held throughout 2018 on this topic, namely in February, June and August 2018, and many questions were asked and answered about the selection of EnviroGreen by the former minister of VROMI and the former Council of Ministers. The questions and the answers are recorded in the reports of these meeting, and nothing has changed since then on the topic of EnviroGreen.

As concerns the company EnviroPower, they have made a presentation to Parliament and have submitted a preliminary proposal to the Government for discussion. The proposal is being reviewed and there are no decisions taken on it as yet.

- Has the Minister of VROMI evaluated the SG VROMI in the last year? Since January has the Minister started the process? Was the Minister satisfied with the performance?

Answer to both questions:

Since 101010, evaluations of SG's as far as I am informed have not been done as yet. However, this CoM made it a high priority to have this done this year, and is in the process of doing so across the board. The SG's are held accountable by the respective minister and thus far I am satisfied with the performance of the SG of VROMI.

- Has the Minister of VROMI had personal involvement in this budget? Has the Minister made changes in this budget or was this done by the organization and the Minister Just approved it?

Answer to the above question:

The budget proposals were submitted by my person to the Ministry of Finance after proposal were made by the VROMI organization, and vetted by my Cabinet and myself. The current budget was approved by the Council of Ministers, which I form part of.

- Is the Minister happy with this budget and can the Minister work optimally with this budget?

I am not happy with the budget, and we will be hard-pressed to find someone that is happy with this budget. This budget is about trying to make the best out of very difficult times and financial circumstances for the country. There are obviously serious limitations on this budget that we all have to accept in this time of sacrifice, while we work to improve the economy and the quality of life for the citizens. It goes without saying, that if we had more money on the VROMI budget, I would be much happier and VROMI would be able to do much more.

- Is it true that there are department heads going on strike until the Minister does what they have asked him to do? Is this also taken up in their evaluation process?

I am not aware of this, but if the MP has specific information he would like to share, please do so.

- Who is the head of Inspection? Has the head of Inspection been evaluated in the last year? If not, what has been done about it? Has the head of inspection been coming to work since hurricane Irma? Has the Minister gone through the process with P&O to get rid of underperforming department heads? Is the minister satisfied with all the evaluations of all the department heads in the Ministry? The department head of Inspections and a few others have not been evaluated. So, what is the Minister basing his evaluations on? What standards are being used?

The head of the Department of Inspections at VROMI is Mr. Alexis Schoormans-van Houten, since the beginning of 2017. Since being appointed in the position, after having served 3 years as the Legal Policy Officer of VROMI, to my knowledge he has not yet been evaluated as the Head of Inspections. He has been working regularly since January 2018, in fact since October 2017. The HR cycle, which includes performance evaluations will be fully implemented for all Department Heads in 2019.

- Have you gone through the process of getting rid of underperforming department heads?

The performance evaluations for 2019 will be the basis for any decisions about performances of department heads.

- Since January 2018, how many building stops have been put in place?

In 2018 there were 49 Building Stop orders issued, of which 7 have led to the issuance of Removal Orders.

- The Ministry of VROMI has been underperforming the most since hurricane Irma.

Considering the budget limitations and lack of resources and machinery to do our work, our Ministry has done an exceptional job getting the island cleaned up in the aftermath of Irma and getting the island back up and running with the limited means that we have. The Ministry doesn't share this sentiment.

- What is the process of a citizen going to VROMI to report an illegal construction happening? And what is the timeline for VROMI to show up and put a stop to this? What happens when VROMI comes and they give a warning and the building continues? What happens again when VROMI comes? Does VROMI remove the building itself after the final warning? Or do they make the owners move the building? How long is this process?

Written complaints can be sent (even anonymously) to the Inspection Department VROMI about any assumed illegal building construction. An assessment will be made on location as soon as possible by inspectors. In principle, 1 warning letter will be issued and the property developer has to pass by the Permits department to apply for a Building Permit within 1 week. Continued illegal activities will be stopped by means of an official Building-Stop-Order. In case the Stop-Order is not adhered to, the Police will be informed. If there is no prospect for legalization of the case, an illegal construction Removal-Order can be issued and the transgressor will be given a so called grace period (reasonable time) to remove the illegal construction himself. If that does not occur, I, the Minister can have the illegal construction removed, in principle at the expense of the transgressor. The Stop order and the Removal order are appealable decisions (objections procedure handled via Objection Commission or appeal procedure via Court of first instance). An objection and appeal have no suspensive effect on the (illegal) building activities unless it is explicitly requested.

Windward Roads has to pay a fine of NAFI. 2 million. This resulted in the company having to render services of up to NAFI. 2 million to VROMI.

- Has the Ministry used this provision already? Is this provision allocated anywhere in the budget? Does this "credit" from Windward roads mean that VROMI still goes through a bidding process? Has Windward Roads used this provision? How does VROMI know that the prices are not now inflated? How is it possible that a company such as Windward Roads, referred to by the papers as criminal organization, continue to get Government contracts? While other companies with lesser court charges are not allowed to continue to work for Government?

I was informed that the public prosecutors would enter into a settlement agreement with WWR, based on which they would be obligated to carry out works for Country Sint Maarten to an amount of I believe 2 million US Dollars. I am not sure if this settlement is complete as yet, I have not seen it. This settlement is not taken up in the budget of VROMI. If this settlement money can be used by VROMI, then I would need to be more specifically informed by the public prosecutors how exactly this would work. If the settlement money is allocated to VROMI for civil works to be carried out by WWR, then VROMI would engage an independent engineering company to review the technical and

cost proposals, as well as to carry out site supervision and quality control during the execution of the works.

- Can the faction receive an update on the car clean up? How many cars to date have been picked up? how much was budgeted? Was there a bidding process? Or companies that are used often were used?

At present the government has picked up some about 550 car wrecks from different areas on the island in collaboration with the CPO's. The government usually pays Naf 100,- per wreck removed and brought to the scrap yard of Steel Crushers BV on Pond Island, this was done by various companies. The amount paid is a standard amount. There was no bidding process held to select a company for the cleanup.

- How much metal is collected on a daily basis that goes to the metal park across from the dump? How much metal leaves the island on a weekly basis? Is this measured? What is the cost per shipment?

The metal is collected and processed by the private company Steel Crushers BV. I do not have any figures at this time about the amounts collected. The shipment off island is also done directly by the scrap metal company, and I do not have any information about the cost of shipping at this time. But I will state that VROMI is in discussion with Steel Crushers BV to have an ideal structure, whether it be once or twice a year, for exporting the metals. And, I must mention that last year was the 1st time metals have been exported since the company has been operating.

- Where in the budget can we allocate monies to speed up the building permit process?

There are no funds allocated to speed up the building permit process. This issue however has my attention, and we are looking at ways to streamline the process. In the meantime, we have recently agreed to temporarily increase the capacity within the Permits Department with technical support from the Association of Dutch Municipalities, where the intention is for these technical assistants to especially assist in the review of the larger and more complicated building permit applications, as well as to give advice on how the permits review process can be streamlined.

This is a complaint that is heard often and there are no solutions coming out of the Ministry.

- The bridge by Cul de Sac is being painted, what kind of quality paint is being used? What kind of paint is VROMI supposed to use? What is the international standard in quality of paint that would last at least a year?

The maintenance and painting of the railings on the bridges and other roadside barriers was assigned in October of 2017 by the previous minister of VROMI, where there were no known specifications given for the paint to be used.. I am not certain of which bridge the MP is referring to, so possibly the MP can indicate more specifically which bridge he is referring to in his question. The quality of the work I have seen thus far is nothing to complain about. The work entails: scraping and removing the old paint, washing it with osphore to remove rust, priming of the railings, painting with 2 coats of white paint, and then painting red stripes for better visibility of the barriers by road users. The paint that is used is Sherwin Williams paint, which I know in general to be good quality paint. I am not certain at this

point what the international standard of paints to be used for these works are, or if there is even such a thing as a standard. However, even if that were the case, then we cannot now decide to change the contract mid-way. Possibly the MP saw the work when the paint was removed before applying the new paint, and assumed the paint had washed off, but maybe the MP can be more specific of the bridge in question, and then we can investigate it.

- Has the Ministry considered instead of patching up holes in the road to cut a piece a road and do it completely over?

This would be the most ideal way of working under normal circumstances but due to the significant road maintenance backlog, for the past decade we are only patching the small pieces that are urgent as there are lots of patchworks to be carried out. Secondly, the amount of asphalt tendered cannot fix the road network that needs fixing. A complete recapping of various main roads is needed, which is seen as a capital expense.

- Doesn't Government think that it should finish the lookout point (steps at the Flag)? Isn't it important for our tourism product? How much does it cost? Is the Ministry in talks to finish this?

This project fall under the responsibility of TEATT, and I will leave this for my colleague minister of TEATT to respond to.

- How much does it cost to have all the signs and mirrors back up?

A public tender is presently ongoing to purchase some 250 traffic signs that will be placed at all intersections to start with, and thereafter move into the districts. This will be phase 1 of the works, which is budgeted for 2019. These works will not be ready by carnival.

- Can Government provide an update on the stoplights? What would be the cost to have them back up and running? Does it have to come out of the Capital Expenditure Budget or Operational Budget?

The quotes for the repairs of the fixtures have been received and are about Naf 50.000,-. The ministry is still awaiting the cost projections for the electrical works and traffic light programming works which we are trying to get locally. The ministry hopes to have the works completed around July 2019. This will be paid from the Operational Budget.

- When and how can it be executed?

We are also working on plans to improve the image at the Look-out Flag Post and will be engaging in discussions with the family that owns that property to see how we as a government can improve what was created there. We believe that though it may have been ill-timed when it was launched, the initiative has the potential of being one of the most memorable landmarks for visitors to the island if done correctly. We are considering the addition of thirty-seven (37) steps symbolising the thirty-seven square miles of our island, and we also want to beautify it with some greenery and incorporate some benches along with a unique access ramp for the physically challenged. We will also find a permanent solution for the constant destruction of our national flag and create some beautiful nightlights so that the area can be something that we can all be proud of.

The aforementioned is being discussed with my colleagues the Minister of VROMI and the Minister of General Affairs.

- What are Government's plans from today till the first Carnival event to make Front street look a little better?

As an avid lover of Carnival and member of COM, I believe it is important as it has the attention of my colleague Minister of VROMI.

The faction would like to see all policies, plans and projects related to the VROMI budget.

- Are the projects listed in the Capital Expenditures ready to go? Have the plans been executed? Have the terms of reference been written? Are contractors and consultants just waiting on these funds to be able to start?

The projects as indicated on the capital budget for VROMI are ready to go. In fact one of the projects are already in execution, which pertains to the execution of the sewage project in Dutch Quarter. The amount on the capital investment budget concerns additional sewage connection works in that area, for which the design is ready.

There is an MOU signed with the landowner for the location of a sewage treatment plant in Cole Bay, and the designs for the hard surfacing of trenches are done, as these pertain to standard design specifications.

The area from the old Government building to the Post Office is an eyesore.

- What are the plans of Government for that area? Is this reflected in our 2019 budget?

There are longer term plans that are in discussion, and have even been presented to Parliament in the past, for the complete city center improvement, This will involve the construction of a parking garage, a new parliament building and possibly a national archives building, as well as upgrading the public areas. There are also plans to redo the market place with more permanent structures and improve the traffic situation. These plans are still in the development stage, including looking at financing possibilities.

In the meantime, I have requested GEBE to assist with the placement of proper lighting for the area, and the cleanup of the area is presently underway.

- The Multi Annual plan is not clear. Can this be clarified?

The elucidation to the draft budget gives an indication of the mid-term (4 years) priorities of the Ministry of VROMI. These center on the themes: 1) stimulation of a sustainable economic development, 2) improvement of the resilience of the country, 3) improvement of the quality of life of citizens, and 4) improvement of the performance of the ministry. The Ministry is busy with the preparation of a new Ministry Plan that will further articulate how these goals will be achieved, with the objectives stated in the Governing Program as the basis.

The members of the United St. Maarten Party faction have the following questions. The faction has taken note of the draft and mentions that the budget is long overdue in the House of Parliament.

The budget seems to have gone through the world tour event to Parliament and was then pulled back because a member of Parliament posed a bunch of questions. Every year we go down the same road. We go through the numbers, the highlights of several revenue items as well as expenses, compare the needs with the wants. We make Capital Expenses based on the legal criteria set as well and the approval of the CFT.

Try to balance the budget and now more than ever borrow and most concerning, borrow to cover operational expenses. Then the Government proposes cost cutting measures and income generating measures. A bit of cutting expense takes place.

The revenue generating measures due to the social effects or lack of political pressure just never happen. A year passes and we repeat the same thing, a waste of everyone's time. The faction would like to suggest that we have a real debate concerning the budget and how we are going to increase revenue without breaking the people, businesses and how we are going to provide adequate public services so the people of Sint Maarten with the resilience they have left, can actually get the help they need to get back on their feet and further build this island.

The faction send a letter when the first version of this budget was submitted to Parliament in November. The letter is dated November 21st, 2018 and the point of the letter was to highlight some serious grievances and inconsistencies with the way that budget was sent. The faction would like to know if Government received this letter and if so, why the faction hasn't received an answer to the letter? Because it is an unfortunate trend that the faction doesn't receive answers. It was very curious to learn 4 days later that the budget meeting was cancelled due to compliance with article 25 of the Rft.

The CFT themselves pointed out to Government the need to comply with article 25 of the Rft. The Council of Advice also pointed out that the budget was not in compliance with the recommendation from the CFT.

- What really took place in that time line? Why is it that at the final minute that it reached Parliament it was decided to cancel the meeting after both the CFT and the Council of Advice had warned Government?
- The faction mentions that in November 2018 an amendment of budget 2018 was also submitted. This just showed poor planning. What was the logic of trying to pass at the same time budget amendment 2018 and budget 2019 as it was almost the end of 2018?
- Where is the budget amendment 2018 now?

Every single time the budget comes to Parliament, the faction requests a fully digital version of the budget. The faction is happy to have received the searchable PDF file of the budget. The faction would also like this type of document for the Elucidation. Definition as per the law of the budget in accordance with the Accountability Ordinance is a policy budget for a service year comprising a regular service and capital service divided into chapters according to the classification shown in annex 1 accompanying this national ordinance.

The faction has been unable to find and verify whether the annex 1 of the Accountability Ordinance has ever been completed. The faction is of the opinion that the emphasis on the policy in the budgets is getting worse. It is not clear how Government intends to spend the monies listed in the budget. It is severely lacking in this budget.

Articles 11 till 14 of the Accountability Ordinance are very clear about everything that has to be included in the budget. The faction refers to article 14, paragraph 3, of the Accountability Ordinance and asks how this process is done.

Ministry of General Affairs Mention was made concerning the Trust Fund that most projects were ready.

- Can Parliament be provided with a list of all the projects that are ready to start via the Trust Fund outside all the consultancy money that has already been paid?

- Has the Government discussed the manner in which the World Bank is managing the Trust Fund with the donor?
- And in these discussions, what is the Dutch Government's view?
- Is the Dutch Government of the opinion that everybody but the World Bank is getting the best bang for their buck?
- Is the Dutch Government in a position to change its mind and have the funds managed more effectively?
- It is seemingly taking very long for monies to be used on projects for the wellbeing of the people of Sint Maarten. What is the planning for the repairing of homes and the promised shelters?
- There are a lot of difficulties with the way the World Bank operates. Has the Government sat with the Dutch Government to explain that the decision to let the World Bank manage the funds was less than an optimal decision?
- Are any reservations being made for expenses that are scheduled to be made from the **Trust Fund but are likely not to be made due to the requirements of the World Bank** for which the local companies will not be able to qualify?
- Bodyguards at the cost of NAfI. 800.000 for the Executive Branch. Ministers already have this. Historically, in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, where have we seen the dangers for political people?
- Has it been in the Executive Branch or more in the Legislative Branch?

The faction mentions that each Minister already has budgeted drivers and proposes for these drivers to be trained as bodyguard personnel if there is a fear for Ministers.

- Why is it that in the sections of the policies in the budget, the policies are not sufficiently tied to the figures?
- Where is the NAf 1.2 million for calamity going too? And why does it fall directly under the Minister of General Affairs which means it doesn't go through the regular advisory process?

Ministry of Finance

Government needs to give a total breakdown of the NAf 132 million in the Capital investments. Almost a billion guilders in loans and debts that Sint Maarten has. We have become a country that doesn't show how it plans to pay down its debts. How serious is this Government to present a budget that doesn't represent the needs of our people after a devastation like hurricane Irma to improve our infrastructure, our way of life and how we intend to prepare for the next calamity to come?

- Mention was made that the Government will loan about NAf 40 million for 2019. Is that true yes or no?

I would kindly like to refer the Honorable MP to the previous question regarding the Capital Expenditures / Income(See answer by 42)

- In one of the budget posts there is a loan that is also showing for NAf 5.2 million. Can that loan be explained?

I assume the honorable MP is referring to the draft ordinance budget 2019. The loans mentioned in the ordinance concern is study financing (“verstrekte studieleningen u/g” in the capital expenditure overview page 78)

- Who is it loaned to and for what?

Can Parliament receive a breakdown of the amount of liquidity support that has been provided since the hurricanes of 2017 to the Government of Sint Maarten in the form of loans with the attached terms (including dates, origin and purpose of the terms of the loans)?

A summary of such can be found in “Staat E” and the Explanatory notes, nevertheless for clarity: Total liquidity support thus far: NAf 104,3 mln total.

This consist of :

1. NAf 21,7 mln coming from Capital investment loan which was converted into a liquidity support loan with approval RMR, terms are repayment of 1, 5 million on year basis;
2. NAf 50 mln Loan, terms 0 % interest and repayment NAf 2mln guilders per year for 30 years starting 2023;
3. NAf 32,6 mln terms 0 % interest repayment of 1,1 mln per year for 30 years starting 2023

For 2019 an amount of NAf 50 mln is foreseen / budgeted

- Which investment is Government making that will generate an income?

For the ministry of Finance, the project for upgrading the tax department will ensure payback of the investments

The faction proposes for Government to borrow \$50 million and purchase Mullet Bay. This can be used to build at least 4 resorts which Government can control the property. We will have return on our investment in the form of employment. How is it that for all these years Mullet Bay was at \$350 million and now the Central Bank did its due diligence and did another appraisal that puts the value at \$50 million?

- ENNIA was illegally including the beach, cliffs and lagoon for all those years in their appraisal. Where in this budget or policy is there a plan van aanpak to deal with this Mullet Bay situation?

This budget does not foresee in acquisition of Mullet Bay.

- What budgetary support is being provided to the Central Bank to keep this process of the restructuring of ENNIA going, to keep policy holders safe and preventing this property from going on auction?

It sounds like a positive initiative, but would need more in depth discussions, analyses, etc. before I can form a well-considered opinion on this subject.

- On the Kapitaal dienst inkomsten, under 41100, it shows a loan of NAf 40 million. It is clear that this NAf 40 million is for loans. Where did the available funds of NAf 10.6 million come from listed under this same post?

In accordance with the Accountability Ordinance (amongst others art. 7 and art. 11) Capital Expenditures (KD Uitgaven) are budgeted for the current year and multi-annual. The capital budget(KD) consists of two balancing sides.

In order words the Capital Expenditures and Income must be in balance.

Investments:

The Capital Expenditure needs for 2019 is summarized per Ministry per project and amounts to NAf 132,3 mln. (page 78-82 of the budget illustrates the breakdown and in chapter 3.4 of the elucidation document the investments are elucidated in more detail)

Income, In chronological order of the budget book. Usually there are only a few resources on the income site of the KD:

Loans acquired via CBCS (NAf 40 million)

Depreciations (covered by the "gewone dienst") (NAf 10,6 million)

Existing balance previous loans (NAf 7.5 million)

Loan arrangement BZK

Tax dep (NAf 48.9 million)

Financial management (NAf 15 million)

Other available resources:

Justice monies granted by NL (NAf 8.4 million); (Onderlinge regeling: "versterking grenstoezicht"

Monies tablet per child (NAf 1.9 million)

Total NAf 132.3 million

- What will happen to this money that is now available due to the surplus?

There is no surplus, the defecate is lower

- What was it supposed to be spent on?

There is still a defecate so there is no surplus spending

- NAf 48.8 million; is this expected to be collected in 2019 as a result of the upgrading of the Tax Office?

This based on the tax reform and this based on compliance

- How will this be done?

Improvement of compliance

The Minister mentioned in the media that payment arrangements can be made but cannot exceed 18 months.

- Can Government explain the grace period that it plans to offer to those who have to pay their taxes?
- Is it over 6, 5, 18 months or not exceeding 18 months?
- What will happen if the taxpayer is unable to meet these terms?
- What are the consequences of such a payment if it leads the taxpayer to go bankrupt?

The collection policy contains an aspect called, postponement of payment, where taxpayers are granted an extension on the legal term of paying, which is within 1 or 2 months, based on the type assessment.

*On top that there is a possibility for postponement of payment
The more reason for Tax Reform*

- What is Government's position on this? What is the status of tax reform?
- How much longer will we maintain an uncompetitive fiscal environment?
- How much debt has the Government build up to the Netherlands in liquidity support?
A summary of such can be found in "Staat E" and the Explanatory notes, nevertheless for clarity:

Total liquidity support thus far: NAf 104,3 mln total.

This consist of :

1. NAf 21,7 mln coming from Capital investment loan which was converted into a liquidity support loan with approval RMR, terms are repayment of 1, 5 million on year basis;
2. NAf 50 mln Loan, terms 0 % interest and repayment NAf 2mln guilders per year for 30 years starting 2023;
3. NAf 32,6 mln terms 0 % interest repayment of 1,1 mln per year for 30 years starting 2023

For 2019 an amount of NAf 50 mln is foreseen / budgeted

- The CFT made mention that the airport should be borrowing the money directly and not Government borrowing the money.

The findings of Cft are recorded in their Art 11 advice. This CFT art. 11 advice is included within the 2019 budget documents (package) as presented to Parliament. In addition to this also included is the response of the Minister of Finance. For efficiency sake I would kindly like to refer the honorable MP / Parliament refer to these documents and if necessary provide a copy

- What is the Government's sentiments on the report of the CFT concerning the way the loan should be given?

The findings of Cft are recorded in their Art 11 advice. This CFT art. 11 advice is included within the 2019 budget documents (package) as presented to Parliament.

In addition to this also included is the response of the Minister of Finance. For efficiency sake I would kindly like to refer the honorable MP / Parliament refer to these documents and if necessary provide a copy

Are any reservations being made for expenses that are to be made from the Trust Fund but are likely not to be made due to the requirements of the World Bank for which local companies will not be able to qualify?

To date how much money has been collected in road tax?

Government is losing revenue based on a bad decision concerning the number plates and stickers. The faction recognizes the effort of Government to raise NAf 1 million which is based on collecting the 10% of medical cost due from civil servants who are currently in scales 6 and higher.

- How far back will Government go in this recuperating scheme?

Government will collect NAf 25 million in dividend from the Central Bank in 2019. In 2017 and 2018 it was NAf 21 million. Can Government explain the increase of approximately NAf 4 million?

This income line item is not classified as dividend but as License fee, which can also be classified as bank transaction fees.

In accordance with article 9 of the - "Centrale Bank-statuut voor Curacao en Sint Maarten" - license fees are collected from St. Maarten based bank institutions, by CBCS - and transferred (1 on 1) to the Government of Sint Maarten.

Considering the fact that St. Maarten experienced an Economic drop in the post Irma period (2017 & 2018), it is evident that this type of income drops.

As outlined in the Budget Explanatory notes it is expected that the Economy will improve in 2019, License fee income is therefore budgeted at pre-Irma level.

More in depth explanatory notes regarding License Fees can also be found the CBCS site, amongst other a presentation (year 2013) to the Parliament of St. Maarten

The faction would like to see a plan of approach to generate revenue from alcohol and tobacco on this island. It is something that needs to be done but in a responsible manner. Post 5401 18240, Time share fee.

- Can Parliament get an explanation on the legislation to change that fee?
- In the budget there is a provision for the Harbor to pay a concession fee of NAf 5.5 million. Did Government receive any concession fee in 2017, 2018 and to date?

Concession Fee is established by law (AB 2013 no 129), hence a legal obligation that must be reflected in the budget.

Initially the Harbor Group of Companies indicated the need for suspension / waiver of the payment of concession fee (October 2017, see NRRP).

Thereafter the a full two- year waiver (2017&2018) was (officially) requested (October 2018). To date Government the Shareholder has not taken an decision, due to two (2) main reasons:

1. Waiver / exemption of payment concessive fee is not described in the applicable law and most likely must be preceded by establishment of a National Decree in order to make this possible.

2. In contrast to the other Government owned companies, the Lenders of the Harbor Group of Companies, approved a one-year suspension of loan repayment and interest. This enabled the Harbor to ensure Cash flow for the purpose of their Recovery / Rebuilding efforts.

- There is also a projected NAf 5 million concession fees from GEBE. Is this realistic?
Or is it from the water distribution part of it?

Equal to the previous question:

The Concession Fee is established by law (AB 2015 no 9), hence a legal obligation that must be reflected in the budget.

In the case of GEBE a settlement agreement is being drafted in which the outstanding Concession fee will offset the outstanding (utility) payments to GEBE, after which a reasonable amount remains payable to Government.

GEBE will also receive the necessary disbursements from the Trust Fund once that particular project is engaged.

- This issue with Bearing Point and whether a contract has been signed. If a contract was signed, can Parliament receive a copy?
If not, then when did the process of the selection of bidders start? Who were the selection committee members and how did they score the final candidates?
Is there a report of the scores of the committee?
And can Government present that report and the date it was made?
- Why did it take so long to conclude the selection process if a process was done?
Is it true that Minister Gibson awarded a Chinese company who was one of the last two candidates along with a local company?
Bearing Point is the best candidate, how did the other candidates score?

The bidding process is not finalized as yet, this is a confidential process.

Therefore I cannot share information until a decision is taken by CoM and a final advice is approved.

There is a huge price difference between what is being presented by Bearing Point than the bids of the other candidates on this project.

- Can Government explain to Parliament how this process went?
- Was the IT department involved in the selection process of this project?
- The issue of consultants in the cabinets of all Ministries. Can Parliament be provided with all the contracts of all consultants working in the cabinets of the Ministers?
- There are increases in the Minister's budgets. For what?

The bidding process is not finalized as yet, this is a confidential process.

Therefore I cannot share information until a decision is taken by CoM and a final advice is approved.

The board of GEBE seemingly has a budget of NAFI. 1 million for the board.

- Can Parliament get full details of the budgets for the boards of all Government owned companies?

The faction is of the opinion that there is no legal basis for a Financial Recovery Plan. There is conflicting information between this budget and the Financial Recovery Plan. There is no synchronization between the two.

- Is the Financial Recovery Plan reflective to start in 2019?
- Who created this Financial Recovery Plan?
- The Ministry or was a consultant hired?

The faction refers to the proud notion for Ministers that they have taken a salary cut. But if you really look at the figures in some Ministries, you realize that the Minister's salary has decreased but

the cabinet costs have increased. So, then what are we really cutting? The faction refers to a NAFI. 3 million (Rechts- en deskundig advies) increase in the Ministry of Finance for a consultancy pool for all Ministries.

- Why does this money fall directly under the Minister and not for example under FBB?

Like all ministries, the ministry of Finance uses consultants during a year to perform certain tasks or projects. That is the price we pay in being understaffed and not able to attract enough people with the right education and experience ourselves. Furthermore, the budget of NAF. 4

million for the 'pool of external expertise' is put in the draft budget under the Ministry of Finance while it is still unclear which ministries will make use of the facility that will be managed by SOAB. The idea of a pool originates in the Governing Program of this Government.

The amounts from the pool used by different ministries will be re-arranged to those ministries via a budget amendment or, for the last phase of the year, in the annual accounts. And finally an amount of NAF 1 million is budgeted for hiring ATS, the audit team consisting of people

from SBAB and SZV to strengthen compliance for tasks income purposes.

This is a new practice. Based on article 45 of the Accountability Ordinance immediately upon receipt by Parliament the budget must also be sent to the General Audit Chamber.

- The faction just wants to verify if this was done. Was this done?

Art. 45 of the accountability ordinance, is related to Quarterly (progress) reports and not particularly related to the budget.

This article is superseded by Art. 18 of the Kingdom Law Financial Supervision, in which Government is obligated to report (quarterly) on the execution of the budget.

Quarterly reports once discussed and approved by the Council of Ministers are forwarded to amongst others the Audit Chamber and Parliament.

The internal accountant (SOAB) was not included in the in the mailing list of the latest report, this will be rectified and they will be included moving forward.

The way the Kapitaaldienst has been handled and calculated. The CFT stated that the maximum amount for loans should be NAF 14 million. In the end we have Capital Expenditures to the tune of NAF 132 million. Kapitaaldienst inkomsten, 41001214 and 41001215. The post 41001214 is "Opname van geldleningen" of NAF 40 million. Some points under Kapitaaldienst are not clear.

- Can this be better elucidated?

The Belastingdienst is scheduled to provide NAF 48 million. What exactly is the justification for this?

How did Government come to this number?

How is this money going to be translated into Capital Investments?

What happens if there is a shortfall?

What happens if Government's very ambitious plan to put additional pressure on an already tight economy for tax compliance, fails?

"Financieel beheer" for NAF 15 million. Where is this coming from?

Is it coming from the Trust Fund?

Is it from the Netherlands?

In accordance with the Accountability Ordinance (amongst others art. 7 and art. 11) Capital Expenditures (KD Uitgaven) are budgeted for the current year and multi-annual. The capital budget(KD) consists of two balancing sides..

In order words the Capital Expenditures and Income must be in balance.

Investments:

The Capital Expenditure needs for 2019 is summarized per Ministry per project and amounts to NAf 132,3 mln. (page 78-82 of the budget illustrates the breakdown and in chapter 3.4 of the elucidation document the investments are elucidated in more detail)

Income:

In chronological order of the budget book

Usually there are only a few resources on the income site of the KD:

- Loans acquired via CBCS (NAf 40 million)
- Depreciations (covered by the "gewone dienst") (NAf 10,6 million)
- Existing balance previous loans (NAf 7.5 million)

Loan arrangement BZK

- Tax dep (NAf 48.9 million)
- Financial management (NAf 15 million)

Other available resources:

- Justice monies granted by NL (NAf 8.4 million); Onderlinge regeling:" versterking grenstoezicht"
 - Monies tablet per child (NAf 1.9 million)

Total NAf 132.3 million

The faction refers to arrangements with BZK, which have not yet been finalized as per the elucidation The faction feels uncomfortable approving a budget based on arrangements that are still in progress especially because the entity we are dealing with has moved the goal post before. NAf 60 million will be provided to improve the tax infrastructure of the country (Belastingdienst Plan van Aanpak).

- So, what is this Plan van Aanpak?

There is no detailed Plan van Aanpak attached to this budget at all.

- Can Government explain this?

Numbers are being thrown in the Kapitaaldienst that add up to NAf 132 million without proper sourcing on how or why we are actually going to be doing this.

The faction has a discomfort with the fact that the emphasis is more on tax collection than revenue generation.

Sint Maarten needs to do a better job at collecting taxes that is owed. However, there is a fine line ceiling as to what that can be. Because if you don't create some sort of revenue generation, so stimulate the economy so people can collect more, all you are really doing is forcing them to pay what they already have a hard time paying.

While NAf 85 million is being proposed for Capital Investments in the Ministry of Finance for the Tax Office, the Ministry of TEATT will only get NAf 1.7 million. That is a huge disconnect seeing that TEATT has to do income generating measures. The faction is not seeing monies for customer training and route development. There is too much emphasis on the Ministry of Finance which has

NAf 85 million out of the NAf 132 million. Why would Government even consider doing something like this?

The faction would like to highlight the zeros in the budget. These are things that have received zero support. One of them is the Mental Health Foundation. Same goes for the Library. Zero investment in hospitality training. You can't create a good tourism product if you don't educate your people properly.

- Why have these entities not received the necessary funding that they need?

The Council of Advice made mention of 10 items that keep recurring in budgets. The faction needs Government to explain how these things are going to be addressed and they are:

1. SMART objectives; why isn't this being done?
2. Sticking to deadlines,
3. Government picks and chooses what to react to as it pertains to the advice of the Council of Advice; what is the plan van aanpak pertaining to responding to the Council?
4. Poor policy guidelines,
5. Making poor use of cost cutting measures without proper justification,
6. The need to properly justify concessions.
 - The Council found the GEBE and Harbor concessions very unrealistic. How did Government calculate these concessions?
 - Does Government have any tangible documentation with commitments from these organizations that they will indeed pay these concessions
7. It is unclear how Government is sourcing its Capital Expenditures,
8. Time pressure,
9. Debts to SZV. Can the faction get better explanation what the plan is?

RvA will always give points of attention. We started with a step-by-step improvement of the budgeting process for which we received compliments from RvA as well as Cft. We will continue this process with budget 2020.

1. Smart objectives

Government is improving the policy paragraph's the last 3 years. Please keep in mind that the introduction of the Dutch equivalent for municipalities (VBTB) took 24 year to implement and then was abolished before it came to an adult level. This concept was not introduced on the level of the country by the way, on country level they still work a cash based registration. Sint marten is improving and will continue to do so but it will take the time it needs.

2. Meeting deadlines

You remember the budget 2019 was at parliament in November 2018 and could have been approved if no new conditions were added by the RmR that forced us to revamp the budget as a whole. Government is well aware of the deadlines but is not always the only switch in the chain.

3. Policy

The policy paragraph will improve gradually as explained at the smart objectives remarks made just now.

4. Cost saving measures unspecified

The cost saving measures have a volume of 2,5 million. This is a marginal amount that even can be reached when being reluctant on purchase advises. We look at about 1% of the budget so it is marginal and should be easy to realize when income develops as projected.

5./6. Unclear Sourcing KD

First of all: concessions are stipulated by law and not cannot be changes just now. These rights should be taken up as a claim when the debtor cannot pay. We will do so until the

situation for Harbour and GeBe are clear. This moment GeBe seems to be able to settle against their claims on government and the Harbour applied for a waiver with request is been looked in to as we speak.

7. Time pressure

Pressure seems to go hand in hand with the budgeting process. Preparations start as early as in February but still the organization is hardly able to submit ministerial budgets within the stipulated constraints. A lot of factors contribute to this phenomenon and for that reason the project to increase quality from financial management is defined.

8. Debts SZV

Government inherited debts from the past that were not solved in accordance with the "schuldsanering" at the time. This keeps the pressure high on the liquidity reserves from government over de last year.

- Plan for APS. How are we going to catch up on these things?

Payment arrears are not part of the budget, however these are reflected in the annual reports (as per accountability ordinance)

- It was mentioned that CFT did not advise Government to look into getting the EIB loan directly from the airport. Can this be clarified?

The question of Cft as recorded in their Art 11 advice, is responded to in the "reactive op Art 11 advies". Both documents are part of the bundle of 2019 budget documents that was submitted to Parliament.

We responded article 11 advice and i will read it in Dutch:

"Het CFT adviseert SXM dat ook te bezien the EIB leining rechtstreeks aan PJIA kan worden verstrekt "

In other words CFT is saying, Government of SXM see if it is possible to that a loan from EIB can be borrowed directly to the PJIA they did not advise us to have the funding loan directly to the airport.

They ask us to look at the possibility.

- It was stated that time pressure is caused by lack of resources in the Ministry, can Government then explain that the futile efforts of creating a 2018 budget amendment only added to the pressure within the Ministry?

It is the reality and based on the advice of the CFT and based on the positive development of the income of sxm it was necessary to draft budget amendment 2018 it says a lot about the resilience and strength we have within the organization in finance. We are trying to cope with the time limitations as much as possible and moving forward it is the most important points to stick to the time tables

- It was also stated that cost cutting measures would be across all Ministries. Can it then be clarified that it has only been put under the Ministry of Finance? What is the logic behind it? The overall coordination for cost cutting measures is with the ministry of finance. As well as determining the ceilings of expenses per year, ministries have to comply with. A project with involvement of all ministries will start up shortly to identify and work out these measures The results will be corrected per Ministry via a budget amendment

- Why hasn't the pool of experts been spread over several Ministries?

Similar answer / approach of MINFIN to this budget item

- What legal basis does the Ministry and/or SOAB have to allow SOAB to manage this fund? SOAB is yearly engaged by Government to execute the audit plan, this engagement runs through the normal approval procedures. It is under these same procedures that SOAB will be engaged (CoM decision)

- What will the role of the Minister of Finance be in terms of "wachtgeld" for Ministers? In accordance with the Ordinance: "Landsverordening tot regeling van de uitkering en het

pensioen voor politieke gezagdragers”, the Governor of Sint Maarten is responsible for execution and the Minister of Finance for the preparation of pertaining cases

- Is it a MB, LB or just an advice that has to go to the Governor?
- On what grounds has the wachtgeld for former MP Matser been refused?

Minister of Justice

- The faction has taken note of a number of brand-new vehicles purchased under the Ministry of justice, for the Police.
Were those vehicles purchased?
based on the Capital Expenditures of 2019 or based on insurance from damaged vehicles and the money Government received?
- **The new vehicles were bought through Direct Financing from Holland.**
- How is the border control working out?
- **The new vehicles were bought through Direct Financing from Holland.**
- Have border control efforts managed to curb the influx of undocumented persons or expelled anyone to date?
- **Amount of persons expelled: 2017: 224 persons. 2018: 142 persons**
- **Figures for the 2 months of 2019 are being processed.**
- Have border control efforts managed to control undocumented persons from working without paying taxes while the Sint Maarten people who are documented to pay their taxes without getting adequate public services?
The faction takes note that there is a 0% increase in consultancy fees.
Does the Minister believe he has enough for consultancy fees for his Ministry?
- **We are busy hiring the right people for the right job and eliminating the need for consultants.**
- Even though the Minister took a cut in salary of NAf 27.000, he has increased the salaries of the members of his cabinet by triple that amount. What is the sense then of the cost cutting measure of cutting the Minister's salary and then increasing the salaries of the cabinet members?
- **Not in justice**
- Afdeling Justitiele Zaken is taking a 25% cut. What is the role of this department?
The “judicial affairs” resorting under the secretary general of the ministry of justice is mainly responsible for the drafting of policies, regulations and legislation related to the areas of responsibility of the Minister of Justice.
- What resulted in such a large cut? Reference was made of the possibility of this department merging with the Legal Affairs Department of the ministry of General Affairs. Is this a reality?
- **This amount was budgeted too high in 2018 and it was brought down to actual figures in 2019. We are busy exploring the possibility of merging judicial affairs of justice and general affairs to address the shortage of staff.**
- Is it something that is already in the pipeline? Or is it an official plan?
Budget post prison 5202, Gevangenis en het Huis van Bewaring. 20% cut in personnel cost.
- **This amount was budgeted too high in 2018 and it was brought down to actual figures in 2019.**
- What does this encompass? Only Point Blanche? Police station cells? Simpson Bay cells? Can this be clarified?
- **All personnel that fall under the prison, including the once at the police station cells.**

- Isn't this cut going to result in an even worse situation when it comes to detention in Sint Maarten? A 200% increase (NAFI. 4.3 million) in material cost. The faction would like some clarification on budget post 5202 43489. What is it intended for?
- This amount is for all the pending projects that needs to get done at the prison like the upgrading of the IT system, the project to jumpstart the sewing room and pursuing a cooperation with NIPA.
- Why such high increase in budget post 43499 with no real elucidation what it is for?
- This amount is higher this year because we are busy with numerous repairs at the prison and we are certain that there will be a lot of miscellaneous and/or unforeseen cost.
- New budget item of NAFI. 450.000, does this mean that in the past there was no budget for maintenance of the building (budget post 43430)?
- This amount is higher this year because we are busy with numerous repairs at the prison and we are certain that there will be a lot of miscellaneous and/or unforeseen cost.
- Is there a training plan or syllabus that can be shared with Parliament?
Despite the trias politica and the separation of the 3 branches, the Judicial branch is still primarily funded from the coffers of the Government of Sint Maarten. Are budget posts 5213 and 5215 the only two budget items from the budget of Sint Maarten that go towards that section of the trias politica?
- Also budget post 5214
- And if not, what are the other sources of funding that go to the Judicial branch of this country?
Particularly, what comes from the Netherlands?
What portion of taxpayer's money is going towards the amount of work that the Prosecutor's Office is doing (arrests etc.)?
What portion comes from the Netherlands or any other organization?
What is the contribution of the Netherlands to these 2 budget items?
What is the agreement and what is the status of this agreement that determines who pays for what in the judicial system?
Are all the salaries of all the judges, prosecutors and court house staff covered under these posts?
These amounts are for the contribution of Sint Maarten to the Public Prosecutor. These are the actual amounts that had to be budgeted for the salary cost and material costs of the public prosecutor. The increase is due to the recruitment and training of "locals, individuals of the former Antilles" to ensure we have a balanced representation within this dept.

The Joint Court of Justice also receives contribution from the ministry of Justice. This amount is mentioned under 5214 "gemeenschappelijk Hof van justitie".
Yes and Sint Maarten pays its contribution for the part as agreed upon.
-
- Budget post 5212 is a new budget item. Where is it coming from and what is the reason for it? 5212, Coast Guard seems to be an expense swap between salaries. Can this be explained?
- It was always there in the budget but in this budget the amount is specified in details. This is the budget post for the coastguard. SXM pays 4% of the total budget of the Coastguard.
- Why was this budget item swapped?
- For it to be reflected under the correct budget post.

The Executive protection unit is booked in this budget at NAFI. 783.000 but as a subsidy. This is very strange for various reasons. Subsidies are typically for organizations that have a shortfall and need it.

- Who are we then subsidizing in this case?

Which NGO?

Why is this put as a subsidy?

This would also mean that no bidding process would take place where local companies can bid. Would the Subsidy Ordinance apply if this item is a subsidy?

Can clarity be provided?

- this amount is for the setting up and managing of the Executive Protection Unit based on the decision taken by the NA/USP lead government.
- Subsidy to the Youth detention center; what is the intention of this subsidy item (43499)? Who do we intend to subsidize this to?
- This is not a subsidy but material cost for the MLC. We are trying to have all the budget posts mentioned separately for MLC in the budget 2020 like the other departments.
- What is the policy in terms of giving this subsidy to an organization?
Is the subsidy for Turning Point (NAf 1.2 million) enough?
What is the request that Turning Point has submitted?
Turning point foundation has requested a total amount of ANG 1,435,616.00 in subsidy. However an amount of ANG 1,240,434.00 has been awarded for 2019. This is ANG 195,182.00 less than requested. As the minister of Justice I surely want to give the foundation what they request given the fact that they are giving a good service for the ones that require it. This has our attention and the difference will definitely be awarded if possible in a budget amendment.
- Is it below what was requested? What is the budget post Reclassering? NAf 200.000 for Justice Academy; can this be elucidated?
This budget post refers to the subsidy given to the SJIB (Foundation of Judicial Institutes Sint Maarten)
The budget for the Justice Academy is to finalize all the curriculums for the different training/ education programs for the justice employees and repairs to the building which was damaged during Irma.
- Did the Minister have to make a compromise of cutting salaries in order to receive more material cost?
There is no budget for the Afpak team in this budget. Can this be explained?
- The afpakteam was put on hold due to confidentiality challenges that were experienced.
- A projected increase of 6% for the verblijfsvergunningen, that is surprisingly low seeing the amount of people coming into the country. What are the current fees and are these mandated by a law or ministerial or country decision?
The Current fees for the resident permits are regulated by law in the "Legesverordening". The amounts are mentioned in article II part 41 of said ordinance. A copy of this law has been provided to parliament.
- 100 Chinese workers came in to work on 1 project alone, Maho. From Labor department there are the work permits. These two are connected. On labor side there is an increase of 30%. So how come the increase on the Justice permit side is so low?
"Deposito vreemdelingendienst" is at NAFI. 0 this year, why?
This budget post was erroneously budgeted as an income in the past years. The post "Deposito Vreemdelingen" pertains to the deposit/ guarantee that persons have to give when requesting for a residence permit for the first time.
- The NAf 5.7 million for the prison, what is this going to do?
- What is this going to fix?
With this budget we will cover most of the works that has to be done to put the facility in a good state for the workers as well for the prisoners. However, when we decide to build or extend the current facility we will need more funds. With this budget we will be able to execute the following projects by the prison:
Roof Renovations

Entrance Building
Fencing
Court yard Walls
Chapel Building Roof Phase A+b
Sewer treatment
Repair & extension generator building
Repair of the workshop
CHUBB
Locks
Court yard drainage
Barbwire or placement of a net on inside walls

- How far is it from what the Ministry really needs to get our prison system back to where it needs to be?
Line item ICT equipment (BMS) for NAf 4.9 million; what is this?

This amount is to pay the on time fees for the police application ACTPOL, Border Management System and foreigner management system which are both part of the border control application. The court of guardianship application K18 and the judicial application REACT and a backup server.

- Who is executing this project?
Has it gone on bid already?
What is the purpose of this?
Under Douane, mobile scan for NAf 1.2million.
What is this device?

This amount is for the purchase of a mobile scanner for the harbor and airport for the Customs department in connection with the works they have to carry out.

- Is there a need for more monies in the Capital Expenditures to make sure that the ankle bracelets can continue?
What is the policy on who qualifies to be able to get an ankle bracelet as opposed to going to prison?

Legal framework for Electronic Supervision which is outlined in our Penal Code
For the introduction of the new penal code in 2015, detainees with a positive VI – early release prognosis on the basis of the Ministerial Order with general effect of 10 August 2005 were given the opportunity to participate in leave under Electronic Supervision.

Cases where Electronic Supervision can be applied - As special conditions with:
Suspension of pre-trial detention
Conditional sentencing
Conditional release (VI)
Suspects who are not allowed to leave the country.
Offenders who are conditionally released with a high risk of recidivism.

In all cases, participation in ET must first be assessed by the Probation Service if the client meets all the criteria. Clients can be nominated at the initiative of the Probation Service or can be assessed at the request of the Public Prosecution Service or the General Court.

- The Formation plan of the Ministry is 243 employees while it should be 255. This is a shortfall of 12. The shortfall according to the faction is significantly higher. There is a disconnect between these figures and what was presented to Parliament in the past. Can this be clarified?

The possible formation for Justice will be 897 fte's. However this number is still being reviewed.

Ministry of Education. Culture. Youth and Sports

Absolutely no repairs have been done since 2017 after the hurricane, in 2018 and 2019. The facilities look as if the hurricane just destroyed them. The little repairs that have been done are a joke. It is a fundamental right of every child to be able to access books in a library. This budget shows a lack of seriousness from this Government where the library is concerned.

- Is the Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport familiar with article 34 of the Accountability Ordinance? What did the wish list of this Ministry look like?

Yes Honorable MP, I am familiar with Article 34. Every Minister has had a wish list but this was certainly not honored due to our financial situation. My projection was as follows :

	2019	2020	2021
Building 4 classroom St. Maarten Vocational Training School	1,000,000		
Heavy maintenance subsidized schools		2,200,000	
CRM Software		150,000	
Upgrading Main west bleachers Raoul Illidge Sport Complex		2,400,000	
Renovations John Larmonie Center		3,400,000	
Solar Panels on School/Air Conditioning in Schools/ Phase 1			2,100,000
Partial Acquisition of Digital Archives			500,000
Digital 3d scanners for Archeological research			10,000
Upgrading Main Building Raoul Illidge Sport Complex	3,500,000		
Construction Swimming Pool Raoul Illidge Sport Complex			5,000,000

- Only NAFI. 4.5 million has been allocated for Capital Investments for one of the largest Ministries in terms of personnel. Where are the investments in culture, sports, sports tourism?

Honorable MP as Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport I am certainly not happy with the amounts allocated on the budget for Capital Expenditure considering the vast amount of facilities under the care of this Ministry however I must be realistic about the reality of this government's financial situation and take a decision under the circumstances. Considering this, it was impossible at this moment to capture all institutions related to the Sectors of this Ministry. We do believe that a phased approach is necessary, hence the projection outlined in my response to the earlier question.

- What was the Ministry's request Capital Expenditures?
The Capital expenditure amount for the Ministry is NafI. 4.5 million.
- Why wasn't there no Capital Expenditures listed in this budget for the Library?

The Capital investment budget has no funds allocated for the Library. The Ministry has incorporated these areas in the Ministry's " Education Master plan" for the building back better process.

- What is the Ministry's role in terms of our cultural centers and community centers?

This Ministry has subsidy allocated for two facilities which are culture based and they are the John Larmonie Center and the Philipsburg Cultural and Community Center. Facilities which are regarded as Community Centers fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of VSA within the Division Community Development.

- Perhaps management, assistance with funding, repairs etc. Is there a plan for this NAFI. 1 million for consulting fees under the Minister's budget?

This amount is allocated for the Law Program offered by the University of Curacao via an agreement vetted by our legal affairs department and subsequently signed between the University and our Government. The law program commenced since the latter part of last year 2018 and is ongoing at this moment. The agreement which outlines the specifics can be shared in writing with the House of Parliament.

- And why not allocate this directly to departments (Budget post 43476)?

As indicated previously, in the previous 2018 budget an amount of 1 million guilders was on the budget of the Minister of Finance for the establishment of a Law program. This program commenced in 2018 and considering this activity falls within this Ministry the amount was transferred to the budget of the minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

We recognize that this shift in budget should have been allocated to the Department of Education to be allocated as subsidy, this needed change will be addressed with the Finance Ministry, considering the fact that there is now an official agreement between the government and the institution providing this program. We have already commenced with the process of making the necessary changes for the budget transfer.

- What are the procedures compared to a department head using such a budget post within their department?

There is a standard procedure of an advice for the use of any funds on both levels of the department as well as the minister.

- The Minister doesn't have to go through the SG and controller of the Ministry. Subsidies for schools are allotted based on the number of students. In case there is a subsidy reduction for a school, does that mean that there will be less students?

The reduction of student numbers amongst various school boards can be attributed to at least two phenomena. One being a decrease in student numbers immediately after the passing of Hurricane IRMA and the other being a shifting of students amongst the various Secondary Schools with the increase in the number of Secondary Schools offering academic and or CXC education.

- Several reductions in "Onderhoud gebouwen" at public schools for example Genevieve de Weever. What is the reason for these reductions?

The decreases were caused due to requested cuts needed in the budget. The cuts under this budget line is possible as our Ministry is expecting that there will be less expenditures in the areas of maintenance due to the repairs which will take place through the Trust Fund Early Priority Tranche and the Advance Insurance Pay out.

- Will there be scaling back on the maintenance at these schools? Budget post 43503 60086, SLA, contracts and licenses schoonmaak scholen. In 2017 it was an amount of NAf 270.000, in 2018 NAf 0 and in 2019 it is NAf 350.000. What is the reason for this?

The increase is based on the cleaning contract which estimated cost had to be increased considering that after the bidding process the cleaning of the public schools would be executed solely by companies and not in collaboration with the cleaners of the department of Facility management.

- Was there no cleaning of schools last year? Was this contract cancelled?
The cleaning of schools continued last year with the same company and government until the bidding process was completed.
- Was it appropriated to something else?
Three companies were awarded the contracts to clean the public schools.
- What is the reasoning for the NAf 80.000 increase between 2017 and 2019?
The increase is based on the cleaning contract which estimated cost had to be increased considering that after the bidding process the cleaning of the public schools would be executed solely by companies and not in collaboration with the cleaners of the department of Facility management
- A decrease of NAf 1.1 million can be noticed for subsidies. What is the validity behind this estimate?
The decrease of about 1.1 M Guilders in subsidies is related to a decrease in the amount that was to be awarded in subsidies in general compared to the amount that was to be awarded in 2018. The initial projections may be exceeded however, since the figures used for the calculation of the subsidies were based on lower student numbers after the passing of Hurricane Irma.
- Is it tied to a decreased number of students? Have some schools closed?
The amount is tied to a decreased number of Students however we have no report of closure of schools.
- Total personnel cut of NAf 3.8 million signifies a 13% cut from the previous year. What is the reason for getting personnel cost back to 2017 levels while there was an increase in 2018?
This is related to the fact that the budget verses the actual expenditure did not correlate and therefore said cut was made.
- An amount of NAfI. 382.000 is budgeted for collection by the Ministry. Are there any policies or things in the pipeline that are income generating measures from the Ministry of Education?
Currently the Ministry of OCJS collects income funds based on:
 - The collection of Study Financing loans;
 - The collection of fees for diploma evaluation;
 - The collection of fees for administrating private exams;
 - The collection of fees for administrating of naturalization exams.
 Revenue generating fees are also being taken up in the draft the Higher Education Ordinance.
- Indirect income can be for example obtained when someone or organization wants to make use of the L.B. Scot Sports Auditorium. Fees need to be paid. How is this managed? Do these fees go to the foundation? Can this be elucidated?
The income is based on monies received through the rental of the facilities and the monies go back into the maintenance needs of the facilities. The rental income is managed by the Facilities Manager.
- Does Government have any information on any such organization that collects fees related to the use of sports facilities? What is their income and expense like on an annual basis?
Currently, the National Sports Institute (NSI) receives the funding outlined within the budget per facility for the maintenance of the relevant facility :
 - - Raoul Illidge Sport Complex – Fls. 160,000 – Budget post 43456 67022
 - - Jose Lake Ball Park – Fls. 97,000 - Budget post 43456 67023
 - - Great Bay Sports Auditorium – Fls. 87,000 - Budget post 43456 67024
 - - Melford Hazel Auditorium – Fls. 87,000 - Budget post 43456 67025
 - - Belvedere Sports Field – Fls. 42,000 - Budget post 43456 67045

- - Kruffcourt Football – Fls. 7,000 - Budget post 43456 67046
- With reference to the policy document where there are 6 main themes listed that are tied to the NRRP. Does this budget sufficiently address all of these issues? Can this be elucidated?
The budget reflects the key priority areas as indicated in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. However, contrary to the NRRP, the budget is limited to a timeframe of one year. As indicated in the NRRP, the needs of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport amount to approximately 120 million USD, and this amount cannot be absorbed in the budget of 2019. Therefore, efforts for additional funding from insurances, TrustFund and public-private partnership structures remain key, especially for emergency and structural repairs of the physical infrastructure in the sectors of education, culture, youth and sport. Besides the continuation of the execution of our core task as indicated in the budget 2019, mainly personnel costs reflect prioritized key policies and activities, such as: progressing on the safety and preparedness for all MECYS Facilities, continuous efforts in safeguarding the psychosocial wellbeing through mainly student support services and the Safety Emergency Management Committee, capacity strengthening, continuation of afterschool programs, preparations and analysis for curriculum needs and key policy and legislative products developments. These elements are indeed reflected in the budget 2019.
- Is it still the intention to bring a plan to Parliament as a result of the motion that was accepted a few months ago and that the Minister had to come back to Parliament with, within 60 days?

I would like to make it clear that as Minister of Education Culture Youth and sport, that it will always be my intention to report back to parliament and also to carry out Parliament's instructions to the best of my ability. MP Brison you did an excellent job in quoting me as leader of the SMCP. Since 10-10-10 some seventy plus motions have been passed by parliament. However, with the exception of the motions of no-confidence, the results of but a few motions were reported back to Parliament. Parliament requested to receive the Safe School Plan within 60 days, which was not very realistic. I have noted that some of the safe school plans in the USA took 12 months or more to be completed. The preparation of a comprehensive safe school plan on Sint Maarten, involving all relevant stakeholders would take at least twelve months to complete. Furthermore, it is not possible to produce one plan that would be applicable to all schools because of the specificities of each school such as location, school access, layout of school buildings, student population. Consequently, it makes more sense for each school to develop its own safe school plan that would not only deal with the violent and aggressive behavior of students but would also include evacuations, emergency management, etc.

MP Brison, as a retired Pastor, I believe I know a thing or two about preaching, and as you so eloquently put it, practicing what one preaches. So please take note that the Progress report on the safe school plan, consisting of some 22 pages, was submitted to parliament on March 13th 2019. I am very happy to say that there is progress and when the time comes, I look forward to discussing this report with parliament and together, deciding the best way forward, including a more realistic time frame for me to be able to deliver results we all can be proud of. As far as this relates to the budget, I do believe that some time is needed and we are still a ways off from accurately submitting budget amounts for this project. I am however confident that as we move forward we will make the best of what we have to continue to put policies and plans in place for the protection of our children. The Ministry of ECYS already has a policy document, in draft form, comparable to a safe school policy plan, which is entitled the "St. Maarten National Discipline Policy Planning Framework for Elementary Education". Therefore, instead of re-inventing the wheel, this policy framework can be revised to include secondary education, emergency and recovery management

thereby expanding it to become the National Safe School Policy Framework for Sint Maarten. Such a policy framework would require schools to prepare their own specific policies and manuals that deal with several of the elements listed in the Parliamentary motion of November 9, 2018 such as: parental support, positive peer pressure, parental responsibility and public awareness

- And does this tie into the policy plans in the budget?

In my elucidation regarding the motion I indicated that as far as the policy plan relates to the budget, I do believe that some time is needed and we are still a ways off from accurately submitting budget amounts for this project. I am however confident that as we move forward we will make the best of what we have to continue to put policies and plans in place for the protection of our children.

- Where is the funding for NSI?

Budget line # 44301 67016 in the amount of ANG 500,000 listed is geared towards the NSI.

- Is NSI receiving an increase?

The NSI will not receive any increase. The recommendation for 2019 is to continue with their subsidy to ensure that sports programs relating to school sports and district sports and the maintenance of the facilities can continue.

The faction misses the funding or significant increases to be able to achieve the goal listed here (continued support of National Sport Institute and more structural support of the Sint Maarten Sport and Olympic Federation). What funding is being allocated to make this a reality? The faction doesn't see significant increases to justify or explain that the goal listed here is a realistic one.

The budget outlines the relevant posts for sport.

Maintenance of the facilities relates to the posts with a total which has not changed since 2017: ANG. 480, 000

School sports program for 7 sport areas (For the development of school sports): ANG. 240,000

Interscholastic Olympiad for the execution of School tournaments: ANG 24,000

Institutional Strengthening (to assist the sport organizations with upgrading courses and international affiliations): ANG 110,000

Development of National Teams/Olympic Games (participation of our national teams in regional and international tournaments) : ANG. 200,000

International Tournaments & events (to assist with the hosting or participation in international tournaments): ANG. 12,500

Regional Tournaments & events (to assist with the hosting or participation in Regional tournaments): ANG. 12,500

Local Tournaments & events (to assist with the hosting or participation in local tournaments): ANG. 10,000

The faction refers to an article of Mr. Wycliffe Smith from 2017. We have to practice what we preach.

- Why hasn't the Minister lived up to the motion and presented it back to Parliament in 60 days?

As was said before I answered this earlier as follows: I would like to make it clear that as Minister of Education Culture Youth and sport, that It will always be my intention to report back to parliament and also to carry out Parliament's instructions to the best of my ability. MP Brison you did an excellent job in quoting me as leader of the SMCP. Since 10-10-10 some seventy plus motions have been passed by parliament. However, with the exception of the motions of no-confidence, the results of but a few motions were reported back to Parliament.

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Ministry of Public Health. Social Development and Labor

In previous parliamentary meetings different organizations came to Parliament giving presentations concerning medical marijuana. We are seeing other countries who are now moving forward with this even in the Kingdom.

- Are we going to introduce legislation in this respect to generate much needed taxes?
The Inspectorate is in the process of finalizing an execution policy which takes into consideration the existing legal framework and makes it possible to import, store, distribute, prescribe and dispense medicinal cannabis in a controlled manner, so not to cultivate.

Pertaining to alcohol and Tabaco VSA is not working on this legislation as it falls within the purview of the Ministry of Finance in the drafting of the national ordinance revision tax system. The Ministry does support these actions as we see it as a way to increase health prevention and decrease health costs.

- How far back will Government go in recuperating the 10% in medical costs from civil servants in scale 6 and higher?

Answer VSA: This is a legal obligation that dates back to before 10/10/10. It is unclear if old payments are time barred. This is up to finance and P&O to address.

This budget is not lined up with the Governing program. The CFT has pointed out to Government the importance of synchronizing the AOV pension age with that of the Government pension.

- Is it the intention of Government to carry out such synchronization?
- If it is, when? How much has Government spent

The increasing of the AOV age to synchronize with the Government pension age as executed by APS is in process with the aim to go into effect in 2020.

- in 2018 on medical expenses on persons who do not have any medical insurance?
- How much of this amount was spent on undocumented persons?
- How much was spent on documented persons who live on Sint Maarten without the required medical insurance?

The Uninsured and undocumented persons first go to SMMC for Emergency assistance. Only if life threatening then the patient is air-evacuated internationally. Government stands guarantee for this international aspect based on humanitarian reasons. The bill incurred locally at SMMC is not covered.

According to SZV, Naf 306,888,- was spent in 2018 on air ambulance evacuations and Naf 601,439,- was spent on medical costs.

	ANG
Air ambulance	306,888.00
Medical expenses	601,439.28
	<u>908,327.28</u>
Average cost 11 patients	82,575.21

As it pertains to should this be a VSA responsibility; The Minister of Justice is responsible for border control and so this is not my jurisdiction.

At the present time some persons don't have access to affordable Health Insurance, whether for financial reasons or based on certain exemptions based on legislation and so we aim to solve this problem through GHI.

Another issue plaguing the community is the issue of referral. Government needs to indicate how it intends to solve these issues with SZV pertaining to persons who are being transferred to other countries for medical reasons. Seemingly there is a lot of wait time for these patients to be treated and time spent abroad which is costing SZV much more money.

There is a plan to establish an independent medical bureau with the intention to improve the medical referral process. However, this process depends heavily on the schedules of third parties (Flight availability, foreign hospitals & Medical specialists and Hotel reservations) and even though SXM receives preferential scheduling waiting time still exists.

- Is there a policy by SZV or the medical society on best to treat obese or overweight patients (whether or not through a surgery)?

The treatment of obesity requires a multifaceted approach which includes; prevention intervention & life style changes of the patient overseen by care providers.

The SZV pays for the treatment of patients by paying for consultations with GPs, dieticians, psychologists & the bariatric surgery. Persons have to make an effort to lose weight in order to qualify for bariatric surgery and must undergo psychological counseling, follow dietician instructions, exercise etc. The bariatric surgery is only possible if the health of the patient allows for it.

- By the third quarter of 2019, INSO is expected to be sold. Does that mean that the country of Sint Maarten or SMMC are expected to wait until the third quarter of 2019?

The lenders are in the process of a due diligence. We respect this process.

- The goal post pertaining to INSO seems to be moving constantly. What does this third quarter deal mean for the much-needed building of the hospital?

The goal is to have a general hospital of quality standards, including state-of-art equipment and trained staff. This goal has not changed. The circumstances to achieve this has changed and we remain flexible to adapt to these changes.

- What is the plan B?

Should INSO is not be able to fulfill on the contractual agreements; a new tender process will be initiated.

- Is it really that we are going to continue to have tunnel vision as if INSO is the only company in the world that can build the hospital?

There is and never was tunnel vision. INSO was contracted as the result of an open tender process to carry out the projected work.

- Or are we going to start looking at alternative means?

We are confident that the SMMC is taking all alternatives into account.

- Why don't we take the steps for a second bidding process?

The due diligence process is now being carried out. Further actions will be determined based on the results of this and not beforehand.

- Why the tunnel vision or insistence on making INSO build this hospital no matter what?

Should the outcome of the due diligence process deem that INSO is not be able to fulfill on the contractual agreements; a new tender process will be initiated.

- Are there any specific policy guidelines pertaining to interns?
- Are there any further policies in place that dictate the payment or salaries or stipends for interns?
- If not, are there any plans to do so? Is there any structure behind the idea of getting interns from NIPA to work in the local horeca industry?
- Is there any cap in terms of the number of interns that businesses can hire?
- Or is it that a company can have 50% of their staff as interns?
- Is there any sort of cap on foreign workers for businesses?

Internships or job-training are a mandatory part of most institutions as this provides the students with real life on the job experience in their field. These internship positions are usually offered to all institutes of higher education. Eg NIPA, Sundial as well as HBO / Universities in Netherlands or elsewhere. Interns can be found in Government, NGOs and in the private sector.

In addition, to real life experience, interns are usually charged with specific projects which regular fulltime staff who are busy with day to day activities are unable to carry out at that time. Interns also come with fresh ideas and concepts that promote innovation in organizations and help all workers to benefit.

The policy of the Ministry of VSA and by extension Government is always to hire locally however, in some cases this may not be possible and for this reason there exists laws to regulate this practice. In addition once Government realizes a demand, it strives to provide training possibilities (NIPA - construction sector training with MIC-IT) and adjust policies (study financing priority lists) that aim to ensure local employment.

- What is happening with regards to the so called "animeermeisjes" work permits?
- There seems to be some controversy. The Ministries of Justice and VSA sign off on permits but the Embassy in the Netherlands is blocking certain workers from coming into the country?
- What is going on here? Is it now that the Netherlands can determine who can and can't work in our country?
- If the Embassy is being used as a loophole who can come and who can't, then why have a Ministry of justice and Labor at all?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands has indicated that it is not the case that if a work permit has been issued that they should then blindly issue an entry visa.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, during the interviews in the visa application process which takes place in the country of origin certain inconsistencies arose. For example, the women are often unable to submit employment conditions, nor do they know what to expect in terms of working hours, wages, etc.

The Ministry of VSA has drafted a decision which contains conditions aimed at eliminating these inconsistencies.

The draft decision is currently being reviewed and will be published within short.

Ministry of Tourism. Economic Affairs. Transport and Telecommunication

- Where in the budget is the \$5 million reflected for liquidity support for the airport? Apparently, Government already gave the airport the \$5 million but it is not reflected in the budget. It was also mentioned that it was a \$ 15 million bridge loan to the airport. Is it \$5 million, \$15 million or \$20 million bridge loan that Government is looking to offer the airport? Or is it a different amount? The issues of the airport should be dealt with the bondholders before any decisions are taken. If the loan arrangement is not in place soon, the rebuilding of the airport is not going to happen anytime soon or even this year.

Can Parliament be provided with all information on the agreement that was signed for the \$100 million?

Was it signed or wasn't it signed?

Has this Government taken a decision concerning the airport?

Pertaining to 1 the dissolution of the Holding company and 2. the sale of shares of the airport to the Dutch Government. Can Government inform Parliament pertaining to these two decisions? Did Government even have a discussion about that?

The Minister of Finance will answer and handle all matters related to the airport Financing.

The TEATT budget projects NAFI. 50.000 for sports tourism. The facilities however aren't ready to bring in anyone for activities. If invested well there can be a good return on investment.

The financing of the airport the faction finds very confusing. The proper procedure of a national ordinance to grant a loan was bypassed with the argument that it would be incorporated in the 2019 budget. The initial amount that was given to the airport, was the total amount given to the airport or is there a separate line item for the loans to be given to the airport? The faction needs some clarity on this.

Why is it that Government is exploring the possibility to get the money from EIB and World Bank and then now have to loan it to the airport? The CFT advised for the EIB to deal directly with PJIA and loan the money directly? Why did the Government choose to go against the advice from the CFT in this case (page 3 in the response to the CFT advice)? What was the CFT's reaction after the Government ignored the advice?

Response will be provided by the Minister.

- The faction asks about agriculture in the budget. What is the policy related to the management of any agricultural activities from the Ministry of TEATT? What are the plans for these budgeted funds (NAFI. 50.000)?
At present the ministry is looking into assisting local farmers/operators as much as possible to encourage the citizens to engage in back yard farming. We are aware that some schools already have started teaching the students about gardening. Hopefully, this will spur and evolve into the students motivating even their parents into backyard farming.
- With the current personnel stop, is it possible for Government employees to move in the Ministry of TEATT as long as their salary don't change?
If a Ministry has a vacancy that is vacant, budgeted and was advertised, it is certainly possible for persons within the organization to apply and once selected they can then go over to another Ministry. This then allows the dept where the person came from to proceed

with replacement of the civil servant as their budget will be “freed up” to hire someone else (or replace the person that left).

- With the introduction of system that registers what is entering our country through the ports, we can look at a lower duty on alcohol and tobacco while maintaining a competitive edge.

This can be done but it creates a disparity between the Dutch/Southern and French/Northern side of the island, which may affect the competitive position of SXM. Additionally, with our open borders, controlling same may be a problem. Therefore, we may have to coordinate, and Synchronize/harmonize with the French side to minimize the difference in price as well as ensuring that the PCS is introduced to have a better control of the imported goods.

- Can Government give its views on introduction of such a low duty tax?

Budget post 8220, Economic licenses, and 84009-8240, room tax revenue to decrease from NAFI. 2.9 million to NAFI. 2 million compared to last year's.

From all reports occupancy is better than ever. More hotel rooms are available in 2019 compared to 2018 but the revenue is expected to decrease. Can Government explain? 53404-8220 license revenue is projected to increase from NAFI. 5.2 million in 2018 to NAFI. 8.3 million in 2019. Based on what?

- Is Government expected to collect outstanding revenues from business license fees? Or is it based on new businesses that have been established or are expected to be established in 2019?
53450-8230, vehicle inspection revenue. The revenue is budgeted at NAFI. 30.000 in 2019.
- How many vehicles do we have registered for which road tax is paid? Can Parliament receive a breakdown per type of license plate? How many times does each type of category require inspection? What does Government receive per inspected vehicle?

Number of vehicles based on license plates should be addressed to Finance/Receiver's Office, Inspection revenue as well is collected by Finance

- The faction also takes note of a change in the number plates. Can an explanation be provided what the difference is between BUS and B? Is this the new norm and can Government elaborate on this?

According to article 22, paragraph b of the Ordinance on Passenger Transport, a bus is defined by the license plate with a capital letter “B”. This mistake was communicated to the Receiver's Office last year and they consequently made the correction.

- How many T's and G's were given out in the last two years (2018 and 2019)?

	T licenses/ permitted plates	G licenses/ permitted plates
2018	43 licenses equivalent to 143 permitted plates	21 licenses equivalent to 90 permitted plates
2019 (to date)	16 licenses equivalent to 55 permitted plates	2 licenses equivalent to 6 permitted plates

- Have any taxi or bus permits been given out in 2018 and 2019 so far?
No. However, the Ministry has granted requests for transfers of licenses in accordance with

article 13 sub 1 of the Public Transportation Ordinance, which allows for the transfer of licenses, in case of death of the license holder, to their family members in order to maintain the household. Please note, this does not change the number of licenses operating. From January 1st 2018 to date, a total of 6 transfer requests were granted: 3 for bus licenses and 3 for taxi licenses.

- A lot of people are busy with online shopping on this island which leads to a down trend in business activities for businesses on the island. How does Government see itself helping those businesses that will normally get the business from the local population patronizing those businesses? St. Maarten is an open economy with no import duties. In addressing the general trend of online shopping, the ministry through information gathering is encouraging the business to consider the technological changes, adapt new business models and be more innovative with their manner of conducting business
- How does Government see itself recuperating revenues from that?
- What are the plans that Government has? And how does Government see itself safeguarding businesses on this island?
- What is Government's plan in securing that the gaming companies (lotteries, casino's etc.) as license holders are able to have and maintain bank accounts?

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the regulation of the Banking and the Monetary Regulator, which is the Central Bank of Curacao and Sint Maarten. Therefore, the Minister of Finance should provide the required clarification as it is also a concern of the Ministry of TEATT. There is a dilemma to comply with many Int'l Regulations, for example the Foreign Account Tax Compliant Act (FATCA) and its impact on the local banking industry with all its consequences for businesses in general and especially those in the gaming industry.

- What is Government's plan for the tourism product today that we have in Sint Maarten? How does Government see the revitalization, rebranding and reimagining of Sint Maarten after hurricane Irma? We are seeing the shift from Philipsburg to the Simpson Bay strip as the night life entertainment. How does Government see itself partnering in fixing the infrastructure of the strip? The Vision of this Minister of TEATT is that we understand the current economic conditions and are keenly aware of the circumstances, hence the Ministry is working tirelessly to facilitate the re-opening of the airport, seeking the attracting the establishment of U.S. Pre-Clearance, attracting airlift, the financing for the airport, the re-opening of hotels is being encouraged, the supporting of fiscal reform, the promotion of events to ensure that SXM has economic activity, the controlling of businesses and the encouraging of all parties to assist and support government in these challenging times of our economy by means of keeping the island clean, shopping around, reducing crime, encouraging law-abiding citizens both young and old, in order that the economy and the people of SXM can return to the days of glory and Pre-Irma.

With respect to the branding, the destination has identified with the northern side committed to the MOU that the areas for branding will be:

- 1. Dutch French One island two destination many cultures
- 2. Culture heritage history
- 3. Culinary
- 4. Luxury (Villa vacation, weddings honeymoon food lovers)
- 5. Island Hopping

While the above-mentioned outlines the vision, the reality of many economies is that the Capital does NOT automatically serves as the Night life and/or Tourist capital of the country. For example, the Night life & tourist area of Miami is mostly the Miami Beach and NOT

downtown Miami. Therefore, the reality is that market developments has considered Philipsburg as the commercial district mainly for retail businesses with restaurants catering mostly for cruise tourists. While the Simpson Bay areas has developed into the Tourist Area and Night life for both Tourists and Visitors.

- Key Areas for our tourism development
-
- Reopening of the airport
- Rebuilding of the hotels
- Market Research and Data Collecting
- Revision Tourism Master Plan 2020-2030 Midterm plan
- Diversification of the tourism product: Marine Trade Industry, cultural tourism, Sports Tourism, Business Tourism (MICE market, special events), Creative Industry (Orange economy),
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Product Development and Visitor Relations
- Driving Tourism Volume (i.e. AirBnB, Special events, Marine/Yachting Ind., Cruise Conversion)
- Development of Tourism legislation and policies and regulations for a sustainable well balanced tourism product
- What in the TEATT budget is in accordance with the Governing Program?
What is the vision plan for the Ministry? How does the Ministry see itself pushing the economy?

This will be taken up in the presentation of the Ministry during the public meeting of the budget 2019.

- Tourists are asking if the restrooms at the market are operational, not clean. Who is managing them?

The Ministry of TEATT is aware and concerned about the developments surrounding the availability of public restrooms at the market and their cleaning. Ministry of VROMI is in charge of handling the contracts for the cleaning of these bathrooms. This matter has been forwarded to that Ministry for further elucidation.

- What is the vision and plans pertaining allowing facilities to sell food on the Ring Road?
Were any concessions or waivers given to businesses for the rebuilding of hotels?

The Ministry has advised the CoM/MinFin on the request of Maho & Great Bay as it relates to our area of responsibility which is namely the facilitating of licenses for businesses that will be operating in these hotel operations which we have advised positively once the requirements have been met.

- What is the source of funding to cover the Tourism Master Plan?

The Tourism Master Plan from 2005-2015 will be revisited and assessed to see which components can still be implemented, which need revision. Sources to fund is being sought from the WBG technical

I support who will be on island in the week of April 1 to meet with the various public and private stake holders. Being that there is no need to develop a complete new plan the funding that is needed will be moderate.

- Where are we so far in the year where these entities are concerned particularly Carnival Foundation, Regatta, SXM Festival?

I believe The SXM Festival was a success. The 5-day event has brought visitors and EDM lovers from all over the globe pre and post event. Vacationing on the island spending for accommodations, visiting restaurants, and entertainment establishments and excursions on both side of island. A post meeting is being confirmed with the organizers as we speak in order to discuss the results of the Festival and to collaborate and start working on next year's festival and to move forward with a more targeted and result oriented plan of action. Further information surrounding the supported event is being obtained and once compiled will be provided in a report which can be provided to the House of Parliament.

Through the development of an Event Policy which is currently being drafted. This Event Policy will guide as to the types, the requirements and the conditions to which entities/events can qualify for support. The idea is to manage the already scarce resources and ensure that the economy and the country as a whole benefit from these expenditures.

- Have they received subsidies? If not, where is that so far?

Yes, I do agree and with the Event Policy it will again stipulate the requirements and conditions that have to be met.

- What permit does the Ministry of TEATT give for someone to be able to do an event on a beach such as Mullet Bay?

The permit by TEATT only regulates the sale of food and drinks. Other permits may be required depending on the type of event.

- How is TEATT able to coordinate with the other aspects (Justice, Fire department)? There is a huge disconnect here. Is there some sort of follow up to make sure the person organizing the event is actually able to keep the event?

Upon request of the permit from TEATT, the details of the function are not known by the department. Further collaboration efforts will have to be explored to prevent contradictions within the organization.

- When someone asks for a permit to have an event on Mullet Bay beach, does the Ministry inform them that they have to consult with the Towers management first?

The Ministry of TEATT does not send applicants to request permission from the Towers.

- NAFI. 100.000 budgeted in the Ministry's cabinet for consultants. What are the plans/intention for this?

Response will be provided by the Minister.

- Why were the plans to improve Philipsburg removed from the Kapitaal dienst and no longer in this budget?

The Ministry of Finance made the cuts from the Nov version to the March version of the Budget 2019

Ministry of Public Housing spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

How much money has Government collected so far from Rainforest Adventures for Emilio Wilson Estate for erfpacht in comparison to the amount of money that Government has to pay on an annual basis for the loan arrangement that was taken out to purchase the land?

Post 5302 049220 "Canon erfpacht". The total amount that Government is collecting. In 2017 Government collected NAf 3.3 million, in 2018 NAf 3.3 million. In 2019 NAf 4.7 million.

- Where will this increase come from? Did the canon increase or does Government own more land now?
- The increase in erfpacht is 39%. What measures/policies are being put in place to make this goal of almost 40% increase in erfpacht payments?

The current amount that is collectible on a regular yearly basis on existing long lease contracts is about ANG 5,7 million. However on a yearly basis there is a lack of full compliance of payment of the full amounts of canons due by long lease holders, therefore the amount of about ANG 4,7 million is reserved to take into consideration this persistent lack of compliance. The intention is to attempt to improve compliance in payments as well as backlog payments. The amount reflected in the budget does not take into consideration the backlog payments that could also be collected, but reflects simply the amounts to be collected based on the yearly payment of existing long lease contracts.

- Similar can be seen in inspections. What is the justification or policies in place in order for the Ministry to be able to make these collections?
What is being done to make sure that these fees don't decrease?
The increases indicated in the revenues for contributions to burials and inspections of electrical installations is just a matter of statistics and indication of the increase of these services based on a review of trends. These concern services that are paid for before the service is rendered.
- Why is it that the Ministries of TEATT and VROMI didn't see an increase in Consultancy fees?
This question would be answered by the Minister of Finance as it pertains to a general question for all ministries. It is clear that the Ministry of VROMI can use additional funds for consultancy, insofar as available budget may permit.
- What is the plan of approach in handling the Mullet Bay property? Is there anything from Domain Affairs perspective that Government can inform Parliament that is happening with aforementioned property?

As I stated, this is a matter that I too would want clarified, because I would like to have the Mullet Bay Beach regarded as a completely public beach. I have indicated that it has my priority to look into this matter from a legal perspective, as I understand that this is a problem. I will look into this and get back to the Parliament on it.

- Especially seeing the fact that the meetbrief is illegally running into the water. Has the Ministry been in contact with the owner? Has the Ministry been working with Kadaster?

We are currently in discussion within the ministry of VROMI to see if this situation with respect to the beaches can be corrected, because indeed we believe that all beaches should be government or public land. There is no quick solution to this on the table as yet.

- Several personnel cuts in the VROMI budget. Do these cuts negatively affect VROMI in its ability to execute its tasks effectively?
Is it going to be a reduction in staff, hours or efficiency?

The personnel cuts will negatively affect the ability of VROMI to improve its performance and functioning from an operational perspective. The personnel cuts do not affect the performance of VROMI with the current staffing, because there is no cut in the current staffing, only limitations in the ability of VROMI to recruit new staff for positions that are not already filled. This will of course maintain the heavy burden on the current staffing, that has existed for several years, and which has obviously increased since the passing of the hurricanes in 2017 and the increased workload as a result of that.

- Is there a reason why there are so many items on NAf 0 in the VROMI budget?
Some of these posts have been there for years. Can Government give Parliament a quick review of these zero items?
Are they really zero items or have they been moved from one budget post to the next?

The line items with '0' (zero), in general, are line items where there were funds reserved in previous budget years and have either been cut as a result of cost cutting measures to limit the extent of the deficit throughout the organization, or indeed because of shifting of expenses from one line item to another where it may be better categorized. From a budget perspective, to ensure that there is the possibility to make comparisons with previous budget years, it is necessary to maintain the line items even if there is no money reserved under a particular budget line item

Budget post 9115 semi private NGO organizations; one of the zero items that was transferred to another budget post was the St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation. There is a subsidy of NAf 510.000 which is an increase of NAf 36.000.

- Can Parliament get a breakdown of how this subsidy works?
- Is this amount enough in Government's opinion?
- What is the purpose of the subsidy?
- Besides the St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation, are there any other organizations and NGO's who receive subsidy from Government (VROMI) or have submitted requests for subsidy?

The SMHDF does not receive any subsidy from the Government of Sint Maarten. The money that is paid to the SMHDF is a subsidy that is conveyed by the SMHDF to their low income tenants that qualify to receive this, to assist these tenants in being able to afford the rent for the homes. The basis for these subsidy payments is a Performance Agreement signed between the SMHDF and the Government of Sint Maarten in 1997. In addition, a part of the payments are used to cover certain agreed infrastructure maintenance and land lease expenses for the projects under the management of the SMHDF. The payments are not intended to assist the SMHDF with the repair of hurricane damaged homes.

The amount that is paid to the SMHDF may not be sufficient to cover all the costs related to the activities of the SMHDF aforementioned. For many years the SMHDF has not received the amount that they are duly entitled to based on the Performance Agreement, however in the last 2 budget years the budget reservation from the Government to accommodate the agreed yearly indexation of the SMDHF expenses has been significantly increased, from ANG 300,000 in 2017 and prior years, to ANG 474,500 in 2018 and ANG 510,500 in 2019. In addition, we are planning with the SMHDF for a review, to update and modernize the

agreements entered into in 1997, and to ascertain if the levels of subsidy to the tenants and other expenses are appropriately estimated.

- Does Government apply the Subsidy Ordinance on the subsidy given to the St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation and then they pass it on to others? Or does the Ministry apply the Ordinance to individual cases?

The subsidy ordinance is not applied in the case of the subsidy to individuals, that is channeled through the SMHDF. However the SMHDF is obliged to submit year reports, to justify the use of the funds for the intended purpose.

- Has the St. Maarten Housing Development Foundation requested any additional funds besides this that Government put aside?

The SMHDF has requested assistance based on the damages sustained from Hurricane Irma. This is being granted through the funds allocated through the Recovery Trust Fund. This project is currently ongoing.

- The faction would like to receive a list of all organizations being subsidized.

There are no organizations that receive subsidies from the VROMI budget. The Government does not give subsidy to the SMHDF, because as was previously mentioned, the subsidy is to housing tenants that qualify, which is managed by the SMHDF. The NF receives a compensation for services they render to the Ministry of VROMI. Some operational expenses of the Rent Committee and of the Committee of Experts for VROMI affairs are also covered in the budget of VROMI.

In addition, it is my intention to assess the various local private recycling and cleanup initiatives from companies and foundations, to determine if there are ways in which the Government can support these organizations in their efforts. We have already contacted some companies, such as Meadowlands and GreenBox to provide us with overviews of what they are busy with, so that we can see how we can support them. This can be in the areas of financial and logistical support to scale up their activities, and maybe also in community outreach and campaigning activities. Recently we have received a proposal from Meadowlands which we are reviewing, and from GreenBox, a proposal was to be submitted but this was not done as yet.

- What was the wish list of the Ministry of VROMI in accordance with article 34 of the Accountability Ordinance?

The list used as the wish list of VROMI is the list that was submitted for 2018, since there was no capital budget honored in 2018. As nothing had changed, we submitted the same list.

- What is the total ball park figure for the Ministry of VROMI to function accordingly?
- Does Government understand that evaluations are actually a legal requirement by the LMA law that governs the civil service?

Indeed evaluations are legally required, and when an evaluation is not conducted, this falls in the favor of the employee in question. As was stated, specifically in the case of SG's, there

were never any evaluations conducted in prior years, and this government will be the first to implement this..

Budget 904, ROB yard. There is a reduction of NAf 200.000. Another reduction of NAf 600.000 in road repairs and NAf 500.000 in afwatering.

- What was the reasoning for these reductions? With these reductions, how is VROMI going to guarantee at least equal or better efficiency in performance in the carrying out of these tasks?

The premise behind the budget cuts related to the mentioned line items is that there was a temporary increase in the budget line items for roads maintenance and drainage management in 2018, which was related to the cleanup post Irma. These line items have been cut and brought back to the above pre-Irma (2017) levels in the draft budget of 2019. The line item for consultancy services for district upkeep was reduced by ANG 100,000 on the same premise and the budget for the VROMI Yard was cut by the amount of ANG 200,000 on the premise that these expenses are related to facilities and should be accounted for under the central budget for the management of facilities.

Based on a brief analysis of these budget cuts, VROMI has determined that some of these cuts can be detrimental to the ability of VROMI to meet all of its obligations, and indeed can affect performance. This is a matter currently being looked into between VROMI and the Ministry of Finance to resolve. It goes without saying that I am not happy with these budget cuts, as the performance of VROMI can be affected, and these cuts most definitely restrict the ability of the ministry to improve its performance.

The concession of GEBE is listed at NAf 5 million. Both the CFT and the Council of Advice indicated that there is not sufficient documentation to back the reality of whether GEBE can live up to such a condition of a concession or not. Can VROMI provide Parliament with any sort of additional information as to a. how they came to the NAf 5 million concession fees from GEBE and b. is there some sort of letter of intent, a contract or any sort of documentation that the Ministry of VROMI possesses to solidify the intention to collect this NAf 5 million? How realistic is it to collect this income?

- GEBE is owned by Government while they have to pay a concession. What is the legal basis for a "verrekening" of this GEBE concession?

The Minister of VROMI is actually just a representative of the entire Council of Minister as regards to being the shareholder representative for GEBE. So my position as shareholder representative is that of the Council. The matter of this concession from GEBE will be specifically addressed by the Minister of Finance, as agreed, as it concerns a general approach towards concessions and Government owned companies.

- On the income side, budget post 9240 5324505, "verkavelingsplannen". In the past this was budgeted at NAf 84.000 but now it is at NAf 0. Why is this? Have the fees been reduced? Aren't we giving out such plans anymore?

It is indeed so that the phenomenon of the planning permit no longer exists in the Zoning Ordinance at the moment, or it is a provision that the Government has not chosen to reinstate. While approved planning permits are still in effect, the provision to issue new planning permits expired by law in 2012, therefore there are no revenues that can be budgeted under this line item. However for comparison purposes to previous budget years, and for the event the Government decides at some point in time to reinstate the provision, the line item remains in the books at '0'.

- A very steep decrease in the leges for building permits at NAf 1.8 million. What is the reason for this drop?
With the amount of building going on the faction would have expected an increase. What is the logic behind this 33% cut?

The Ministry does support the figures as presented in the draft budget as the income of the VROMI Permits Department has increased over 2018 and is forecasted to increase further over 2019. As I indicated in a previous question about this, it is difficult to predict the amount of revenues for building permits, as this is very much dependent on the state of the economy. Indeed, we now anticipate that the revenues will surpass this amount of ANG 1.2 million, but would opt not to count all the chickens before they hatch. We have budgeted this income stream very conservatively, and if or when the revenues turn out to be more, this can be corrected in the budget or in the year-end financial statements.

The faction was very happy to see the pull up spots for tour busses in Philipsburg in the Capital Expenditures of the budget that was presented in November. In this budget it disappeared.

- What happened between the end of November 2018 and beginning of March this year?
- Why was this removed? Who decided on this removal? Was the Minister of VROMI in support or in protest of this removal?

A lifting station is another name for a sewage pump station. That is still very much on the wish list, but we are looking at other possibilities for this funding, possibly even from other sewage project reservations currently on the capital investment budget.

- Can Parliament receive the wish list/vision from the Minister of VROMI for what the Capital Expenditures was supposed to be?

Attached you will find an overview of the projects, as submitted under the budget for 2018 for desired capital expenses under the responsibility of VROMI. These intentions have in principle not changed.

- What is the number 1 issue that VROMI is faced with that people say that need to be fixed? And the one that the economy and business sector is telling Government that needs to be improved. The thing that has been bothering us for over 30 years. It's the dump. Why is it, that not a single guilder, is allocated in the Capital Expenditures for this? What portion of our taxes is going to the dump?

No one is happy with the state of the discussions with the World Bank about projects and the fact that there are so many procedures and bureaucracy, and that things are taking longer than we expected. However, we also cannot disagree with the fact that the Government is still in recovery mode, with budgets with big deficits, and revenues not being to the levels that we would like. So it makes little sense to me, when we have invested so much time and energy in the dump project from the Recovery Trust Fund, to disregard the moneys reserved specifically to deal with the dump problem. I am still confident that this project will materialize in 2019 and the actual improvement of dump management can start after so many years of neglect. After so many years, at least 10 years to be exact, of VROMI requesting increase in the budget for the improvement of the dump management from the national budget without any results, I am going to try something different and tap into the US\$ 25 million that was approved for this project in the Grant Agreement of December of 2018. Given the dire needs of the population in other areas, because all these areas are

important, I am willing to gamble on the expected results of this project, and forego placing additional financial burden on the Sint Maarten population, by using the Recovery Trust Fund budget for the dump and not adding more deficits to the budget.

On page 83 of the getallenboek, there is a breakdown of the different positions in the workforce. It is supposed to add up to 152. But it is adding up to 114.

- The faction would like to know where the difference in number of employees is coming from? Which one of these are critical vacancies and which one does Government plan to fill this year? Is it already budgeted for? Does the budget account for 152 or 114?

For cost saving measures, there is a general stop on the recruitment of new personnel. The budget is in principle based on the level of staffing that the Government had in 2018. There is an additional general provision in the amount of ANG 300,000 for recruitment of new staff for VROMI. We are reviewing the critical vacancies plan in VROMI to set priorities for which additional vacancies are the most needed at this time. The fact that VROMI is operating with a shortage of staff is a chronic problem that has existed for many years, and we have to improvise in this time of sacrifice until improvement is possible, depending on available financial means. At the moment, some departments are benefitting from technical assistance through the Association of Dutch Municipalities, and for special projects such as those funded through the Recovery Trust Fund, we will appeal for technical support for VROMI.

- In terms of environmental awareness, PR campaigns, signage etc., is lacking. Is there any source with the VROMI budget where this can be allocated?

There is no specific budget allocation for these types of activities in the VROMI budget. In the event these activities will be carried out, we would have to improvise on budget allocation.

- What budget post is used to handle the invasion of Sargassum seaweed in Sint Maarten?

The budget post to be used would be the regular calamities budget under district maintenance.

- What fund does Government tap into to have this cleaned up quickly? What policies are in place for the handling of this?

VROMI and TEATT has had discussions with the SHTA and the Oyster Bay Beach Resort about the possibility to purchase a beach cleaning machine which can also handle Sargassum. The problem we encounter is that the usage might be very limited to certain beaches.

- The number of garbage bins at Mullet Bay are not sufficient. Are there any plans to make an additional number of garbage bins available on our beaches in particular Mullet Bay? What is the frequency of collection for picking up garbage at beaches?

Yes, the government has approved the purchase of various garbage bins and upon receipt the regular green bins will be placed on concrete stands at various locations alongside the beaches. In the new district cleaning contracts that will be tendered and will go into effect July 1st 2019, the frequency of garbage collection and the cleaning of the beaches will be increased. Furthermore, we will work in collaboration with the Ministry of TEATT to enhance the services on the beaches of Kim Sha (Simpson Bay) and Mullet Bay.

- Restrooms at Kim Sha beach/Simpson Bay beach. This area has become a lot more popular with tourists/cruise passengers now. The Ministry of TEATT took it upon itself to acquire a small container right after the storm to be used as a restroom. The intention was that VROMI would take over the maintenance. Has this been done in the meantime? Is the toilet at this beach being monitored and kept clean? And are there any plans to have more toilets at the beaches?

The services for the maintenance of the restrooms in Philipsburg and Kim Sha beach have been publicly tendered and was recently approved. As such, the maintenance of this facility has been taken over by VROMI. There are at present no plans or budget as yet for public restrooms at other beaches.

In the November version of the budget there was a post and it's called description other structures, number 1121: lifting station Philipsburg West. The amount was NAfI. 675.000 falling directly under the Ministry of VROMI. The purpose of this was to create lifting stations on the Western side of Philipsburg so that tour busses are able to pull over.

- Why was this removed from the current Kapitaaldienst?

A lifting station is another name for a sewage pump station. That is still very much on the wish list, but we are looking at other possibilities for this funding, possibly even from other sewage project reservations currently on the capital investment budget.

- Noticeable reduction in this version of the budget compared to the November version of the Capital Expenditures. It was NAf 9.175.000 it is now NAf 6.7 million. A NAf 3 million reduction in the Ministry of VROMI's ability to do capital investments. When did this happen, when was the Minister made aware of this and what is the logic behind it?

The financing of the Plan of Action is not a confirmed part of the capital budget; the Minister of Finance can better explained the conditions and provisions, based on which this can be financed. The capital budget is actually 40 million. The capital budget wish list was initially 70 million and based on the advice from the CFT this had to be cut to 40 million. As a result, this is one of the projects that was cut.

- What would a monthly affordable rent be in the opinion of Government for a family of 4 (2 parents and 2 children)?

Has Government taken inventory of the affordable housing needs on Sint Maarten?

How many affordable homes are projected to become available in the next 12, 24 and 36 months?

The World Bank has recently completed a survey on this matter. The report on this is not yet available, but the first draft indicates challenges for government on this matter. Because the core task of public housing is delegated to the SMHDF the World Bank also is doing a survey to see how this organization is functioning and what is needed to enable them to face the upcoming challenges. The outcome of these reporting will lead to new policy and proposals on this matter.