



Parliament of Sint Maarten

Staten van Sint Maarten

Parliamentary Year 2015-2016-086

**National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of
Country Sint Maarten for the service year 2016**

**Report
No. 5**

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 service year 2016.

The Parliament considers this draft to be sufficiently prepared if the questions asked below are answered in time before the public meeting so that the draft can be discussed in a public meeting.

The member of the Marlin-Romeo-faction has the following questions.

General

The faction would like to know if the ministries were able to accomplish any goals that were budgeted for in 2015. If yes, can Parliament receive a detailed outline of such per ministry? The faction would like in essence to be provided with the ministries' plans, what was accomplished and the cost related to it. This is needed to make a better comparison on what is being budgeted for in 2016.

Can Government provide a policy priority list for 2016 and a list of potential risks associated with this budget due to lack of funds? Can Government indicate if it has examined the possibility of shared service efforts due to the limited funds that are available (for example reduction of the number of systems, merging HR departments, sharing of personnel between different departments etc.)? How much will be saved if the administration of the ministries are linked?

Ministry of General Affairs

The faction wishes to know who the owner of the Government building is? This is in relation to the sale of the building. What is the current value?

Is there money budgeted for Electoral reform? And what are the costs involved?

What about those employees that fall through the system, where they do not show up to work, for months even years, but collect 100 percent of their salaries or show up and do nothing and burden the budget? How many of these situations do we still have? What is being done in these situations? Why isn't the no work no pay being used? Instead of us rewarding those specific type of civil servants, the government should ensure that HR Cycle Process is properly implemented and that the hard working civil servants are placed in their rightful scales. Some are walking around with a landsbesluit that does not correspond to their actual function. How many of these cases do we still have? What happened to the kerntakenanalyse that started in 2014? Was it concluded and have the results been implemented? Can Parliament be provided with a copy?

Why was nothing budgeted for the Integrity Bureau? Page 18 of the Elucidation specifically mentions the establishment. Why was this not given priority? The budget for the Fire Department was increased by NAfl. 130.000; what is the cause of this increase? The budget of Burgerzaken was reduced by NAfl. 185.000. How will this reduction affect operations? Especially looking at the responsibilities of the department and the upgrade that is needed with the identity documents (ID cards and Drivers Licenses). The budget for Facility Affairs was increased by 426%. Can an explanation be given for this? The gratificatie and overtime increased by 151%. What is the reason (for this? Is there a structural problem that needs remedying? Have alternative measures been evaluated?

The faction would like to know if there is no continuity in Government. Mention was made that there is no continuity in Government, however, the SG's and Department Heads are permanent. Is Government stating that they do not know the priorities of the departments? Can the Government please clarify this statement? Can Government clarify the following statement: "when monies come in then it will be distributed". That statement is very dangerous in the opinion of the faction, because everyone will want to know who will get from the pot.

Where it pertains linking the Ministries. There is an ongoing project for such. Why did the ongoing project for this stop? Does Government understand what is meant with the linking of the ministries? Can Government clarify this?

Can Government clarify the matter about the security guards working overtime? What is meant with the statement “overtime is needed and no security guards present”? Where it pertains linking of the administration. The idea is to start linking the various Ministries to lessen the burden on the Government. Various persons at BAK were informed which also fall under Ministry of General Affairs. Explain the value of the New Government Building. The market value is NAfl. 25 million and the auction value is NAfl. 17 million?

Based on the agreement made, what will be the monthly payment for the New Government Building, and what are we paying now, what is being paid monthly outside the agreement? What will be the difference between what was being paid then and what is being paid at the moment? So how much will we saving?

How much did Government paid out in the last 3 years in legal fees? What is the basis used to take matters to court and what basis is used to terminate court proceedings? Government lost a particular court case 3 times, will Government pursue for the fourth time? How many Government cases are pending for 2016? How many cases have been lost thus far in 2014 – 2015? And how many won for this same period? Is it true that the Fire Department has taken Government to court?

What is being done to curb the errors by the HR department? There are a lot of civil servants that are disgruntled, documents are being lost. What is being done on those situations? More details can be given if requested. It was also a concern since the last time. Kerntakenanalyse: will this Government take it up again? It was put aside by the former minister.

Will the Civil Registry department fit into the new government building? What will happen to the machinery that is in place in the new building for passports for several years? The situation at the Civil Registry department is deplorable. What happened to the plans for the expansion of the Civil Registry and the Receivers office? Drawings were made by Nieuwe Werken. Where are those drawings? A study was done on this expansion. Pertaining to the scanning of documents in the archive, are there any plans to scan to save our history? Can the current minister inform Parliament whether he has been updated by his support staff about current matters?

Ministry of Finance

The faction would like to know what projects within capital investment, if any, have been identified as priority. What are the priorities per ministry? Can Parliament be provided with a breakdown of such? Can a status report be provided on those policies and any other financial policy that is being drafted? What is the country's debt ceiling and how much have we lent thus far of that maximum?

Does Government have a reserve policy (a policy that outlines a prudent level of financial resources that Government will maintain to prevent service disruption in the event of unexpected revenue shortfall or unpredicted expenditures) or are there any plans to draft one in the near future? Does Government have any reserves at the bank? If yes, what is the amount? What is being done to have a greater emphasis on long-term planning and forecasting in order to identify and anticipate budgetary challenges before they become unmanageable? What policy has been changed in the Tax office to generate the extra income? What are these initiatives? What are the current and planned measures? How will these measures affect the small businesses, of which Sint Maarten is made up? How much of the 2015 Capital investment was used? And for what? Can Parliament be provided with a breakdown? Are there funds remaining? And, if so how much? Can a comparison from 2010 – 2015 of the Capital investment account by Ministry be provided?

If the possibility to lend exists, where will those funds come from? From who, which Government or entity will lend that money and at what interest rate? What steps have the Government taken to increase revenue? And what income generating measures are planned? What is the status of the IVUV project? If still being worked on, has this project been taken up in the 2016 budget? How many losses to outright fraud, overpayment and payments to ineligible beneficiaries of government payments are there? How is the NAfl. 12 million calculated that the casinos owe?

Who are the consultants, in the light of transparency, who are these consultants, names, companies, which technical assistance, which lawyers etc.? Can Government provide this information in detail? The first quarters should

have been done. What were the costs? Q1 and Q2 can be given, why is this not given?

As a former member of CFT and now the Minister of Finance, how likely is it that the CFT will approve or request to amend the budget 2016 and what are the risks based on his experience? Will there be room in the budget for adjustments or is this how far we can go?

What measures have been taken to indirect taxes especially looking at the fact that Government is looking to generate revenues and there are undocumented persons not giving to government's coffers? What measures are being taken for businesses to pay their fair share of their taxes? Are container taxes being regulated?

Can we agree to a monthly update on how the execution of the budget to ensure that the budget is being executed as mentioned?

Ministry of Justice

The personnel costs of the Police department were increased by NAfl. 2 million which is an extra 10%, Prison personnel costs were increased by 64.7%, Immigration increased by 17.7%, Landsrecherche increased by 58%. Will these increases remedy the short-staff situation? Has additional staff been hired to remedy the crime situation? What is the cause of the short staff-situation?

All but two ministries namely Justice and Finance increased drastically while the other ministries decreased. The overall increase in Justice was about NAfl. 8 in personnel costs. The personnel overview in Staat B page 51 shows that only 4 vacancies were budgeted for 2016 which totals NAfl. 3.5 million. What is the cause of this increase?

The faction requests that overtime of police officers and their understaffing be prioritized in 2016 and that complaints be looked into and that police officers continue to take training in the field of security.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs

What is the current policy on school bussing? Are measures in place to: a. reduce expenses and b. control and manage accuracy of invoices? What is being done to ensure the safety of students on the school bus? Have funds been allocated to ensure that the action plan of the policy can be implemented and executed?

What is our return on investment with regards to funding education? What guarantees/measures are in place to ensure that our schools perform on a high level? What incentives are there to ensure that our local young people are groomed to become teachers and teach in the public schools instead of the private/ subsidized ones? The word studying in the region is often used, can the Government explain what is considered the region, so in essence where exactly in the region our students are applying to further their studies?

On page 14 mention is made that the Personnel costs were increased by 24.8%. Can an explanation be given?

Subsidies & bijdragen increased by 222%. Can a breakdown of these subsidies be provided? A budget increase of 39.2% is being projected for Dienst Examens. Can this be clarified?

Personnel costs of Public Education were decreased by 10.9%. Can an explanation be given? What is being done about the increase of undocumented students in Public education? How does the reduction in personnel costs compensate for the increase in enrolment? What plans are in place to curtail undocumented students from inflating our budget? Will the compulsory education law be re-evaluated?

The total budget Personeel van derden for the entire Ministry was increased by 249%. Can an explanation be provided? Has a difference in education quality between the public schools and the subsidized schools been identified? If yes, what is being done to tackle this problem? Can Parliament receive a list of how many students passed for the different levels (havo/vwo/tkl/vsbo) of secondary schools per elementary school as well as a list of risks associated with the budget cuts?

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

Are the water reserves mentioned as income a non-recurring or recurring revenue and how much was collected in 2015? Why was 'overheidsbijdrage SZV' in Ministry of Health not budgeted? The elucidation states that an amount of

NAfl. 10 million was budgeted but the “getallenboek” shows an amount of NAfl. 7 million. Where is the 3 million missing? Does this have anything to do with the 30/20 million that is being discussed in the media with GEBE?

What plan of action is in place to reduce risks and circumvent the bottlenecks? How many persons were unemployed in 2015 and what measures will be taken to decrease this amount in 2016? Have sufficient funds been put aside for the possible epidemic outbreak of Zika and what is the amount? Social development was decreased by 31%, Social Services was decreased by 27.5% and Collective prevention services decreased by 18.4%. Which programs are being cut? How will these reductions affect the current programs? Who will be affected by these reductions? What provisions are being made for our aging population? And are these taken up in the budget?

Reference was made to 5 million and non-active employees. Can the Government explain the non-active employees and the 5 million referred to?

Is the fund for persons who were working before and are still entitled to this non-active insurance?

What investments has Government made in GEBE and the Water company?

When VSA did a cleanup, it was determined that certain persons were receiving ‘onderstand onterecht’. Can this be clarified namely there are no ineligible beneficiaries? This was one of the reasons for establishing the links between the ministries, to avoid these leaks and provide synchronization.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Can Parliament be provided with a list of economic development initiatives for 2016? How will the proposed capital investments contribute towards our economic development? When will the NAfl. 12 million be collected from the casinos? How long has this NAfl. 12 million been outstanding?

How did the casino’s end up accumulating a NAfl. 12 million debt? Mention was made of the fact that it is outstanding from 2007 while mention was also made that the laws started from 1969 which is 47 years. When did these monies start expiring?

Is the NAfl. 12 million for social premiums? Can Government provide an explanation for this? In 2007 there was a court case and the decision was that Government has no grounds to collect premiums from casino. Is Government saying that from 2007 - 2015 nothing was done? There is no legislation for school

bus mobility policy, crossing of schools busses. Is this being tolerated? Can an explanation be given as to what is meant with tolerated?

How will we promote Sint Maarten? What is the plan of action? Is there any intention to amend/revise the law that regulates casino fees? What is the state of affairs on the gaming control board?

On page 22 Bureau Intellectueel Eigendom is not budgeted. Can an explanation be given for this? On page 23 Personeel van derden was decreased by 41.9%. Can an explanation be given for this? And how does this affect operations? Overige goederen has decreased by 29%; how does this affect operations? Can a list of risks associated with the budget cuts be provided? Can the Government explain ROI (Return on Investment)? Can the Government provide clarification what is meant with "catch 22"? What is this Asigura system? Can this be explained? What is going on with the consumer protection agency and consumer authority? What is the status? What exactly is the ministry working on? Can Parliament be provided with an explanation for the school bus mobility plan as well as an explanation of what is being done for the safety of the life of school children on the school busses? What is meant with the positioning of the school bus? The Harbor paid NAfl. 1.8 million? Mr. Mingo is absent, is he the only one that can answer this question? Which legislation will the Central Bank be working on? The Central Bank will be working on the consumer protection and gaming control board legislation? Can more explanation be given as to the help that is needed with these important legislations?

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

On page 25 mention is made that the Beheer Stortplaats (Landfill management) increased by NAfl. 1.7 million. How will these funds be used? What plans are in place to control the continued growth of the landfill? Have alternative measures been researched? And what is holding us back from implementing these measures (Recycling plant)? When are we going green? Are there any Public Service Announcement being developed to make our population more conscious of garbage production? Are there any investments in capital investments for Alternative Energy?

Why was Monumentenbeheer not budgeted? What is being done to maintain and protect our monuments? On page 27 mention is made that Overig onderhoud was increased by 18%. Can an explanation be given for this? Zoning is not reflected in the budget. Can Government give a further explanation seeing the fact that it is a priority? The faction is not aware of the fact that districts are being beautified. Can Government explain this?

The member of the De Weever-faction has the following questions.

General

The faction would like to know if Government has policies for a year plan? Does this budget contain the financial consequences of government policies intentions?

Ministry of General Affairs

Where the telephone issue is concerned. Has it changed or not? Can calls be made online?

What is the position of Government on the Integrity Chamber given the fact that this present Government with the exception of MP S.A. Wescot-Williams voted against it? What is their position now? When will the Integrity Chamber be implemented?

Sometimes rent is budgeted under General Affairs and sometimes it is not. Is Government centralizing or decentralizing? What is the policy?

What is the status of electoral reform, how much will it cost, how much reserved, where can it be found in the budget?

Where is the Corporate Governance Council? What is Government's position on taking pension age to 65? Or is there a possibility of opting out between 62 – 65?

Ministry of Finance

What is Government spending policy, is this constant? Will Government increase taxes, deficit spending, consequences? How do we get out of it? What fiscal actions are taken? What spending is needed to stimulate revenue? On page 4 mention is made of drastic measures. Which Government properties are being

sold? And when will the 'vereffening' be completed? Where it pertains structural growth. How many laws have to change to increase income? Can these be listed?

One of CFT conditions is the debt write off. What is Government's position on this write off? Will this happen yes or not? What does Government intend to do for staffing the Tax Department? Is online filling possible, what is the status on this possibility? When will the switch to indirect taxes take place? What is the income projection? Mention is made of a bond of 9.81 %. Can this be confirmed whether it is 7.0% or not? What budget is allotted to SMDF? Pertaining to the staffing of factions, why isn't there anything mentioned about this?

Can Parliament be explained why less turnover tax was collected and less transfer tax? What does Government intend to do on income, expenditure and budgetary discipline? Pertaining to tax reform this faction would like to know when was this study started?

Has a monitoring committee been put in place? How effective is it?

Can Government inform if internal control department has been established and has that been staffed or is it the intention not to have the department at all?

TOT is the biggest post to economic growth, is there information to back up this statement, can this be proven? Can Government provide facts and figures?

Ministry of Justice

Is there a policy on prevention of crime and terrorism in place? Is the increase in the cost generated by residence permits a result of an increase of residence permits fees or of an influx of more people than before? How many children are there in foster care and what is the actual cost per child?

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs

What is Government's return on investment over previous years on Regatta and Carnival? Why doesn't the Committee Flag day have a budget? How to build a nation without budget for flag day? What extra income is meant in Culture/Youth and Sports?

NAfl. 1.2 million is budgeted for the library. Are there any plans for e-libraries or a combination/merge with USM (especially in light of the accreditation by USM)? Can a copy of the new school bus policy be provided?

The faction would like to be informed regarding the repairs to schools, system of solar panels, issues of rest rooms issues in schools. There is a report on the state of the schools, but this has not been disclosed. Is it addressed in the improvements?

Can Parliament be provided with a copy of the new school bus policy? Bus drivers are checked for drugs and alcohol. How is this done, and by what authority? What is the legal basis for this?

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

What are the financial consequences that derive from the new policy on commercial sex workers compared to the income from before? What will SZV collect from this new policy or are they privately insured? How will the control be carried out and by whom? What will be the implementation cost? On page 5 reference is made to the Sint Maarten Emergency Foundation. Why is it needed? How much will it cost and what is the projected income from it?

Can Government present the public health draft law? It will be a cost saving measure.

What is the status of the pilot project on transportation for the elderly? Is it implemented? If yes, can the results be provided? Can a copy of the report from the actuarissen be received pertaining to the mandatory pension? What is current unemployment rate?

On page 28 figures of an 30.000/90.000 increase are shown. What are the actual figures for 2014 over the 1st till the 4nd quarter to see how realistic the figures are and what was actually collected? Is the subsidy for mental health enough?

On page 64 mention is made of the Raad van Volksgezondheid/ Registratiecommissie medicijnen/tripartite. How are the board members being paid? Where is the employment fund? How will this be financed? For the Mental health Foundation there is no money budgeted. How many patients under there have AVBZ, how many private, how many patients in total?

An increase of the tariffs of the St. Maarten Medical Center is being proposed without the study having been completed. How is the increase justified without study, how many % increased, what are the consequences of increase? Why VSA/SZV are not working on these tariffs? Why more work has not been done to address this issue?

On the budget of 2016, figures for tripartite committee are reflected at zero. The registration committee is also zero. Will adjustments be made to this amount? Can an explanation be given why it is at zero? Mention was made of the recently completed tariff study; can Parliament be provided a copy?

How will ABVZ be able to cover the Mental Health Foundation's budget? Can clarity be provided on the Nader rapport and the advice of the Council of Advice? Can more information be provided on the objective of the ambulatory foundation and their proposed activities? Can the account number of the tripartite committee registration be provided? Is the tariff study an internal document that can't be shared with Parliament?

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

What is the state of the economy? Is there an economic policy and a monetary policy? Under Opbrengsten luchtvaart scheepvaart mention is made of NAfl. 1 million and elsewhere it is zero. Why this discrepancy between the two? How can we do that different? Where can the figures for Economic Affairs be found where it pertains to different markets of tourism? Is there policy on religious institutions receiving monies? Which institutions are entitled to it? Cruise conversion has a small budget of NAfl. 45.000. How can this work with such a low amount?

For 2014 NAfl. 7 million was projected for BTP concessions and in actuality only NAfl. 2.1 million was collected. In 2015 NAfl. 5 million was projected and in 2016 NAfl. 3 million. Can the real figures be presented and explained to Parliament? Which other regulatory body than BTP has this arrangement with Government?

Is there a legal basis in place for the checks on school bus drivers for narcotics and alcohol? Can Parliament be provided with a copy of the school bus policy? Clarity needs to be provided on how testing of school bus drivers will be done. On page 12 of the Nader Rapport. Which other entities in Government has this same arrangement or privilege?

Between Heineken Regatta and Carnival which one is producing a return on investment? How much? Can clarity be given which medium is used for promoting St. Maarten, Expedia or Trip Advisor? Mention was made by the Minister of Finance that trade shows are not producing anything, while the Minister of Tourism stated they are, how will this be settled to ensure both ministers report the same and that we are able to market Sint Maarten effectively? Who is the person marketing St. Maarten via the trade shows? Is the French side piggy banking on the Dutch side marketing efforts? Is there any joint collaboration with French side ref. promoting of the island?

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

What happened that a septic truck fee is necessary at the amount of NAfl. 250.000? Is it new contract? No figures are given for the transition landfill. A new contract was signed, but this is not reflected in the budget it seems. Where can it be found? There is no money budgeted for reconstruction and maintenance of cemetery. Where are these items taken up in the budget?

Will the erfpacht and canon be reviewed? Will a zoning plan be approved and those that can pay more will pay more? Will Government reevaluate who pays what and in which districts? Is zoning in place? Can Government take this into consideration? With reference to page 15, what effect will this have on infrastructure and what needs to happen? Can VROMI and Education investments be specified?

Can Government indicate which choice have to be made where it pertains maintaining incineration or go to waste to energy? Which would be better? Pertaining to the upgrading of cemetery or district maintenance, this faction would like to know which one is it? Pertaining to the monies received from GEBE. This faction would like to know what effect this will have on the infrastructure?

The members of the United Peoples Party-faction have the following questions.

Ministry of General Affairs

The faction would like to know what has Government invested in the Government building? What is the actual cost? What does this purchase lease

entail? What will the loan payment be and what proceed will go to both entities and in what proposition? When do we see ourselves paying off this debt while renting / leasing or how will this building then become ours? Will we build a new one or leave it in the hands of the SZV and what will they then do with the building?

Can the statistics be provided on the wider capacity that we need? Can a breakdown be provided how we intend to use the 30 million? What regulations are in place to minimize expenditure of Government owned vehicles?

Pertaining to the project national development plan it was stated that it bears no cost to the country? Can an explanation be given what that means?

Where it pertains the Integrity chamber it was stated that it is not necessary and was put on hold, it is not bearing any burden to the Country. Can Government give a further explanation on this?

Government rents buildings. Does rent of buildings involve any type of cost? What is the total cost? Can the term "it not bearing any cost to the Country" be clarified by Government?

How many consultancies we have since we have the personnel hiring stop? This faction would like to receive a breakdown.

Ministry of Finance

On page 8 mention is made of loans that will be due in October 2016 at the amount of NAfl. 20 million due to beautification projects before 10.10.10. Is it really 6 or 7 million? 2 figures were mentioned, 20 million and 26 million, has this loan matured over the 5 years? Is this the same loan or another loan? What can be done to save money to recoup having to present a lean budget each year?

Can a step by step explanation be given on how Government intends to increase tax compliance by at least 15%, and how much revenue will this generate for Government coffers? Can Government (possibly via the Central Bank) provide a breakdown or list depicting the difference in amounts between cash and card/ check payments deposited on banks?

It was mentioned that some businesses use card machines registered outside of St. Maarten. What measures are considered by Government to ensure

that Government receives tax revenues from this type of practice and how does Government plan to eliminate such practices? How does this effect the TOT payments made by such companies? Does the Central Bank have a role in monitoring such practices? Are there any policies that protect consumers from merchants adding additional fees to credit card purchases/ transactions?

How much does Government pay in rental fees for government subsidized organizations? Are there any measures in place to curb the subleasing, without the consent of Government, by these organizations?

In the explanatory notes it is stated that the working class has increased by some 9%, is this increase reflected in the amounts collected for social premiums as well as income taxes? Are there plans in place to ensure that this is reflected across the board? Reviewing the income of government, we can see that TOT has not been working for St. Maarten. Businesses have become creative at somewhat avoiding this tax. It cannot be that every time the Government needs money, it increases taxes on those who are compliant.

Last year a motion was submitted by this faction instructing Government to start the process to switch to a sales tax or value added tax, which would cast a bigger net and everyone would contribute to the coffers of Government. It also stated to make a report on the feasibility of reducing or eliminating wage tax, giving our people more spending power. Was anything done by the Government concerning this motion? Does Government consider switching from TOT to a sales or value added tax? Does Government consider direct or indirect taxes to be more beneficial for the Government of St. Maarten as it pertains to revenue generating? Are there any increases or new taxes in the works that would affect the working class of this country?

Mention was made that the breakdown for the capital investments can only be available after the Council of Ministers approves the priority list. Will this list be approved before the voting for or against this budget? And if not, is Parliament expected to vote for a budget without knowing how the monies that we are committing the country to repay in loans will be spent? Same as with the 20 million being demanded of GEBE?

How are the rates controlled for third party contracting because they are very high, also when there is a stop on personnel hiring does it include these third party consulting? The list provided of third party consultants including legal and other experts amounts to over 4.1 million a year, in two cases, being the case of the Justice ministry as well as the ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor it is duly noted that the amount of time given for the third party contract are listed as a onetime function or that the contract ends at a specified date. However the majority of the case is itemized as a yearly amount. Who are these companies and individuals? This alone equates more than the salaries of Members Parliament. While it is understandable that every ministry has a controller, how is it that we do not have dated contracts? Can you provide me with a list of these companies?

Ministry of Justice

As it pertains to the 2.7+ million, the faction would like to know if it represents the Legesverordening? If so, the question is more geared towards the deposit for applicants for permits, art 11 of the Legesverordening and art 9 of the Toelatingsbesluit Waarborgsom. Could the deposit be made non-refundable?

Is the ministry still considering establishing substations, and if so where? Is the ministry still in negotiation regarding the purchase of the land in Cay Hill to house a substation? Does the budget 2016 as presented consist of financial provisions to fund retroactive salary corrections, normal salary promotions and jubilees? Was the functiehuis and plaatsing approved? If not when? Has the decision by the previous cabinet regarding the life insurance for police officers been carried over into the 2016 budget for realization? If yes, has there been any preparations on the terms of reference concerning this (public bid for insurance companies)? Have the heir(s) of the late Gamali Benjamin been awarded the respective life insurance equal to the amount as regulated for firefighters? What are the possibilities of the Justice Academy training security companies? Is the BAVpol training a possibility to train these security officers? With overtime pay being a major concern and carnival approaching, what plans are in place to ensure safety during the complete carnival season? How does the prison perform adequately under the current circumstances? How does Government plan to go about this?

The faction has been hearing internationally and locally that Sint Maarten is a corrupt island. Is there any indication or hard proof that the casinos on Sint Maarten are laundering money or involved in any illegal activity in any form or fashion? Can this be investigated? Where are these casinos that are involved in money laundering? Government should come with concrete evidence that the casinos are involved in money laundering. Are casinos connected to the underworld? Have any legal cases against casinos been brought to a judge?

The departments of the police force have complained. Has Government already consulted with the police union and other unions that represent the police force, the other employees and immigration as there are issues that concern these individuals ref. promotion and their living situation? What are the problems in the police force in regards to housing?

How are we going to educate our police officers and get proper education facilities? How are we going to provide management with academic training? What is the possibility of having officers trained in the same training as security officers ensure more BAVpol? What does Government have planned to ensure we have enough police officers for the entire carnival season?

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs

It has come to the faction's attention that loans for study financing funds were not in place on time for students, is this so? How much is being redeemed from former students who have completed studies and are now working, how much is being paid back yearly? How is our liquidity situation and what can be done to safeguard a basic liquidity so that we don't have to borrow for this problem? With the reduced subsidies, which institutions are effected? Is UJIMA involved in the 44.201 budget post?

In the past a Central Committee was held and adjourned and thereafter never finished. It was about study finance. The faction would like to have this clarified. What is spent on this post and what is the repayment? If this is to be a revolving fund, then this has to change. If the ordinance doesn't exist, this gets difficult. Can Government clarify this?

Can Parliament be provided with the agreement on studying in the region (USONA agreement)?

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

Is there a policy in place for all mentally challenged persons who are able to work? This will be to minimize the expenditures.

As it pertains to interim positions, such as the S.G, is there a length of time in which this position needs to be filled? Does the pay reflect the position? Does it mean that the one holding the position that they are doing the work for two and how long can that go on? The reemployment insurance, where are we getting the funds from and is it included in the budget?

The companies that have been inspected. How many in the past year? How many were closed down? Where were they located? As of 2016 how many were inspected and how many were closed down and where were these companies located? How can we make the pension fund more sustainable?

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Since the Minister of Finance is of the opinion that tradeshows don't contribute and the Minister of Tourism has a different opinion, what effect will this have on the budget of the ministry? How does Government intend to solve this difference of opinion? How much is spent? What are we losing if no one attends?

How did the decision come about to cut 10% across the board? Why not 5%? What formula was used? How was it determined how much subsidy should be cut when it's not regulated in the subsidy ordinance? How was the cut determined? How much is paid out? How do we come to the conclusion to take a cut in this ministry which is a ministry needed to promote the economy of the island? Will the STAT be set up in 2 months as mentioned? Does this mean it is already in process and what kind of entity will this be?

There has been an increase in stay-over tourist rates over the years 2013 and 2014. However this is not reflected in government revenues.

What is being done to increase the revenue and enable Government to measure actual sales?

Has the ministry received any cruise line reports for the past year? If yes, what is the amount of monies spent per passenger as mentioned in this report?

Has the ministry confirmed this increase in collected revenues from the increase in expenditures?

What kind of entity is the STA? Who is setting up the STA? Who are the stakeholders involved? How much money will be saved by moving the Tourist Bureau and STA to the old fire station? And is it so that both will be housed there? Is the design for the building and the estimated cost to build and furnish it available?

What plans does Government have to attract tourists during the low season? What major international events are scheduled to be hosted this year on the island? What major shows will the ministry be attending this year?

As it pertains to Comparisons and Revenues on the markets where Sint Maarten is being or expected to be promoted as far as North America, Benelux, and South America. How many tourists do we attract from these markets as it stands now? What are possible new markets for us to enter? Has the Ministry explored the possibilities of entering the Asian market?

In the Business licenses department an uncollected licenses project was done last year where they had over 2000 plus uncollected licenses in office. The 2000+ licenses were those approved between 2002 and 2014 but never picked up. Can Government provide a summary of this project? How much does that account represent in revenue loss?

After the project survey was addressed, how many licenses were picked up and how much does that represent in revenue?

As it is now, when people apply for licenses they pay NAfl. 150. A lot of people never pick up the license after it has been processed and completed. If we charge the full or even 80% of the NAfl. 1.550 fee, we will be able to keep more money in the coffers. At the same time attract a more serious businessman or woman so our civil service will no longer waste time on working on these licenses and then they are not picked up. So the question is can we raise the price? And lastly it would be less necessary to run people down for money of work done by the civil service.

What was put in place to curb this situation?

In an attempt to address this issue can we move away from an "application fee" and instead charge the full fee upfront (non-refundable)?

It was indicated that it will now take two weeks for licenses to be approved, that is a great step of improvement. Can Government elaborate on how this will be executed?

What is the current status on attaining our category 1 status?

What is the status on the civil aviation and MET office building?

What are the measures the ministry is considering in implementing for stricter control on telecommunication companies to generate revenues that will assist in covering budget?

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

Can Government explain if the cemetery cleaning fall under district cleaning and if it is budgeted for 150,000 a month? 150,000 for 2 cemeteries? Is cleaning included in that amount?

How does the ministry ensure/oversee that entree to buildings by physically impaired persons are realized in the establishing of buildings, when issuing the respective permits? Are their inspectors who are assigned this task? What policies are in place to substantiate this practice? And are there fines issued if persons are in non-compliance?

What measures has the Ministry taken to ensure the following changes as it pertains to N.V. GEBE: Will the fuel clause be eliminated? What kind of relief can be expected? Will this as a result, be reflected on the invoices of its consumers? What studies were used to help determine the waste to energy project? Can a copy of the respective study be provided? Was the author of this study paid? Did the Ministry use the study to determine the Terms of Reference? What are/were the dates for this process?

Problem with rain on pond fill with regards to flooding where the former police houses are. Can it be connected to the Sundial area for the water to go?

The member of the Democratic Party-faction has the following questions.

Ministry of General Affairs

What is the status of the NDP (National Development Plan)?

Ministry of Finance

The faction would like to know if Government can give an elucidation as the reason for the creation of a St. Maarten Government Emergency Medical Services Foundation.

The economic growth for 2015 was projected at 1.4%. What was the real growth? What is the Budget 2015 vs. realization 2015 (Budget vs Actual)? Are the 2014 figures in the draft 2016 budget accurate? What is the status of the annual account 2014 for Sint Maarten? Can data be provided on the "pensioenen en uitkeringen ex-gezagdragers" as mentioned in the Nader Rapport on page 6?

Can an explanation be given on the drop in "loterijvergunningen"? What is the Policy for cabinets of Ministers (See staat H)?

What is the St. Maarten Development Fund's program for 2016? Is there synchronization with Government for subsidized institutions? Can a status update be given of the "Vereffening"? The elucidation states the Netherlands is not (yet) in agreement, yet we took note of an objection by Curacao recently. The Nature Foundation is not mentioned in the subsidized institutions. Does the Management of the Marine Park not require such?

Ministry of Justice

Can an update be provided on the operations of the FIU (MOT) in terms of its effectiveness? What is the status of the Prison expansion project?

What is the status of the implementation of the Justice protocol, signed with the Kingdom/Netherlands government?

What is the motivation for the increase of NAfl. 1.2 million for the income of “verblijfsvergunningen”?

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs

Is there a new plan for school bus transportation?

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

Unemployment amongst young men is reportedly at 28.2%. Can overall unemployment figures and trends be provided? The Government wants to establish the APS premium officially and retroactively at 22%. What premium amount is taken up in the 2016 draft budget? Which "Steps to get to an NHI" are being undertaken (see page 21)? What is the status of the Health Information System? Is the system in operation? What is the policy on the Elderly (Ouderenbeleid). Is there one? Is the mandatory 2nd layer pension being worked on? When is the increase in the pension age to 65 years being envisaged? It is stated that "Bottlenecks exist to the implementation of an NHI (National Health Insurance). How then will the approach to a National Health Insurance be?

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Why was only NAfl. 1.9 million paid for the Harbour concession in 2014? What are the projections for the cruise industry for 2016 and 2017?

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

Ministry of General Affairs

What is the thought process of Government on the Government building? Why did you make it a priority? Can Government give an account on the state affairs of the condition of the Census office? What plans does Government have to remedy the situation?

Can Government give an account what was done by the former Government to the Census office, new building? At least an attempt was made by this Government to get the budget translated in English.

Can Government explain what contributions are being made, financially or any other way, to Sint Maarten by the Netherlands? Is there any financial contribution in this budget by the Netherlands?

There are some fees that we call Kingdom fees or kingdom taxes. Sint Maarten is definitely paying money to Holland. Can Government shed some light on this? How much money is being collected for passports, leges etc.?

Can Government explain why the helpdesk of Telem in Curaçao? Why can it not be here? If it can be here, how fast can it be here?

Ministry of Finance

Do the Government Owned Companies have money in foreign banks, if so what is the benefit of this activity and why not put the money on the local banks? Can Government explain what Through Port fee is? What is this, where is it collected, and how much money this brought to the island in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015? The faction would like to receive an explanation on the Tax Holiday. How does a company qualifies? Can a small or local company/entrepreneur also benefit/qualify? What is a CRIB number, how does a person or business get a CRIB number? How many CRIB numbers do we have in St. Maarten? Where are they registered? How many are business related and how many person related? How many are related to the public sector and the private sector? Pertaining to land tax, water rights. Are they paid? How much was collected in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015?

Concerning the reduction of salary compensation for Members of Parliament. Can Government provide a breakdown of the gross Salary if 19.000 is earned as well as if gross 12.000 is earned and what is the net salary is for a Member of Parliament to take home? Can Government provide a breakdown from 2012-2015 of the costs for the government owned companies of consultants and legal fees and travel expenses? Are the Government owned companies up to date with their yearly financial reports? With reference to

Minister Tuitt, what happened to the internal controller that was there before? Can the consequence of not having a balanced budget be explained? Can Government explain the last time St Maarten had a balanced budget? Can Government explain the reasons why there is a surplus in this budget? What does it mean to be given an instruction and why was government given an instruction? Why was the 2015 budget not approved and why the CFT did not give their approval?

Ministry of Justice

In the budget of Justice, are there funds for the camera system that has been talked about a lot on the island?

Is there sufficient budget so that the outer part of Philipsburg can get cameras? Government is advised to look at the French side to see how it's done on the other side of the Island.

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labor

Is there a shortage of beds at the St. Maarten Medical Center? How many beds are there? How many are needed at the moment?

Can an explanation be given pertaining to the possible expansion of the ICU (intensive care unit)? How long is the request to have this upgrade done on the table? Where it pertains the equipment on the grounds of the St. Maarten Medical Center. What is the situation with that in terms of the move and is there any costs related to that?

Can a follow up be given of how long the acting SG is in place?

Pertaining to the sex workers policy. Can Government elaborate more on the policy? Is there a policy that Government is willing to implement? Is this new? Can an explanation of the process be given?

Elderly charged when they collect their pension at the bank, can Government look into the functioning of the pension, so when pensioners are collecting their pension, they get their full money and nothing is being taken out? Will SZV pay the administrative fee?

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

The road through Dutch Quarter was being upgraded, but then it stopped. When will this project be completed? Can a time frame be given?

Area in Dutch Quarter, by the emergency homes, it's extremely dark in the night, the road is graded every so often however, can Government find some money in the budget to do something with cement or asphalt for paving of the road? In Suckergarden area from the hill where Cowboy lives, this road is very narrow, is the department of VROMI aware of this and do they have plans to upgrade this and the Suckergarden roads? On the corner of Arch Road and Suckergarden, can Government look into the possibility of widening the corner? Many big trucks need to make that corner. GEBE bought land in Hope Estate, how much land was bought, when and for how much, and what are the plans intended for that? Front street and backstreet there are black netted rims around the coconut trees, and iron sticking out. Can Government do something about this? People are getting hurt, including tourists. Can Government look into front and backstreet road with the sunken bricks? Do you have personal wishes that you will like to get done seeing that you used to work for VROMI and you are now the Minister of VROMI?

The member of the United St. Maarten Party-faction has the following questions.

Ministry of General Affairs

There was an incident with the vehicle of the Minister of Justice. A deal was made that the former minister could keep or buy MR-3. This faction was informed that the vehicle was sold. It needs clarity, how do you buy a Government Can the minister do this on his own or does it have to go on open auction? Was there any documentation on the sale of MR3? If there is sale, than the vehicle should be given to the former minister and not be driven around.

Pertaining the new Government administration building, this faction would like to know when the finalization of the administration will be? How Government tends to see how the works will be done in a speedily manner to

make sure that the different ministries are able to move in into the new building? We need a plan of action.

How does the advice procedure in the ministries guarantee quality control and delivery of services in actuality? Cars for example, who checks that we are purchasing ten cars for 10k each but have an invoice reflecting 110k suggesting one car fell through the cracks?

Of the 150 vehicles considered to be part of government fleet, how many vehicles belong to Government? How many are actually in use, and how many are being rented? The question may sound the same but specifics are being requested. How many vehicles are we paying insurance for? What type of insurance(s) does the entire fleet consist of? Who carries out control of the wear and tear on Government vehicles (e.g. tires, batteries, filters motors etc. for servicing etc.)? How much is actually spent on vehicle repairs and service in general? This faction would like to receive a breakdown of this for each ministry. What is happening to the vehicles in the VROMI yard? Are these apart of the 150 as listed in the budget? Has the ministry considered implementing a tender for full maintenance (extensive) of all government owned vehicles? How is the need for new vehicles established? How does the ministry determine when to go from all risk to comprehensive or third party insurance?

How much money is spent on paper, ink, toners, and servicing of printers and copy machines? Does Government have any plans on going automated or paperless? If so when? Has a study been made to determine what it will cost to go paperless and what we are paying now to see which makes better financial sense?

What is the status of the telephone policy that was initiated by the previous Prime Minister?

Is the ICT department properly staffed? How many civil servants are budgeted for the department and how many do we have right now? Is that amount sufficient to assist the entire government offices?

In relation to the National Development Plan, how much is the total cost of the project? What is the timeline for completing this plan?

Now it is understood that the (NDP) is a United Nation Development Project (UNDP). However does it have any financial consequences for Government? As a follow up to the previous question. If Government has indeed invested in this project, how much money has been spent so far on it? How much of it was indeed contributed through UNDP program and how much has been invested in consultants from abroad for this project? What role will Members of Parliament play in this plan? Is it the intention of this project to eventually contribute to the financial affairs of the country?

While it was clearly stated that this is not yet off the ground the faction would like to make clear that is has the faction's concern. How much money has been invested in the integrity bureau project? As it pertain to training and activities? Are any other monies being spent on this project even while on hold? Were any consultants hired for the assessments and who or which ministry bears the burden of this cost? Does Government still have any outstanding where this project is concerned?

How much (crucial) open vacancies are there per ministry at this time? What is being done to fill these positions? What is being done to promote internal growth for those qualified? Has consideration been kept, or has the ministry exhausted using the BrainGain project to recruit (return) students/professional locals?

As it pertains to the third party consultancies be it companies or individuals, how are the respective tasks/function that these consultancies have been hired to carry out reflected in the actual personnel organization of Government? The numbers in personeel van derden are significant, and as such does not validate such actions as "internal" personnel stop". Can a breakdown of the consultancy firm listing be given as it pertains to the type of business these consultancies are (eenmanszaak, etc., n.v.)?

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

Can Parliament be informed concerning the land that TESI NV/ KIM Sha owns? Have they been paying erfpacht for the land? Have the land of the parking lot at Kim Sha been given away to the same port de Plaisance group in long lease? Was a lien put on the property for the parking lot in Simpson Bay by Tessi N.V? If so, what was the reason for the lien?

There is much talk about the landfill, what is the urgency that should be used to fix the issue of the land fill, what is the priority to fix it? We have seen in the newspaper the awarding for the garbage collection. How much money will the new bidding for the garbage collection save government?

Many persons are using government land and not paying erfpacht, what are the plans to ensure and enforce that government will and can collect rent on this?

What is the plan of the ministry to collect water rights from persons using the water rights that were not issued to them? Issue of Kadaster, does it fall under the Ministry of Finance or VROMI? Concerning Caravanserai's court cases: erfpacht lease land has been sold, monies have to be paid to the owners to close the deeds. Not sure if it is Kadaster or the notary's fault but monies have been lost because of their mistakes. Does this Government have to absorb these losses, can the director and the board be held liable for their wrongdoings? The amount can run into NAfl. 10 – 15 million.

Can Government provide a copy of the investment plan of GEBE to Parliament?

The member of the Maurice A. Lake-faction has the following questions.

Ministry of Finance

Page 8 of the elucidation, CFT report 2014, poor financial management, what has been done to reflect this, what is in the budget 2016?

The sale-lease agreement with SZV and APS is the it the same as a long term loan, was the CFT involved/informed in this and do they support Government in this?

What income generating measures for budget 2015 have this Government cut and what was the projected income? Will this Government come up with a structured income generating measure?

Is there a post for emergencies and calamities / unforeseen emergencies?

Ministry of Justice

Overtime is budgeted for over NAfl. 3 million for Justice. What were the actuals in 2015?

How much is budgeted for training and development for the Police Force?

What is the action plan for the immigration officers at PJIA? When will they be placed in the positions that they are trained for?

Some of the young Professional Police Officers are part of the mobile unit and want to be rotated. Government is advised to listen and look into their concerns and issues.

Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment and Infrastructure

Upgrading of Front and Backstreet. It has to be handicap accessible. This has to be taken into account. Can Government take this into account? The comment on Arch Road was a good comment. Can Government check with the landowner to see if he is willing to extend?

The member of the Silvio J. Matser-faction has the following questions.

Ministry of Finance

Is the Government looking into all the technical and interim positions that are filled by outsiders and place locals to fill these positions? How are we going to change this to have locals fill the positions as this will be less of a burden for government, getting our students back?

How is Government looking into a capital flight in Sint Maarten? Using expertise of local accountants while expertise is on the island, are we looking into preventing this from happening? How can we make it attractive for new investors to come to the island? How can we come up with incentives that generate good income for Sint Maarten? Is the Government looking into ways of incentive for local companies to employ more of our youngsters to get into the market to get the youngsters into jobs?

This report can be considered the end report.

Adopted at the meeting of the Central Committee of the 10th of February 2016.

The Reporter,

S.A. Wescot-Williams