



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication
Mr. C.M.M. Connor
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/275/2014-2015

Philipsburg, June 8, 2015

Re: Reminder questions MP Sarah Wescot-Williams

Hon. Minister Connor,

Herewith I would like to remind you of the questions by the Member of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah Wescot-Williams, pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten and article 69 of the Rules of Order of Parliament that were sent to you on February 16, UV/175/2014-2015, February 16, UV/176/2014-2015, March 4, UV/201/2014-2015 and March 6, UV/202/2014-2015.

L.J. Richardson, MD
President of Parliament

Linette A. Gibs

Subject: FW: outstanding questions

From: Nancy Joubert [<mailto:nancy.joubert@sxmparliament.org>]
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2015 1:00 PM
To: SXM STA Linette Gibs
Cc: SXM STA Ann Groen-Gumbs
Subject: FW: outstanding questions

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN | |
| Ingek. | 04 JUN 2015 |
| Volgnr. | 151 801 / 14-15 |
| Par. | 8 1187 |

From: S. Agatha Williams [<mailto:williamssaw@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2015 12:20 PM
To: Lloyd Richardson
Cc: Nancy Joubert
Subject: outstanding questions

Honorable Chairperson,

Through your office and as required by law, I have submitted several letters to Ministers of Government regarding issues that affect the citizens of our country and I have asked specific questions regarding numerous matters.

To most of these questions, I have not even been afforded the courtesy of a reply, let alone answers to the questions submitted.

Below I provide you with a listing of the pertinent questions, with the request that you impress upon the ministers their obligation to respond to (members of) Parliament, barring the ground for exceptions as stipulated in the constitution of St. Maarten.

February 10, 2015, IS 410 TEATT Minister (St. Maarten Tourism Authority)
February 12, 2015, IS 411, TEATT Minister (Developments in Simpsonbay)
March 6, 2015, IS 488, TEATT Minister (Security Contract Harbor)
March 12, 2015, IS 519, VROMI Minister (Petition by residents of Simpsonbay)
March 23, 2015, IS 547, VSA Minister (Appointment board members SLS)
March 3, 2015 IS 468, TEATT & VROMI Ministers (Dredging in the S'Bay Lagoon)

Kind regards,
Sarah Wescot-Williams, MP (DP)

Sent from Windows Mail



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and
Telecommunication
Mr. C.M.M Connor
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/175/2014-2015

Philipsburg, February 16, 2015

Re: Questions MP Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Hon. Minister Connor,

Herewith I submit to you questions by the Member of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah A. Wescot-Williams, pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten and article 69 of the Rules of Order of Parliament.

The letter is self explanatory.

L.J. Richardson, MD
President of Parliament



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN | |
| Ingek. | 13 FEB 2015 |
| Volgnr. | 15/410/14-15 |
| Par. | S. M. R. J. |

To the Chairman of Parliament
The Honorable Dr. L. Richardson

February 12, 2015

Dear Chairperson,

Kindly find enclosed questions directed to the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transportation and Telecommunication.

Please forward these to the Minister concerned with the usual expediency.

Respectfully,


Sarah A. Wescot- Williams
Member of Parliament (DP)



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To

The Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication, the
Honorable Claret Conner
Administration Building
Philipsburg, St. Maarten

February 10, 2015

Subject: St. Maarten Tourism Authority (FOLLOW-UP FROM BUDGET DEBATE)

Dear Minister,

During the recent budget debates, you informed parliament of your intentions to "revisit" the structure and functioning of the St. Maarten Tourism Authority (STA). I have to admit that this is your and any government's good right. However, this statement in my opinion comes at a time when that body has hardly been given a chance to execute any of its duties, let alone that its functioning could be evaluated.

Your response in the budget meeting that triggered the above conclusion, has caused a lot of concern in tourism circles. Many are quite discouraged that after years of talking and unsuccessful attempts to establish such a body, now that at least one has been created, there are already talks of change. What or how is any-one's guess. In addition, the state of the representation of our tourism product abroad is dismal for various reasons. No direction, no communication. No plan, period.

Please inform Parliament of the following:

What has prompted this decision by you to "restructure" the fledgling STA?

Is this a decision of the STA itself or of the Minister?

How has the STA performed thus far? Have there been meetings?

What are your ideas for a "restructured" STA?

What timeframe do you have in mind?



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

What happens to the critical outstanding tourism issues in the meantime, such as payments to representatives, contracts with representatives and representation overall?

I look forward to your prompt reply, not only to Parliament, but also to the many stakeholders, who are as baffled as I am by your announcement.

With kind regards,

Sarah A. Wescot-Williams,
Member of Parliament (DP)



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and
Telecommunication
Mr. C.M.M Connor
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/176/2014-2015

Philipsburg, February 16, 2015

Re: Questions MP Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Hon. Minister Connor,

Herewith I submit to you questions by the Member of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah A. Wescot-Williams, pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten and article 69 of the Rules of Order of Parliament.

The letter is self explanatory.

L.J. Richardson, MD
President of Parliament



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----|--|
| STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN | | | |
| Ingek. 13 FEB 2015 | | | |
| Volgnr. 15/411/14-15 | | | |
| Par. | 4 | NRJ | |

To the Chairman of Parliament
The Honorable Dr. L. Richardson

February 12, 2015

Dear Chairperson,

Kindly find enclosed questions directed to the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transportation and Telecommunication.

Please forward these to the Minister concerned with the usual expediency.

Respectfully,


Sarah A. Wescot-Williams
Member of Parliament (DP)



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To:

The Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication,
the Honorable Claret Conner.

February 12, 2015

Honorable Minister Conner,

During the questioning in the Central Committee meeting of Parliament on February 10th, with the Ministers of TEATT and Finance on the Harbor Group of Companies (Harbor), I focused on several references by the Harbor in its 2013 annual report.

These reports by the way, as far as the financials of the Harbor are concerned are a consolidation of all the companies that fall under the Harbor and these are many.

One recurring reference by the Harbor in the elucidation of these reports regards plans for the Simpson Bay Lagoon and the greater area of Simpson Bay.

My serious concerns with respect to these subtle announcements in the Harbor's 2013 reports, were expressed during aforementioned meeting, but were met with denial by the minister of knowing anything of these plans and the assurance that nothing will happen in general and in Simpson Bay in particular without a strategic plan being presented by the Harbor to government, and ultimately to Parliament.

It appears now however, this assurance by the Minister notwithstanding and zoning hearings notwithstanding, that government (read the Ministry of VROMI) since March 2014 has received a request for water rights at the "head" of Simpson Bay to *...develop a pier, hotel and facilities and amenities to service smaller cruise ships....*

The urgent questions therefore are:

- Has this request been granted?
- Who has the jurisdiction for this area? Government or the Harbor?
- Are these the plans the Harbor alludes to in its 2013 reports as far as Simpson Bay is concerned?
- Must government consult with the harbor on this request?
- Are we about to witness a standoff between Government and Harbor like in the case of Dock Martin or are government and Harbor in on this together?



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

It should and can not be that while the Parliament is being assuaged by Government with the promise of a strategic plan of the Harbor, if and when we get so far, the plans for Simpson Bay will already be underway, sanctioned by government and/or harbor.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah A. Wescot-Williams
Member of Parliament (DP)



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and
Telecommunication
Mr. C.M.M Connor
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/201/2014-2015

Philipsburg, March 4, 2015

Re: Questions MP Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Hon. Minister Connor,

Herewith I submit to you questions by the Member of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah A. Wescot-Williams, pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten and article 69 of the Rules of Order of Parliament.

The letter is self explanatory.

L.J. Richardson, MD
President of Parliament



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Chairperson of Parliament,
The Honorable Dr. L. Richardson
Parliament Building
Philipsburg,
St. Maarten

March 3, 2015

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN | | | |
| Ingek. | 03 MAR 2015 | | |
| Volgnr. | 15/468/14-15 | | |
| Par. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Dear Sir,

Kindly see below questions, which I kindly request that you forward urgently to the respective ministers of Government. Given government's stated collective responsibility for government owned companies, I ask that these questions be sent to the Prime Minister and the Minister responsible for Harbor Affairs.

Kind regards,


Sarah Wescot-Williams
MP (Democratic Party)

In the wake of the 911 attacks in the United States, The International Ship and Port Facility Security Code or ISPS Code was developed to enhance the security of Ships and port facilities. Given the large contributions made by the marine sector on St Maarten, both in terms of freight and tourism revenues, security of our port facilities could definitely be considered a matter of national importance. Terrorist attacks, smuggling and disasters could all have serious financial consequences for St Maarten. Therefore parliament not only has every right to investigate recent allegations but has an obligation to investigate recent allegations regarding the Security procedures at St Maarten's ports of entry.

Imagine.....

What would be the impact of a terrorist attack on a cruise ship in St Maarten waters?
What would be the consequence if St Maarten became a major drug, weapons or human smuggling transshipment port?

Financial Stability

The financial stability of the main security subcontractor at the harbor becomes a national security issue. If reports of a Naf 2.3Million debt to SZV are correct, this leads to serious questions and concerns.

A company that is heavily in debt becomes vulnerable to external influences. Would a company in financial trouble be willing to turn a blind eye when it comes to smuggling



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

weapons and drugs onto ships in port in exchange for financial contributions to pay down its debt?

Why would the harbor invest money in training staff of a company that is not financially stable? If the company goes bankrupt, any investments made in training could be lost. Shouldn't training of its security personnel be a responsibility of the security company?

What is the current status of the Checkmate's financial health?

Transparency

The fact that the ultimate beneficial ownership of Checkmate seems to be such an issue simply raises more flags and questions. Imagine if the ultimate ownership of Checkmate turned out to be al-Qaida or ISIS. That would clearly be an issue. There is no valid reason why the ultimate ownership of a critical subcontractor of security services for our main port of entry should be confidential.

Increase in Fees

How does the Harbor group of companies justify \$2.2 Million dollars increase in fees?

Is the Harbor agreeing to the increase in fees to assist funding Checkmate's debts? if yes, why? Again, transparency on ownership is critical.

If statements by Kuiperi are correct, and the contract with Checkmate didn't expire until December 31, 2015, why did the harbor agree to renegotiate the contract to the financial detriment of St Maarten?

Given such a massive increase, why didn't the harbor put the contract out for bid?

If the increases in fees are related to compliance issues, it suggests that the Harbor has not been compliant with ISPS regulations. Therefore, it raises more questions....

1. When was the last Port Facility Security Assessment done and by whom?
2. Has the Port Facility Security Plan been updated and when was this done?
3. Is the Director of Security a Certified Port Facility Security Officer?
4. Has the mandatory ISPS Training been conducted for personnel with security duties?
5. Has the mandatory ISPS Training been conducted for all other port facility operators and employees with non-specific security duties?
6. Are there procedures in place to conduct due diligence checks on companies or person who perform critical functions within the Port?
7. Has a due diligence investigation been conducted since the Checkmate Security had been sold?
8. Does the Harbor have a Security Plan of Action, which dictates the mission and vision of the department, goals and objectives and subsequently tied to a budget plan of the department?
 - a. Is there a formation plan which indicates how much personnel is needed for the facility?
 - b. What is the entire budget for the security department?



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

While it is understandable that there are elements of the security plan that should remain confidential in order to preserve the integrity of the security procedures at the port, managing the finances of a government owned company that belongs to the people of St Maarten should be transparent for all to see.



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and
Telecommunication
Mr. C.M.M Connor
Government Administration Building
Philipsburg

UV/202/2014-2015

Philipsburg, March 6, 2015

Re: Questions MP Sarah A. Wescot-Williams

Hon. Minister Connor,

Herewith I submit to you questions by the Member of Parliament, Mrs. Sarah A. Wescot-Williams, pursuant to article 62 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten and article 69 of the Rules of Order of Parliament.

The letter is self explanatory.

L.J. Richardson, MD
President of Parliament



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To the Chairman of Parliament
The Honorable Dr. L. Richardson

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----|--|
| STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN | | | |
| ingek. 04 MAR 2015 | | | |
| Volgnr. 15/1471/14-15 | | | |
| Par. | 3 | WCS | |

March 4th, 2015

Dear Chairperson,

Kindly find enclosed questions directed to the Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transportation and Telecommunication.

Please forward these to the Minister concerned with the usual expediency.

Respectfully,


Sarah A. Wescot- Williams
Member of Parliament (DP)



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

To

The Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication, the

Honorable Claret Connor

Administration Building

Philipsburg, St. Maarten

March 4th, 2015

Subject: Dredging Simpson Bay Lagoon.

Firstly, I want to commend Nature Foundation and the Maritime Inspection department for their swift action in connection with halting the illegal dredging that was taking place in the Simpson Bay Lagoon.

However, it should not have gone unnoticed that some persons felt quite comfortable to start this type of work without any kind of approval or permit. At least, they were not able to produce this to the inspectors as reported.

I find it hard to believe that this is the case and I therefore ask the Minister to please answer the following question in relation hereto:

1. Has the Minister received a report of these activities by the relevant government organizations?
2. Was this work indeed started without any type of permission?
3. What exactly was the purpose for the dredging?
4. Who are the principals involved and will they be held responsible to undo the dredging already done?

I await your answers,

Kind regards,

Sarah Wescot-Williams