



Minister of Finance

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To: Parliament of Sint Maarten
Attn. President of Parliament, Mrs. Grisha S. Heyliger-Marten
Wilhelminastraat #1
Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

STATEN VAN SINT MAARTEN

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Par. *J* *WB* *GR*

Philipsburg, **JAN 19 2022**

Subject: Draft National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of country Sint Maarten for the year 2022

Ref. no. 4069G

Excellency,

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

I trust to have informed you sufficiently, and in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely,


Minister of Finance
Mr. Ardwell M.R. Irion
St. Maarten

CC: The Council of Ministers

National Ordinance stipulating the Budget of country Sint Maarten for the year 2022 (National Ordinance budget 2022)

NOTE FOLLOWING THE FINAL REPORT

Parliament in its meeting of the Central Committee has exchanged views with the Government on the draft National Ordinance stipulating the budget of the country Sint Maarten for the year 2022 (National Ordinance budget 2022).

Parliament considers the present draft to be adequately prepared when the questions below are answered in time for the public meeting so that the draft can be discussed in a public meeting.

In order for Parliament to consider the present draft to be adequately prepared, so that the draft can be discussed in a public meeting, Parliament is hereby provided with the answers to the questions stated in its final report.

The text of the questions as stated in the final report is expressed in black, while the text of the answers is provided in blue.

The **National Alliance faction** has taken note of the draft with interest and has the following questions and remarks.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

Parliament said they made amendments in budget 2021 and they wanted to know if they were taken up in 2022

Please note that amendments made to the 2021 budget were included in the 2022 budget.

They said they are unable to see that in the current setup of the budget.

Should Members of Parliament want to make amendments to the 2022 budget, please do not hesitate to do so. These approved amendments will then be included in the 2022 budget.

However, if there are specific questions pertaining to amendments made in 2021 that Members of Parliament or in this case MP Wescott would like to see in the 2022 budget, please clarify which amendments the MP is referring to specifically and I will gladly respond accordingly.

Will we fight for debt cancellation and needs to be pursued seriously?

Your motion of June 2021 has not fallen on deaf ears. The Ministry of Finance has started the discussion regarding the liquidity loans on the organizational level. That discussion includes the position taken by Parliament as per the motion of June 30th 2021 on debt cancellation.

Online payment: issuing of persons owing for long lease if this can be included.

Facilitating customers with multiple and convenient payment options continues to be high on our agenda MP Pantophlet. At this moment, we have several remediation projects happening

in both the Ministries of VROMI and TEATT which will allow Finance to gain an insight into monies we may have outstanding and to gain a firmer grip on what we have ahead of us. Once these processes are completed it will be incorporated on the online services platform. Our goal is to have this completed and operational by end of year 2022. I took the initial steps early on to create a platform to be able to pay on line. This has made it possible for other ministries to offer the possibility to pay online. Suggestion: have it deducted automatically from Civil servants salaries.

This is a suggestion.

Pensioners: find ways and means of ensuring that they are exempted from paying taxes. We continue to look for ways to reduce the tax burden of the people of St. Maarten which includes the senior citizens, which includes the pensioners. As mentioned during the Tax Reform debate the objective is to broaden the tax base and reduce the individual tax burden on all our citizens. Those in the lower income brackets.

Unless they are making a certain amount. So they don't get so much pressure. See the answer provide above.

We are not allowed to borrow, to loan then what can we do.

It is being asked what we can do if we can't borrow. The government has included the financing needs in the budget. The borrowing options available to St. Maarten are subject to approval by the Kingdom Council Of Ministers for which the KCOM seeks the Cft's advice. This means we need to continue investigating what other possibilities there are to make the necessary investments in our country. We should consider in this regard the important role that government owned companies have played in the past and the role they can play in the future when they have recovered from the consequences of the last few years of economic setbacks. Financial stability and financial independence should be our collective goals, providing St. Maarten with the fortitude to set its terms and to invest in the priorities it sets.

Dividend policy. How far have we come with the policy/law? Isn't it being discussed any more or has it been put aside?

The development of the dividend policy is still ongoing. The high level of priority that this policy had was decreased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the crisis surrounding it and the fact that in general entrepreneurs and government companies on Sint Maarten are in survival mode. But I do agree this is a critical issue. Just yesterday we had this discussion with TelEm.

How much is it now, can it be used to deal with projects that are needed for Sint Maarten.

At this stage, a Dividend Policy on its own is not enough. Given the tremendous amount of our debt, (about 1,4 billion at the end of the deficit period) a few million dividends will not solve the country's financial challenges. Some new initiatives could be started with it, but more substantial changes, more rigorous measures are needed to turn the tide for the mid and long term.

Short term contract: art 2 of the law foreign labor, inform parliament how much has been collected in fines from business or employers that were found in contravention of the aforementioned ordinance.

This answer has been provided by Minister VSA. But I agree that we lack data. We need data to make data driven decisions. The department of Statistics needs to be upgraded.

In order to get proper data, we must know the population of SXM. Undocumented persons are not included.

I would like to state that having adequate data is vital in making projections and planning the country's development. For every country it is of utmost importance to have adequate data. I will elaborate on this topic as I respond to MP Duncan's questions.

Collection of data: how do we make a data-informed decision without data collection?

Having adequate data is vital in making projections and planning the country's development. For every country it is of utmost importance to have adequate data. As I respond to the question of MP Duncan I would like to emphasize that discussions are being held regarding this topic with the consideration of establishing an independent bureau for data collection. I consider this to be a priority.

Phasing out of license plates in 2023. Is it budgeted for? What savings can we look forward to?

Currently, the Government has begun a pilot program in which we will eliminate the need to renew your license plate annually. We have already engaged with one of our major stakeholders in the Justice chain for feedback on the pilot program in which positive feedback was given. By July of 2022 we will have sufficient data to confirm if the pilot project is ready for 2023.

Now in pilot project phase. First vehicle tax online payments. Hope everyone will make use of this option in January. Using the QRcode concept of the vaccine and build an App. Official Road Tax App, Beta phase of the App. Meeting held last week with the Justice Ministry. 10 officers will be able to control using the App. 50 government vehicles will get the required stickers including 10 fake stickers. Data of the vehicle and owner will be imbedded and payment information. This is the second phase. Updating the software of the cameras to be able to read the QRcode. Officers can then spend more time doing other things that need their attention. Controlling the motor vehicle tax payments can be done more efficiently with this method. Officers recommended changing the sticker color annually to facilitate easier control.

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

What is phase 1 of the Ring Road? How will 5 million be allocated?

The Ring Road, phase 1 is the section from Prins Bernard Bridge up until Salt Pickers roundabout. The Naf. 5.000.000,- will be allocated for the drainage and hard surfacing of that section without the projected roundabouts.

Link 6. Part of the road exists, but from the Bethlehem side MP sees 1 million. What exactly are they going to do? Link 6 is supposed to be the east – west connection. What is the intention there?

The projected 1 million is earmarked for structural repairs to the existing road alignment, due to various complaints from the residents.

Repair to Front Street has started in 2021 and continues 2022. MP has not heard that repairs have started. Not sure which repair has started. Can an explanation be given?

The repairs to Front street project was previously answered. In regard to the start of works, this will commence shortly.

SMHDF: What are the plans for Government for the SMHDF (Sint Maarten Housing Development Foundation) and specifically what are the plans for government for social housing.

Government and the Ministry of VROMI in particular believe that the relationship between

Government and SMHDF needs to be strengthened to ensure that SMHDF's full potential can be realized. Government wishes to increase the access to social housing on St. Maarten and considers SMHDF a key partner in developing plans to (1) improve the existing social housing stock on St. Maarten and (2) to develop new social housing. With the support of the Trust Fund, and especially Emergency Recovery Project I, VROMI and the NRPB are currently working with SMHDF on improving the existing social housing in Belvedere, where the renovations of the towers are starting in the next few weeks. For these renovations, approximately 5.5 million US Dollars is available through the Trust Fund. VROMI and the NRPB will also be supporting SMHDF in the development of proper maintenance plans for the units that are being renovated.

Moreover, Government is exploring different options to work with SMHDF on increasing access to social housing, including through potential support from the Trust Fund. The Ministry of VROMI is and remains steadfast in its commitment to work with SMHDF in addressing the urgent housing needs of our people".

Ministry of Justice

Illegal immigration – to fight it, a proper border control management system needs to be in place. Is this reflected in the budget or is it even necessary needed right now? Is the current one

sufficient, is it a priority?

Currently the Immigration officers make use of a Border Management System (BMS) which records and monitors the traffic of persons at the Border. As such, there is currently no need to allocate an amount of funds on the budget of 2022 for a new border management system.

31.5 Mil on the budget. Great. However, if I understand the State Secretary correctly this will only be received once it has been established that Sint Maarten can carry the burden of a new prison and the operations once it has been completed. I need the minister of justice to explain whether there is a final agreement or an assessment ongoing or are we to find out later? Could it be a repeat of 2016 where the minister is lead to believe that she is getting a new prison for 31 million guilders and on the back end you are going to say yes but you have to be able to afford a 31 million guilders and afford exploiting managing operating a prison of that size.

State Secretary Knops has expressed on several occasions in different arena including in the Netherlands' House of Representatives that the Netherlands will make an amount of EURO 20,000,000. (Twenty million euros) available for the financing of a new prison on Sint Maarten. The total amount included in UNOPS' most recent rule of law infrastructure proposal is US\$ 39,543,599 (Thirty-nine million five hundred and forty-three thousand five hundred and ninety-nine dollars). This amount minus the total amount that the Netherlands will contribute which in dollars is US\$ 23,000,000 (in EURO 20,000,000) results US\$ 16,543,599 (Sixteen million five hundred and forty-three thousand five hundred and ninety-nine dollars). **US\$ 16,543,599** is the amount that Sint Maarten must contribute on the based on the estimate received from the UNOPS proposal itself. It is important to note this does not include additional costs and operating costs which the Netherlands in its discussion with Sint Maarten has requested Sint Maarten to show what steps are being taken to bear the operating and additional costs. Although, monies have been reserved on the Capital Expenditure for the financing of the building of the prison two important points must be noted here:

1. It has been communicated to the Netherlands (BZK) on multiple occasions that the Ministry of Justice requested the Ministry of Finance to reserve monies on the Capital Expenditure for the building of the prison to which the Ministry of Finance agreed. However, BZK was made aware of the fact that in order for these monies on the Capital Expenditure to become available, the CFT would have to positively advise on it and the Netherlands would have to write in on the loan. Although, the importance of a new prison is widely understood by all stakeholders and partners alike, no guarantees have been given on how the CFT will advise and what the Dutch Government's response will be. As such I share MP William Marlin's concern and would hope that this resonates with our partners.

2. It is only after UNOPS has conducted and finalized its research into building of the new prison that it will be known what the actual operating costs for the prison will be. In addition, with respect to the additional cost for the project, as you may know it is only once the building has started that insight is gained into this.

I will close of this question with a statement that I made previously on the floor of Parliament:

Sint Maarten's interest must continue to be put first in the discussions on the new prison and the final agreement signed with the Netherlands and UNOPS must be reflective of this.

For me it is imperative that the following three things are realized; Sint Maarten is

1. getting a facility that we need, can afford to construct and can financially maintain.
2. that our agreement with the developer would be a turn-key agreement and
3. the developer will commit to a completion date and honor same.

This means that the amount that has been quoted to Sint Maarten is reliable as to be expected from a professional international organization and as such guarantees to deliver by a specific date.

These three positions are vital as I cannot commit Sint Maarten to an agreement that is harmful to us a country financially or otherwise.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

One of the risks mentioned is key departments within the ministry being understaffed. Of the critical vacancies to be filled in 2022, how many specifically are for the department of education? How many in total for the ministry ECYS?

The Ministry ECYS had a total of 10 budgeted vacancies on the 2022 draft budget. These 10 budgeted vacancies were allocated as follows:

- Cabinet Minister ECYS – 2 budgeted vacancies
- Department of Education – 3 budgeted vacancies
- Division Public Education (Public Schools) - 5 budgeted vacancies.

How is the high turnover of staff being addressed?

It has not been established that there is a high turnover of staff, however, it has been noted that in general there are some civil servants who are requesting transfers between Ministries, while some are leaving Government for employment with better conditions in the private sector and some are even leaving the island in search of Better opportunities in the region or the Netherlands.

What are the planned activities for the iSTEP program in 2022?

The planned activities for the ICT in Education project for 2022 is a joint project between Division of Education Innovation(DEI) and Division Public Education (DPE) , which is a public tender to purchase digital boards for all classrooms in the public schools. DEI will continue to support DPE with purchasing ICT equipment to complete the IT networks in the public schools and with the license fees for the Device Management and Education Transformation platforms.

What innovative projects is the ministry working on for the youth, such as coding, robotics, crypto currency? How is our youth being exposed and trained in these innovative areas? Has the Sint Maarten Vocational Training School giving these technological classes just mentioned? All public school will receive an Educational Coding and Robotics Kit using the "Wonder Workshop "Robotics Platform. The kit comes with two (2) ready-to-go robots and five free apps, which include in-app puzzles and challenges, across all subject areas. The teachers will have access to a coding curriculum that is organized by subject areas to make it easy from

them to integrate into their lessons. The introduction of this is to encourage students to continue building critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills for tomorrow's job market.

Does the Summer School Policy also take into account technological classes such as coding and robotics?

The Ministry of Education Culture Youth and Sport is currently finalizing the Policy Framework for the Summer School Program. According to the research executed, enrichment and extracurricular courses on subjects such as art, technology, and leadership are recommended to be delivered during the Summer School Program. Details regarding the nature of the enrichment courses focused on technology will be further determined in collaboration with the executing schools.

Can an update be provided on the restructuring of the Sint Maarten Vocational Training School and how this is reflected in the 2022 budget?

The process regarding the possible restructuring of SMVTS is still ongoing.

What is the budget amount for school material for the Sint Maarten Vocational Training School? How is this amount intended to be spent in 2022?

The budgeted amount is Naf 100,000. The monies will be spent on replacing and replenishing of books and resources currently in use.

What type of books and other school material will be ordered for the schools?

DPE orders textbooks and materials for all subject areas including student workbooks. The order for Math, English and Dutch are usually separate orders because they are each sourced from a different company.

The special needs policy is intended to be finalized in 2022. Once the policy is finalized, what is the next step and how is this reflected in the budget?

The next steps once the Special Needs Policy is finalized include the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the policy. This includes ensuring the proper training of teachers within Special Needs and Inclusive Education, which falls under the Professional Development Plan (Teacher Recruitment & Retraining Activities, budget post 43489.60090). In addition, 200,000 is reserved under budget post 43489.60073 (Education Reforms) for other implementation activities.

What STEM projects are at the PWA school and Sint Maarten Vocational Training School? What will be used for the 2022 budget?

Both PWAS and SMVTS will receive the Education Robotics Kit from Wonder Workshop.

Questions related to the Department of Culture

How is the department of culture collaborating with Ministry TEATT to enhance our cultural and tourism product? Any policy being worked on jointly to ensure culture is reflected in tourism?

The Department of Tourism and the Department of Culture have established a good working relationship between departments.

However, there is no set policy but a mutual understanding on collaborating on tourism and culture related projects.

Over the years, there have been several collaborations; more recently the Mural Insta Tour for Philipsburg.

Will there be possibilities for courses on our history and culture organized by the department of culture for tourism, tour guides, taxi drivers, persons working in info centers etc?

One of the goals of the Department of Culture and UNESCO is to organize workshops to educate educators, afterschool programs, persons the within the hospitality sectors and the public about St. Maarten's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

What I missed is the initiative that focuses on ensuring that our professionals in the tourism industry truly know our local and historical facts in Culture?

As mentioned before one of the goals of the Department of Culture and UNESCO in 2022 is to organize workshops to educate educators, afterschool programs, persons the within the hospitality sectors and the public about St. Maarten's intangible cultural heritage.

What is the collaboration between the two ministries on our cultural product?

In 2022, the Culture Department in collaboration with the UNESCO office will be organizing cultural heritage trainings on the ICH convention for policy workers in the culture, tourism and economy department to ensure the policies related to cultural heritage (intangible and tangible) are updated and clearly described and defined in the island's national policies and legislation.

Are there any policies being worked on jointly to ensure that our culture is reflected and integrated in our tourism industry?

There is no set policy, but a mutual understanding of collaborating on Tourism and Culture related projects.

What is the collaboration between the two ministries when it comes to culture and our tourism product?

The Department of Tourism and the Department of Culture have established a good working relationship between departments.

ISTEP developed an app that can be considered to give cultural experience to students and visitors. How is the department of culture working with this istep project to promote and stimulate culture to be able to reach the masses and what are the plans for this in 2022?

The Department of Culture is in the process of collecting Historical information on Monuments to include in finalizing of the cultural tracking. Once this is done, the Department will investigate the possibility of including these plaques in the ISTEP project/Monument walk.

What is being done but not limited to the development of creative industries as an economic sector for our youths

The department has been at the for front, in creating platforms for introducing the Culture Creative Industry, through hosting several culture Creative industry forums, finalizing the set-up of the artist guild, supporting artist education through talent scholarship as well as creating scholarship policy.

How is the development of the Cultural Sector being done?

The department is stimulating the Cultural Creative industry as the driving force for the development of the Cultural Sector. This includes supporting organizations with subsidies, advising on intellectual properties, establishing policies and legislation related to Culture as well as collaborating with UNESCO, TEATT and MECYS in education, tourism, and convention ratifications.

What is happening with the national theater for performing arts

The plans for the National Theater of the performing arts are currently on hold as the financial means and land availability is scarce.

Letter of concern from Teen Times. What is being done but not limited for the creative industry for the youth in the economic sector and how is this being realized in the budget?

The department is stimulating the Cultural Creative industry as the driving force for the development of the Cultural Sector. This includes supporting organizations with subsidies, advising on intellectual properties, establishing policies and legislation related to Culture as well as collaborating with UNESCO, TEATT and MECYS in education, tourism, and convention ratifications.

as well as planning for Culture Creative Industry Career and College recruitment Fair for youths and creating the apprentice ship match maker program which matches creative industry professional with young creative, interested in pursuing careers in the creative industry.

How is the further development in the cultural sector in the schools being realized in the budget?

Intangible Cultural heritage projects are presently being executed at four (4) after school programs in collaboration with the UNESCO Office. Wire bending and stilt walking programs are presently being offered. The intention is to offer these two ICH programs at all after school programs and to offer other projects such as: doll making, kite making to name a few.

What is the status of the national theatre for performing arts? Has this been finally incorporated in the budget?

The National theater of the performing arts is currently on hold as the financial means and land scarcity. The department is refocusing its efforts to renovate the John Larmonie Center of which will include a small theater that is to be used for training and performances.

Are there any plans for adapting or making the John Larmonie Center and the Cultural Center more user friendly and more workable for the youth?

The John Larmonie Center will be renovated, and the Cultural center has plans to upgrade the seating area.

What is the ministry's intention on these important concerns of the youth ref. letter teen times?

The concerns expressed matter to me as Minister of ECYS. The Ministry will review all points introduced and engage the ministry staff to follow up

Questions related to the Department of Youth

Can you list the projects to be executed in 2022 in the scope of youth?

The following projects and activities will be executed in 2022 by the Department:

1. Rights of the Child Awareness Campaign;
2. Institutional strengthening of the Early Childhood Development Sector;
3. The Business Outreach and Placement Program;
4. Positive Action;
5. *Institutional strengthening of the youth stakeholders (NGO's);
6. *Youth Round Table Conference and forums;
7. *Data management Training;
8. *Data Collection via Social Mapping;
9. *Development of a Violence Prevention Program;
10. *Development of a National Positive Parenting Program and National Parenting Vision;
11. *Meaningful youth participation trainings;
12. * Development of a National Youth Monitor.

NB: *activities that will be executed in collaboration with UNICEF technical partners

Will the BOPP program that caters towards the youth take place in 2022?

The execution of the annual Business Outreach & Placement Program will take place in 2022. The Department has worked on revisiting the concept of the BOPP by offering more and diverse opportunities to its participants.

What are the priority areas for early childhood in 2022?

In collaboration with the Ministry of VSA the priority areas for Early Childhood Development in 2022 are:

- Establishment of the Comprehensive Early Childhood Development Policy Plan.
- Funding model for Early Childhood Sector to facilitate increase in access.
- Finalization of the updated Minimum Standards for Early Childhood Development Centers and its action plan.

What are the targets for early childhood in 2022?

In collaboration with the Ministry of VSA the targets for Early Childhood Development in 2022 are:

- Increase the number of Early Childhood Centers that have Safety & Emergency Plan;
- Options of funding models;
- Capacity building trainings;
- A Nutrition Guide; and
- Establishing learning outcomes for the sector.

What is the status of the integrated youth policy 2020/2025?

As the Minister of ECYS I have approved the Integrated Youth Policy Plan 2020-2025; The Department has been organizing the Youth Round Table Conference and Forums. This is a strategy that is part of the youth mainstreaming concept. The youth together with other relevant stakeholders are indispensable partners in the process of creating and implementing policy. Youth RTC is scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2022, under the theme: "MY PARTICIPATION MATTERS".

What is the status of the funding prevention program and youth desk?

In collaboration with our technical partner, UNICEF-NL, a Violence Prevention Program and a National Positive Parenting Program will be developed in 2022.

With regards to the Youth Desk, the Department of Youth anticipates that the office infrastructure will be ready by 2022 for opening. The planned activities will start once the Youth Desk is functioning optimally.

Questions related to the Department of Sport

Is the department of sport working on any new sport awareness for 2022 besides the annual awards and open house?

In addition to the annual sport awareness campaign which encompasses the sport conference, sport and creative industries open house and the brown pelican sports awards, the Department of sport will continue to highlight athletes and organizations monthly and the programs being executed by the National Sports Institute.

Are there any other plans for the youth in sport development realized in the budget?

Financial support for the execution of school tournaments and after school programs is reflected in the budget in the amount of Naf. 454.000.00

The teacher professional development course, can I get more information on this and the budget and procedures and outcomes expected of it? Not only training but recruiting new teachers.

Sint Maarten has been faced with challenges in meeting the demand for teachers. In 2018, several school boards escalated their challenges of being unable to fill teaching vacancies after the passing of Hurricane Irma in 2017. Due to the obligation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (MECYS), to ensure quality education, the Ministry embarked on

creating the Professional Development Program (PDP). The PDP is geared towards filling the gap with qualified teaching staff to meet the needs of Primary and Secondary schools. It will provide in-service primary and secondary school teachers with the necessary qualifications to teach legally on Sint Maarten. It will assist school boards in providing opportunities to its in-service teaching staff who have been granted dispensation by the MECYS, to fulfill their obligations within the two-year timeframe.

In addition, the program is also geared towards providing the opportunity for other professionals in the community desirous of changing profession with the opportunity to certify to meet the qualification requirements of the teaching profession.

The Ministry has partnered with USM/UVI to offer the Bachelor's in Elementary Education, the Bachelor's in Secondary Education, and the Certificate in Secondary Education to our Primary and Secondary School teachers. The costs associated with the execution of the PDP, to a maximum amount of NAf. 500.000 has been budgeted for the ongoing professional development training in 2022.

Your opinion minister ECYS on the way in which Government handles development of sports and culture, for reforms I mean for restructuring of departments and ministries. They say that they operate in the confines of the legislation, is there not a need to change the way they operate? Government needs to be a driver for sports for example. What would need to change for the youth to feel more supported?

The sporting world is one that does not allow for Government's interference, this is shown currently by the sanctioning of the Russian Government by the IOC (International Olympic Committee) and the fact that Russian athletes during the recently concluded Olympic games, participated under the Olympic flag and not their own. The challenge that we face as a department lies in how much we can and should assist within the above-mentioned confines. The Department facilitates the development of sports through the provision of funds (program of requirements policy) as well as facilities (facilities policy). The responsibility of sport relies on sport organizations and their development of their coaches and the athletes and their organization in general. The Department facilitates this by covering the costs of notary fees (articles of incorporation) to assist with the structural development of the organization; providing funds for coaching training through the relevant federations; and funds for training camps for the national team athletes. Funds have also been made available for school programs and district programs, national team travel, uniforms, equipment, and national tournaments locally. Government is a driver for sports on St. Maarten.

Regarding the phrasing of the question "What would need to change for the youth to feel more supported?" The implication is that the youth does not feel sufficiently supported. There is, however, no information given that this is the case. To the experience of the ministry there is always room for improvement, and for better communication about the function and operations of the ministry's department of culture.

The core function of the department is to safeguard, promote, and develop the cultural heritage of St. Maarten.

The reform that the department would explore is the introduction of field officers or executing bodies within the department of culture

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

How much has been collected in fines from business or employers that were found in contravention of the national ordinance regulating foreign labor?

Any fines or penalties for infringement of the Ordinance on foreign labor must go to the Public Prosecutor for processing as the law doesn't provide for fining directly by the Inspectorate of VSA. Based on the information provided by the Inspectorate of VSA, in 2020, the Public

Prosecutor processed a total amount of NAF 47.000. The exact amount collected for 2021 is unknown.

Regarding the Mental health situation, in your capacity as minister will u be able to grant the two psychiatrists a temporary ministerial decree allowing them to practice.

As stated before this matter is subject of a current court case and Therefore, I am awaiting the outcome before taking any actions.

What developments are taking place in the Ministry as enhancements for persons within the community with special needs or disabilities? what is currently in place and how is this reflected in the budget.

We have boosted our outreach programs. One of the outreach programs recently launched is our Community Days.

December 18, we will be in Dutch Quarter to meet persons in their community who need assistance whether it be for jobs, financial assistance, medical aid, legal aid, and one on one discussions with the elderly and disabled persons who can get to the helpdesk.

What is currently in place?

- a. Community Development has a worker assigned to work with persons with disabilities that encounter problems in their living situations. Persons can contact the department via the Community Helpdesk. Community officers go into the communities to look into challenges that the disabled encounter and/or consult others on behalf of them.
- b. The department of Social Services provides medical assistance, financial assistance, crisis care and social work assistance for the disabled. Legal aid is also arranged for the disabled upon request.
- c. The department of Social Development in collaboration with SZV installed an AVBZ Committee to handle all requests for AVBZ Care.

How is this reflected in the budget?:

- a. Falls under the budget post personnel cost for the fte of the worker in community development and activities organized by Community Development fall under the budget post Projects and Activities of the budget of the department.
- b. The department of Social Services has separate budgets for financial assistance, crisis care, and SZV manages the budget for medical assistance (PP cards). Legal aid budget is at the Ministry of Justice as this service falls under that ministry. The salaries of the three social workers comes from the budget post personnel cost of the budget of department of Social Services.
- c. AVBZ care has its own fund and SZV manages it.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

MSMEs(Micro, Small and Medium, Enterprises) – access to capital for micro-financing. Saw in the TEATT budget for investment promotional agency. Will it double as small business center? It was budgeted in the past for entrepreneurs to go to for assistance.

No, it will not. The Ministry is in the final stages of acquiring a partnering agency to execute MSME Policy objectives, such as coaching, guidance, training and preparing MSMEs to access finance. The partnership is planned for one year in first instance, with a possibility to extend based on the success of the partnership.

I would like to see some tax incentives for MSMEs (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises), they are the backbone of the economy, is this something Government is looking at and when can we expect this policy?

We agree. Our role is limited to an advisory one when it comes to taxation. With this in mind, the Ministry has via our MSME Policy advocated for tax incentives for MSMEs, which we hope will be incorporated into the planned fiscal reform. This also applies to the areas of diversification as well.

Manufacturing products on Sint Maarten and sell abroad, what are we doing to create an environment to see this happen and market their locally products, where is this reflected in the budget?

Light manufacturing is one of the diversification areas identified by the Ministry and we are currently exploring initiatives to stimulate/ support this sector.

Firstly, the Ministry in collaboration with the Department of Kingdom & Interior Affairs is working to establish a Made in SXM Market, to give entrepreneurs in the creative industry a platform to display and sell their products to residents and visitors alike. Additionally, the Ministry is also in discussions with the Kingdom Agency for Entrepreneurship (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO) to launch a business matchmaking initiative to exchange expertise and best practices in among others the area of agriculture and (light) manufacturing.

MSMEs (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises) – protection, can we protect our people to allow them flourish and be successful? This is done everywhere else.

The Ministry is looking into the establishment of a buy local campaign, which would tie into the promotional efforts associated with the Made in SXM Market that we are aiming to organize by the 2nd quarter of 2022.

Happy to see culture and arts orange economy is getting attention, seeing cooperation with ECYS and TEATT, needs to be sustained and in a structural manner. Lots being produced with music and arts here on Sint Maarten and also tied to nation building. Are we doing what we can to see this flourish?

Similar to my previous answer as mentioned before. Collaboration is ongoing with the department of Interior and Kingdom Relations (BAK).

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When are we going to see a dept of Agriculture? Esp. Since food security is a major concern?

This is also a recommendation of the Ministry and is mentioned in the Draft National Agriculture Policy. The restructuring of the Ministry of TEATT is presently underway. Within the Council of Ministers, we will explore the possibility to incorporate an agriculture department.

Collection of data: how do we make a data-informed decision without data collection?

- A new Department head of the STAT department was hired in November 2021
- One senior researcher vacancy was filled in November while the second senior researcher has already been recruited pending finalization of the paperwork.
- Regional collaboration with the Dutch Caribbean Statistical Systems (DCSS) has been reestablished. As a result, more knowledge sharing is taking place which will lead to the application of best practices.
- Requests for proposals for capacity development programs for staff of the department have already been sent.

STAT Dept. What is happening with the censuses can we expect one, is it budgeted for? We haven't had one in quite a while. Is it on the budget and what is happening with it?

Census 2022 has been budgeted for ANG 1.2 million. The pilot for the census is set to take place in April 2022 while the actual census is planned to start in October. The data generated

from the census will also be used for key studies such as Household survey, Cost of Living and the Poverty Line.

Environmental protection of sea and land: whether is it via a subsidy, what is happening for environmental protection?

My Ministry has a management agreement with the Nature Foundation. The contribution to the Nature Foundation through a subsidy amounts to USD 115 thousand dollars. One of the principal activities of the Nature Foundation is nature conservation and nature reserve protection. If further elucidation is needed, please contact Min. Vromi.

Marine sector: is anything budgeted for 2022?

The Marine sector is a priority, as also mentioned in the diversification strategy. The ministry is having discussions with the private sector to execute an economic impact study. Funding of this study will be done through government owned entities active in the Marine industry and the private sector.

Stray cats: number has increased Govt has obligation to subsidize the organization that looks after the stray animals?

These organizations can make use of the R4CR program of the NRPB. R4CR will launch 7 calls for proposals over the period 2020-2024 and has a budget of USD 4 million.

In order to get proper data, we must know the population of Sint Maarten. Undocumented persons are not included.

Census 2022 has been budgeted and once completed, will offer more in-depth information about the population of St. Maarten and allow for key studies such as Household survey, Cost of Living and the Poverty Line.

Copa update discussed connecting to get to Panama.

PJIAE is ready to receive COPA flights from Panama. However, COPA has not resumed its flights due to negotiations on protocol (health).

Due to the lockdown in March 2020 plans to continue and develop a new plan for the coop airline marketing were put on the shelf as priority was to strategize and develop a plan for reopening. Important to mention is Latin American Market (LatAm) was the last region to reopen as the numbers of Covid 19 were very high.

St. Maarten Tourism Bureau (STB) continued having dialogue with Copa airline and provided updates and webinar to keep the trade industry informed of the destination's development and entice to book for the future when reopening.

The ban was lifted in November 2021 for LatAm and STB immediately approached Copa to start strategizing the plan of approach in order to start flying asap. This included also St. Maarten's commitment to commit marketing funds for a coop marketing campaign. Which will be to increase our market share once again in South America in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Columbia, and Central Panama. In addition, the west coast of the U.S, also makes use of the flight connecting in Panama to come to Sint Maarten.

Latest development: Copa Airlines informed STB in November that unfortunately due to lack of equipment they are not able to assign a plane to our destination and that they are looking at Summer 2022. Communication will continue with Copa, and they did let us know if anything comes available, we will be notified, but at this moment they cannot commit.

Conclusion: it is vital that we market in 2022 the LATAM Market as this was a good market for us and due to lack of action it has even decreased in arrivals more.

West Indies Helicopter: this helicopter organization should have a license to operate.

What is the cost of the license?

PJIAE provides services to third parties in this case an authorized handler who serves West Indies Helicopter.

Do they pay landing fees? How much is the landing fees?

All fees are applicable and paid via the handler.

Do they fuel here or wherever they take their passengers?

Fueling takes place at PJIAE and/or St. Barths. Passenger are mainly flown to St. Barths.

Ministry of General Affairs

Public management and reform is key. Are our ministries currently structured to meet our needs?

I understand the question of the MP, and would say that one of the objectives of these reform measures is exactly that - To reform the ministries so we are more resilient and prepared to support the community.

A number of policies and processes are outdated, these are the types of reforms we need. We need detailed information on budget and policy tied to budget posts.

Various policies in my focus area HR/ICT/FZ/Ministerial Policies for Council of Ministers, among others, are currently being assessed and updated to ensure effectiveness and efficiency leading to cost savings and customer as well as employee satisfaction. This may lead where necessary to legislative changes. The MinAZ has commenced training for Policy Based Budgeting and will ensure Ministerial and Department plans flow naturally and cohesively.

Not only about building new housing and social housing but the rent committee needs to be supported: Is the rent committee going to be subsidized more? Are they allowed to hire more staff? What exactly is going on with the rent committee because they play a crucial part when it comes to rent and housing?

Since last year we have reached an agreement that the Ministry of General Affairs will be available to support the rental committee. This has been working very well. For example, in the case of the hiring of staff, on the indication of the Rental Committee to the Ministry, we reached agreement and the advice(s) is being prepared for the minister to sign. Furthermore, bottlenecks are also discussed with, for example Facility Services on the housing, and last year also the placement of the screens to mitigate the spread of COVID, so they could continue with receiving their clients. Legal bottlenecks are also discussed with the dept of Legal Affairs. All in all, as a government we are providing support as best as we can with the aim of doing better to improve their ability to lend service to the community.

Page 75, overview of rent agreements and Government properties. Two things caught the MP's attention: The value of the building. Not sure if the list was updated. Go over this list if this the correct valuation. Also the ownership caught his attention. Little league stadium, several private schools are all listed as owned by Government. Explain if this is so or not All buildings listed are Government owned buildings. All buildings were appraised to determine the insurance costs. Little League stadium is managed by the Little League Foundation while other sporting facilities are managed by St. Maarten Upkeep Foundation and subsidized schools are managed by school boards. Even though, the foundations and school boards are subsidized by the Government of Sint Maarten, the buildings are still Government owned buildings.

The **United Peoples Party faction** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and observations with regards to the draft national ordinance.

Ministry of Finance

Accountability ordinance: the budget is divided in Chapters in accordance with annex 1 of this National Ordinance, then it talks about functions classified in accordance with the classification included in the annex 2, for economic categories, speak of an annex 3. What are these annexes, could not find these. Can these be provided? What is meant by these annexes? Would be good to get that clarity once and for all.

The annexes have not been finalized and approved yet for Sint Maarten. However, looking at the legislation during the former Antilles, annex 1 details the chapters which are linked to the existing Ministries, annex 2 details the respective departments per Ministry and annex 3 detailed the expenses and revenues per category and not per budget post.

Loans: PJIA 91M page 58, negative and positive number. I don't understand what this means. Can the Minister explain? Can we get income? When is the time frame and can this be considered an asset for Govt? Can I get a list of the quarterly amounts that is projected for the loans? Is there a point within the year where we see the shifts of taxes? Is there a graph that shows the peaks and valleys of the taxes, can that be provided?

EIB Bank as a policy could not lend directly to PJIA. The construction is to lend to Government and Government in turn lends this to PJIA on the same terms of EIB. So EIB has a claim on Government while Government in turn has a claim on PJIA. The Trust Fund is matching the loan from EIB. However, those funds were earmarked for Government and thus the claim will be for Government. The interest received from the Trust Fund is for the account of the Government however on advice of World Bank, this interest receivable should be earmarked for another purpose.

'Wachtgeld' is established How long has this been, how did it help with the financing of the country. What role stability has played in that aspect.

The "Wachtgeld" or redundancy pay was recently decreased from 2 to 1 year. This means that the moment MPs and Ministers become eligible to receive the payout, they will only receive it for a maximum of one year. This allows the government the benefit of reducing this budget post as a result of the amendment to the law. Additionally, those MPs and Ministers currently receiving redundancy pay/wachtgeld for a maximum period of 2 years are almost completely paid.

Council of Advice and the Cft law. MP does not agree that the Council of Advice has to render their advice only after Cft advice has been provided. Now we can see the advice of the Council of Advice independently and vice versa. Welcome that to be the norm going forward.

The Council Of Advice is an advisory body for parliament and in that role the CoA should be informed about every input to the budget. The Cft provides advice with respect to art 11 advise. In that advice from Cft the government is advised about their findings, which will be a part of the input for CoA.

What plans are there to eliminate the red tape of government and improve business and reducing the cost of business, please elaborate on the plans.

This question is about the plans for elimination of red tape. From the perspective of Finance, in the country package simplification of processes to reduce the red tape is approached from several angles. For example, red tape is reduced by simplifying regulations (like taxes); improving and facilitating exchange of information between government entities - so called

integration of processes; improving client services by using ICT technology in an e-government program that offers functions like portals and access to other crucial information.

Even the IMF sees the importance of tourism; when can we as government see it and start looking to focus on that vision? What sort of improvements can we see being implemented? Can it be explained what the core issue is? What dialogue is being had besides the IMF report, dialogue with the business community and labor force?

Indeed, tourism is the main pillar of our economy and provides our businesses with turnover and profit. We should consider two main strategies. First, we should work on restoring our market share in the tourism industry. This needs support from government (i.e. marketing initiatives) as well as from businesses offering fitting products to our clients. On the other hand, we also think about how diversification can be stimulated. We learned a lot about digital nomads wandering about the globe. IMF analysis the available data and makes recommendations among other based on the developments in the region and or comparative economies. It is our responsibility to use this information to our advantage and develop as it best suits St. Maarten, cognizant of the developments around us and recognizing what the customer wants. It has been emphasized by the cruise industry in particular that the interest of the cruise passenger has shifted, more so to experiences. We must respond accordingly, businesses must respond accordingly, if we are to make any strides in remaining relevant in this industry.

Can a breakdown be provided on the SSRP from the beginning? The break down needs to show the results. The break down also needs to show all companies that have applied and were denied and the reason(s) they were denied. Can the payment to the companies also be provided over a quarterly basis?

An overview of the SSRP from the beginning has been requested. An overview will be sent to you which can be disseminated to the members of parliament.

Period	Total Forms Submitted	Total Forms In Review	Total Forms Approved	Total Forms Rejected	Total Forms Approval Rate	Percentage Revenue Loss	Total Supported Amount Paid	Total Supported Employees	Total Support Percentage for Wages
2020-04	767	0	537	230	0.70	58%	10,317,285	5717	68%
2020-05	873	0	726	147	0.83	90%	16,830,481	7498	78%
2020-06	586	0	551	35	0.94	89%	9,423,143	5924	54%
2020-07	444	0	412	32	0.93	75%	7,072,805	4645	45%
2020-08	444	1	406	37	0.91	70%	6,426,094	4275	42%
2020-09	435	1	409	25	0.94	72%	6,518,916	4421	43%
2020-10	448	2	392	54	0.88	67%	5,698,252	4071	40%
2020-11	445	4	369	72	0.83	65%	5,370,118	3861	39%
2020-12	444	8	388	48	0.87	65%	5,006,038	3869	39%
2021-01	395	15	316	64	0.80	61%	4,257,809	3320	37%
2021-02	398	19	319	60	0.80	63%	4,323,879	3329	38%
2021-03	350	145	154	51	0.44	64%	1,861,400	1373	38%
2021-04	331	195	98	38	0.30	63%	1,291,993	986	37%
2021-05	336	225	83	28	0.25	60%	661,553	605	36%
2021-06	330	231	73	26	0.22	58%	533,380	550	35%
2021-07	299	222	49	28	0.16	54%	226,841	300	32%
2021-08	245	209	20	16	0.08	54%	126,894	191	32%
2021-09	239	203	18	18	0.08	55%	135,678	184	33%
Total	1014	362	840	539	0.83	71%	86,082,559	55119	49%

The payments are provided on a monthly basis.

How was the data collected by the IMF? Can it be elaborated on? Are various stakeholders and sectors involved in providing data?

IMF does have various stakeholder meetings and based on feedback and requested information they compile their reports together.

In the English version of the multiannual prognosis under 1.1.: why is the expected growth different? Two different comparative figures (12% vs. 16%) are being used, why is this? The 12% refers to real GDP and the 16% is nominal GDP for 2022

There were several projects budgeted for in 2021 but were not implemented due to the lack of liquidity. Can you name these projects and what the plans are moving forward? Could MP Bijlani please elaborate on the question about budgeted projects of 2021 not implemented. Maybe MP can inquire about a specific project or projects.

Can I know exactly what has to be done in a timeline format in order for the budget 2023 to be submitted to Parliament before September 1, 2022. Exactly what the procedure is and what are the hurdles in this process as well?

Continuing with the questions from MP Bijlani, please informed that if we follow the guidelines in the National Accounting Ordinances, technically the budget, in this case as requested, the 2023 draft budget, can be submitted to Parliament in the legal required time; a standard timeline is developed to comply with the deadlines. This however is only feasible in "normal" times (no hurricanes, other disasters etc). For various reasons, delays occur in the drafting of the budget. In recent years projections from i.e. IMF and CBCS changed frequently and consequently amendments were required to the budget. Changes are very time-consuming to incorporate because of the lack of proper tools to maintain consistency. Occasionally we are hampered by our supervising entities as happened this year with Cft. Just recently we explained, at the evaluation of Cft that government has to deal with approximately 16 supervisory bodies that are looking over our shoulders. Meetings will be held with all finance controllers as a first step in January 2022.

Can you explain what current data system is being used to determine the percentage of compliance in the business community regarding the paying of taxes? Where do the numbers come from?

Parliament is inquiring about how tax compliance is determined. A system to determine tax compliance is based on a calculation of the total tax revenue as a percentage of GDP.

The proposal on the tax reform will be presented to Parliament in 2022, can you name the exact institution that was hired and came with this proposal? Are you still meeting with various stakeholders or has this process been concluded?

As it pertains to Tax Reform, no institution is being hired for the tax reform proposals that will be presented to Parliament in 2022. These proposals will be made by our Fiscal Affairs Department after the government has taken a position on the reforms. After the draft legislation on the tax reform has been completed, stakeholders will be consulted for their input. It is then determined if any changes will be made based on the consultations.

Please explain in a nutshell what exactly the international exchange of data on taxes is? What are the benefits to the Government and public?

This question is about the exchange of tax information, so I will now respond to the advantages. The advantage of international data exchange (CRS) is that Sint Maarten complies with international standards and is not blacklisted by the international community, with all the negative consequences that entails. Additionally, Sint Maarten also receives tax information from other CRS jurisdictions regarding Sint Maarten tax residents which can increase the taxable income that a tax resident declares.

With Minister FIN and Minister TEATT, can we get an updated version of the CBCS report on preclearance, as this might even be more profitable now with more relevant statistics?

What are your increases for third party expenses? Anywhere in the budget that had increased doubled or more is what I am questioning across all Ministries when it comes to third-party expenses is very general and miscellaneous, 'diverse, overige' accounts. Get detailed breakdown what those costs relate to?

The Third Party Expenses for the Ministry of Finance did not increase in comparison with 2021, the same applies for our miscellaneous expenses. The only budget post that increased with 50% for the Ministry of Finance is the Auditor's control, and this increase is based on additional tasks that SOAB is required to perform for the entire government.

Where are the valuations of our government owned entities?

In the annual accounts of the entities, we can find the values of the companies related to the year before. These figures are not used for the budget but surface in the annual accounts of governments (under participations).

Central bank has constantly claimed they will draft legislation. Minister it is coming to the point where I want to ask this parliament to have a motion, asking you to ensure that these things are done.

No question.

Minister, how are people who have no bank account supposed to pay government when you do not accept checks? Are we fostering a climate where people have to walk with wads of cash to the receiver? Keeping cash in their home? We are breeding money laundering, it is counterproductive.

Checks are also linked to bank accounts; we want to limit bouncing of check by stimulating electronic payments and link these payments directly to our ledger to vastly improve efficiency. The banks also want to promote electronic payments and abandon checks for their efficiency.

The following laws are critical for the functioning of our country: Basic Bank Account law. We do not have a law on opening a bank account. I have several discussions with the CBCS. They will be having discussions with the commercial banks regarding the requirements for opening a bank account. CBCS is supposed to start this assessment I believe in January 2022. Indicating the requirements to open a bank account, while staying within international obligations.

Consumer banking protection agency: most countries have set this up since 2008, we don't have one. Consumers need free protection from predatory bank practices.

Our Central Bank has a strong history in prudential supervision. This supervision focuses on the soundness of financial enterprises and contributes to the stability of the financial sector. However, next to its prudential supervision, the Central Bank has provisions in place serving the conduct supervision. These provisions are:

Provisions on Disclosure of Pricing Information on Consumer Credit (APR)

- Provisions on Preventing Overextension of Credit (POC)
- Provisions on the Disclosure of Interest Rates on Deposit Accounts (APY)
- Regulation on complaints handling for supervised natural and/or legal persons
- Manual for the implementation of the Regulation on complaints handling

The national budget: The CBCS assists the curacao government with the drafting of their budget. Can you confirm this and make use of that opportunity? Regardless of curacao they have so much expertise there paid by us let's get it done.

CBCS is also assisting Sint Maarten with projections of GDP, fiscal income, and fiscal spending. We use these statistics together with projections of IMF to make our projections for the budget.

Capital: How realistic is this? What indications do we have from CFT?

We already are very prudent with our capital requirements given the growth of our national debt. Only the most important investments can be expected to be accepted when the loan needs to be approved. Cft indicated that they will positively advise on the new prison as well as on infrastructural projects like road resurfacing. The funds for tax office and financial management have already been secured from the Trust Fund.

Tax reform: requesting clarity on the operational budget ref tax reform.

- a. 4403 have an amount of NAf 2M for 2022, under 43489 1.5. million in 2021, What did the NAf 1.5M go to in 2021 was it spent or maybe because the budget was passed a bit later maybe it was not spent. What are those 'projecten en activiteiten'.
- b. Similar question for 4402 under 'belastingdienst projecten en activiteiten', we see an increase from 1M to 3.6M. U have 22 million on capex, and then 2 million and then 3.6 million. Is this the total amount, some are operational, and some are investment but then it is called projects and activities. Some clarity needs to be given.

Both the "a" and the "b" question are mainly related to initiatives that are part of the country package. A major part of the country package initiatives was planned during the last quarter of 2021 and begin with surveys and analysis and not yet with real improvement activities. But the financing in 2022 of those initiatives must be arranged up front without detailed plans of approach. Therefore, we incorporated an ambitious approach in the budget to safeguard budget space during 2022 (to avoid budget amendments)

In the policy docs we see what parts go to the landspakketten. A1, C1, C4, it adds up to 4 million, but more is budgeted than expected. If there is some room to squeeze savings, MP like to know.

As a matter of fact, we do not know exactly how much money will be used for each country-package initiative. Programs will be active during several years and all expenses to be paid in the coming years need to be predicted in the budget up front. Therefore we plan to spend 4 million in 2022 for analysis and design but major investments like in ICT are estimated to take place later in the program. In my feeling there is no real slack in the overall budget to squeeze saving but if that is the case, we need to be aware that this would not mean that we could spend the monies elsewhere.

SZV: is there a fixed arrangement of what is paid to SZV. How we come to this calculation, that based on an agreement. Various legislation projected to bring income and create savings for the SZV, has any been worked into what has been presented into this budget?

The budget for OZR is determined based on the trends of historical information. Based on the budgeted amount SZV is paid an advance on a monthly base. However, it should be noted that based on discussions with SZV if there is an indication that the monthly advance is not sufficient to cover the costs the monthly payment would be adjusted accordingly.

Costs related to the execution of the 'landspakketten' from the Ministry FIN. MP just want to get confirmation and clarity on the total amount on anything related to landspakketten agreements, what does that add up to.

The state secretary promised a contribution for the main programs of Finance:

- the improvement of financial management,
- the modernization of the tax regime and
- improvements of the tax organization.

The United Peoples Party faction heard a lot of focus ref. expenses but in terms of the income a lot of good things, income, however people have to wait too long in lines. If

improvements due to COVID can be made; GDP increases. How much of the income items are related to collection efforts. What efforts are being made in 2021 to reach these goals stated here. Also are there plans to continue to improve efforts between receivers and the depts that that issues the various documents example. Licenses that are being issued by the Economic affairs. Is there a good amount of information on what has to be strengthened on the receivers to get the information.

It is a very good sign that we receive more revenue than predicted. This has to do with different things like to pessimistic projections, unexpected increases economic activity, audit activities by SZV (ATS) and Receiver's office.

The contracting of loans by the country. Art 16, of the Kingdom ordinance on financial supervision basis for contracting loans. Why is it that SXM cannot borrow. Can u explain to the people of Sint Maarten in layman's terms as Minister FIN why all this has happened and the goal post being changed. What were u able to contract on the local market. What would be a term and interest rate for SXM, what were u able to attract for SXM as reasonable competitive loan. Yes interest rate NL is lower, but is that the only thing u use to determine whether a favorable loan, what conditions are being mentioned by the NL. Is a trade off of a slightly higher interest worth it to a higher extend?

Article 16 of the Kingdom Act, is only allows for contracting loans for capital investments, through a public or private tender, in case these loans are part of an approved budget, for the Cft to assess if these loans would be in line with the budget standards mentioned in Article 15 of the Rft. If the budget standards indicated in Article 15 are not adhered to, for example if the operational costs are not covered by the income of Government, the KCoM has to approve any deviation from these standards. If the budget standards are adhered to, then a public tender or private tender can be executed. The Central Bank will have to assess all the biddings received through the public tender, and provides its binding advice. The Cft will advise on the biddings received for the private tenders. In addition to loans for capital investments, loans for non-capital investments are not allowed based on the Rft; these loans have to be approved by KCoM as well, based on Article 25 of the Rft. So theoretically, (not to say hypothetically) it is not true that Sint Maarten cannot borrow in the open market from another party than the Netherlands, if the KCoM approves it, it would be possible. I believe for a loan to be competitive the main focus should not solely be on the interest to be paid, you should also have to take into account factors like, the specific purpose the loan, the ability to invest and of course the return on investments. Example, now we get loans in tranches, but if we could have borrowed ½ a billion at once, you could invest and start your assignments right away.

Provide an update ref. funds from UTS. The sale was not closed off finally, is SXM looking forward to any additional funds coming as a result of the sale, in the future; are there any other components from the UTS sale, like strategic assets being sold that would sell 2 – 3 years later, that Government is entitled to some funds. Can we get an idea what this might be, an idea of anything to be expected there.

By letter of January 9, 2020, we received the closing statement of the sale of the UTS shares. However, at this time there are still entities that are jointly owned by Curacao and St. Maarten. of which Sint Maarten's share is 12,5%. These entities did not form part of the sale of UTS. In particular the companies Data Planet N.V. and Antilliaanse Televisie Maatschappij N.V. could be sold for additional cash if they are not deemed to be strategic investments. Before any actions are taken in this regard, we will have to do our due diligence.

Airport: Can the concession agreement between Government and the Airport be shared with parliament. Any taxes and/or fees entitled to Government but airport is authorized being collected. Can you provide a list. What is being collected by the Government.

Yes, the airport concession will be shared, the remainder of this question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of TEATT.

There used to be a post called 'pool van deskundigen': this is no longer there, what happened to this budget post, was it ever spent, any initiative to create a pool of experts or a fund to assist the different ministries in regard to legislative support. What is being provided for the drafting of legislation, cannot be just the role of JZW; wants to know what those numbers are. The former minister of finance envisioned a pool of professionals to be formed and managed by a third party that would make public biddings unnecessary and add some flexibility to temporary hires. This idea never materialized though, and no funds were spent in accordance with this plan.

'Inspectie belastingdienst': various appointments are being looked at for this section, also material costs increased. The ATS is actively out there doing some audit and collections themselves. Is the Minister considering synchronizing the efforts of inspections together with the ATS. Yes, independent structures Government – SZV, but can the efforts be synchronized. What needs to be done to integrate ATS into tax inspector /Tax auditing system on SXM. The tax office is very actively conducting audits and taking collection measures to increase revenues. Synchronization of efforts will have to be studied considering that both entities have their individual objectives. We will have to see how the money collected will be divided amongst the entities taking the law regarding preference into consideration. We have had discussions with SZV with regards to using ATS.

Interest payments; 'totale rente en afschrijving', a saving of 11%: more explanation on this. how was this achieved.

Interest Expenses declined by 7.38% because a 2010, 10 year bond matured in 2020. The interest for this bond was paid in full. The bond was not paid off but payback is postponed till 2023 with no interest.

4100 budget time Audit for 1 million: what is the intention of this budget, also for th 1.5 million for project activities capital expenditures for financial control. what to do those projects entail.

The exact impact of the SOAB work still needs to be determined in the plan of approach of Phase 2 of the "uitvoeringsagenda".

Mortgage fund: excellent idea. Is it difficult to find the financing. What other steps need to be taken in terms of the foundation, members, has Minister already created this, how far did the minister go in this regard.

There are three members that form the supervisory board of the Mortgage Guarantee Fund. The Government of St. Maarten appoints a chairman of the board which occurred earlier this year, then the Bankers Association propose a candidate which they have and a third member is appointed. Currently, the statutes need to be updated along with a new business case and the application of renewal of the funds casualty insurance. As the fund is being reestablished there are number of steps that were completed in past that will need to be revisited and updated according to the corporate governance code.

CCRIF insurance: is this still budgeted for, will Government still make use of this. are there any other insurance dues due to the Government that we can expect to be collectible in 2021. Payments secured for the next two years through the Trust Fund.

32 million in capital expenditures budget. Under Ministry FIN: is this all to be expected for 2021. Or is there the possibility that additional expenditures might be needed in 2022. Considering the works are yet to start, the expenditures will cross over multiple years. The total amounts however must be received in advanced in order to ensure continuity of the projects until completion.

SSRP: updated figures in going forward as the economy is improving, are we hopeful that it will not go forward beyond this year. Quarterly estimates for the period of June and December are being requested.

We have budgeted the continuation of the SSRP for 9 months in 2021. Execution depends on additional receipt of liquidity support.

Formatieplan Government: there is always a discrepancy with 'werkplaatsen', from a financial perspective, might it be time to make adjustments to what the total formation is. We never make the amount in the budget. If not hired, so can it be considered as a savings for the Government of SXM.

The existing budget method invites management to include vacancies in the budget even if they do not believe to be able to find candidates during the fiscal year. This because a new vacancy must be in the budget in order for that vacancy to be filled. Realizing a saving is not the main purpose of filling vacancy or not. But what we have done, due to the lengthy process of recruitment is budget for vacancies for part of the year.

What can we expect from CBCS in terms of legislation eg. Mortgage guarantee can they assist in the financing of such and the legislation. Is the CBCS going ahead with the plans we hear in the media that they will sell gold reserves which belong to Sint Maarten will they do this within 2021; don't see the profit tax reflected in the budget. also no increase in the license fee, in the media it was mentioned that the license, known as the dollar tax, would increase to 1.5%. is it still planned, does the minster favor this, wants some comments on that.

CBCS is in the process of managing the downfalls that occurred in Curacao with Ennia and Girobank. They see the selling of a part of the gold and increasing the license fees as a solution to cope with the problem. We are not in agreement with their plans and negotiate about the way forward.

Update on the debt to SZV, what is currently owed and what do we expect to pay this year to assist in the financial gap that is there. It is still good to budget as it gives us a realer picture of what is owned.

The debt to SZV is about NAf 100 million. In this time of deficits, we will not be able to solve this but government is working on arrangements to bring the debt to better proportions.

Government assets. What are the challenges to come up with the valuations in accordance with those assets that would fall under the art 24 of the Comptabiliteitslandsverordening and be divided into fix and current assets, how to get a better picture. Is that sth that can strengthen our standing on the international market.

At this moment, not all assets have been appraised after Hurricane Irma, which creates uncertainty about the value on the balance sheets. The uncertainty may not exceed 1% in case an approved annual account is needed.

Three points for more info, can be in writing, can you confirm with the sale of data planet, would the country need another 'machtiging', or it is already ready so far?

Yes, based on article 46, third section, subsection c, of the Compatibility Ordinance, the sale of shares owned by the Country will require a mandate.

Will you share the concession agreement with Parliament?

Yes, the concession agreement with the airport will be shared.

Can we get a schedule with the maturing bond interest for all bonds maturing over the next 10 years with a table structure?

Please refer to STAAT E for requested overview.

For marketing the destination to TEATT, I suggested renaming the budget post to Expedia, can Minister FIN comment on that and if he agrees, even from the accountability side that Expedia services is not something for bidding.

It could be considered, but it will require that the assignment and the associated cost be clear and substantiated. However, this may not be considered strategic for parties involved. We would recommend amending the procurement legislation, from the perspective that we sell a tourism product. A special clause could be included to prevent to provide transparency on our own position as a tourism destination within the industry, considering that we have competitors.

Investing more in the film industry; do you see the viability in that?

Yes, the Orange Industry is certainly a worthwhile industry to invest in.

For Central Bank, can minister put on the table/negotiate the right to a bank account? The Central Bank has told us they have the means to do so, are you willing to put this discussion on the table as part of the negotiations with the Central Bank?

Yes, will table this matter at my discussions with Central Bank.

Evaluation of government owned companies will be provided to Parliament, how quickly? Can it be provided before the public meeting on the budget 2021? Is it a recent evaluation? Have all companies been evaluated?

This is sensitive business intelligence information not to be disclosed in any public setting as it pertains valuations of companies owned by Sint Maarten, of which any disclosure may affect outcomes of future decisions.

Based on my request for a more detailed explanation proposed CAPEX projects, you refer me to page 75 of the budget, you also mentioned the 'getallenboek'; I don't see the explanation there. There are only a few CAPEX items which are explained in the budget itself. Such as the parliament building. Not all of them are mentioned. ICT equipment and the like; Not explained. What are we supposed to be buying?

The list on pages 69, 70 and 71 present a breakdown of all items the ministries mentioned to be needed for their functions. The overview indicates the investment, the ministry and the department as well as the SNA code and amount. The list is mostly self-explanatory but please indicate if this indication does not satisfy your information need.

I still want to further elaborate/discuss with you the issue of the as far as the country package concerned, where the bidding takes place, that is the budget will carry the cost. The first implementation agenda talks about an integral 'doorlichting' in the government entities and semi entities that needs to take place to see if they are meeting their objectives. If that says Sint Maarten is the one responsible, does that mean we have to have such an investigation?

Does Sint Maarten need to carry out the research? If that is the case, then would that not be a cost for government? Where would that cost be reflected in the budget?

The answer provided to a similar question as follows: The costs for the upgrading of the tax department can be categorized in investments in software, consultancy and training. Since this initiative has been included in the country packages, the whole approach has been vetted by our Dutch counterparts. The first phase of the altered plan consists of executing additional surveys that might bring new issues to the table as well as the need for budget adjustment. We have decided to maintain the same total amount as previously budgeted, until we have made the assessments and at such time will be able to provide the assigned amounts to each part. For now this is a general allocation for the restructuring of the Tax Department.

For the program expenses there are various possibilities discussed. The Cost for research in this phase will be paid from the limited TWO budget if external expertise are required. The government of St. Maarten and the government of the Netherlands contribute by means of making their civil servants available to work on the relevant projects, not only the projects the faction mentioned. Therefore, there is no specific mention of a budget at this phase for the Country Packages.

In response to my question on the Parliament financial administration, I was referred to the secretariat of Parliament. Could the finance department explain what has been paid on behalf of the Parliament?

In the attachment a list is added containing all payments done for Parliament in 2021. We are working on a solution to connect Parliament to our reporting tool to enable Parliament to do the inquiry by itself.

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

In regards to Building permits, please outline the information procedure from the submission of a request to when the Minister is informed that a request is in. The process of permit application/submission is handled by intake personnel. The Department Head and in extension the SG and Minister is informed of the request when the advice to approve or deny the application is ready for signing.

Processing of permits. It speaks of the delay of various construction and reconstruction projects, is the delay related to the Ministry VROMI. The Construction sector will take us out of the economic recession. Is any Ministry doing whatever it takes to get the permits related to construction moving?

The Ministry continues to do whatever it takes to increase the output of not only the permits department, but all revenue generating departments. The Ministry shares the view that these departments are directly linked to taking the country out of economic hardship.

In relation to the question regarding Tour Bus drop off areas. Min VROMI & TEATT
The Ministry has completed the lay-Bay project for the tour buses which was constructed in collaboration with the Ministry of TEATT. This project is located opposite the Vineyard Building for pick up and drop off of tourist. In regards to potential areas, considerations can be made alongside Walter J.A. Nisbeth Road (Ring road) and in the area of the Clem Labega square through redesigning of future plans. We are still Seeking potential locations for the tour buses and we will consult with the Ministry of TEATT on the feasibility of creating a cultural corridor in Philipsburg.

In relation to your question for the GEBE metering for the Kim Sha Vendors,

The Ministry has prepared the paperwork needed for the vendors to obtain their own meter at GEBE. We are in consultation with the Ministry of TEATT to have this realized by the end of this year.

[Kimsha restroom facilities] Is there going to be mechanism for people to contribute towards this? Vending permit fee are not very high. So where are the cost covered for providing this, maybe an increase, maybe a small fee. Where will the costs be covered from?

This topic will be addressed with the Ministry of TEATT based on insufficient funds within the Ministry's budget for this project.

Restrooms: Can we get an update on the operation of public restrooms in Philipsburg as well and the signage? Where are the areas that people can use public restrooms in Philipsburg? The public restrooms in Philipsburg are located behind the Court House and are marked with signage on the building. The Public Restrooms are under Contract by VROMI Infrastructure with opening hours from Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Ministry can look into placing additional directional signage towards the restroom facility.

MP thinks what might be a challenge in the leges verordenen number 22 is that you have 200 guilder aanvraag fee 'voor in behandeling nemen van een aanvraag van bouwvergunningen als bedoeld' in art 7 of the law. It is suggested to make a simple amendment by removing "bouwvergunningen" and make it "vergunningen".

Note has been made in relation to charges for the services of issuing waivers. The Ministry will look into the most feasible way to have this implemented so that we are able to generate funds for this service.

Ministry of Justice

Sharp decrease in the amount to be collected from the Ministry. Because of the missing projects codes, it can't be seen exactly what it is for. Reduction of 20%, the opening hours of businesses have been extended. Would like to get an explanation why we see a huge decrease. Is it for fine, or less immigration permits, please provide the information and justification as to why we would see a decrease in the next year?

The decreased relates to the gas levies linked to the Customs department. The realized figures for 2022 were adjusted to reflect the actual figures in 2021.

Please outline the information procedure from the submission of a request to when the Minister is informed that a request is in.

The Ministry of Justice has an array of various requests that we process. I would ask the MP to please be more specific in terms of which request he is referring to.

Private sector is helping our police force. Police officers that can provide their services for a certain amount of hours, they can be contracted by the private sector under very strict conditions and the actual legislation regulates the pay. Fort Lauderdale has this. General idea. How does Minister JUS see this working to help police earn additional income?

Pursuant to article 52, paragraph 1, of the LMA, it is prohibited to carry out side jobs that may impede the proper fulfillment of your (government) function or the proper functioning of your department. Pursuant to article 52, paragraph 2, of the LMA, the public servant is obliged to inform his department head in writing of side jobs, which he performs or wants to perform. The department head may allow, prohibit or attach conditions to the side job activities so long as same does not conflict with his or her primary function.

Wants update on the implementation side of the plastic bag ban. How ready is the JUS ministry? The Politiekeur had to be adjusted. Can minister indication when the ministry will be ready.

Due to the required role of JZ&W to handle the ratification process of draft initiative law, the status of this initiative is currently in the responsibility of the Ministry of General Affairs and as such the Prime Minister can provide the requested details.

Letter MP Bijlani: FATF recommendation all electronic transactions – credit card should not be included in the client survey. – Deadline for this law December 7, is unrealistic. Give verbal response to the letter and ease the implementation until we have had the discussion. The draft legislation did not enter into force on December 7th, 2021, based on the extensive legislative process.

It is the intention to introduce draft legislation to parliament in the second quarter of 2022. At that time, amendments will be introduced to update the Anti Money Laundering/Counter Terrorism Financing and Proliferation legislation, amongst others, this subject matter will form part of that amendment (removal of credit cards for Jewelers) will then be made available.

Shooting range, is that still in the plan?

Yes, the intention is to construct the Law Enforcement Institute of Sint Maarten, whereby a shooting range will be established.

What is the position of the minister on gun control? Are we too liberal, too restrictive can I get the policy on it?

The Ministry is currently working on establishing a new weapons policy.

Different stakeholders have been consulted in the drafting process and great strides have been made thus far however, though it was the aim to complete same before year end, the various aspects added to ensure persons who are applying for a weapon are able to do so responsibly.

For example, to operate a vehicle, one must be in possession of a drivers license. This is also necessary for one to own and operate a vehicle. In the same essence, for one to own and operate a weapon, they should be in possession of a gun license and then a gun permit. Proper psychological evaluations and assessments must be carried out to ensure of their sanity. These are fundamental aspects of the previous policy that were lacking in my view.

My judicial team has this item on the high priority list and is pushing to get this complete within the first quarter of 2022.

There is 2.8 million projected for detainees in the Netherlands, exactly how many detainees is there, how much would it cost if they were housed in Bonaire or Curacao?

As per December 8, 2021, the number of Sint Maarten detainees being housed in the Netherlands is 12.

The cost to house the detainees in Curacao is approximately 259 guilders per day. The cost to house detainees in Bonaire is assumed to be in line with that of the Netherlands considering that they are a part of the DJI.

Retroactive payment for Justice Workers, which is 2.2 million. Will that cover everything pending and bring it to current?

The 2.2. Million reserved on budget line 5202-43498 is considered the remaining 50% that was identified for Justice Workers in January 2020.

Though the process is underway to confirm what the actual figure will be, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance anticipates that the 2.2 million guilders will cover the balance of the outstanding payments.

Rehabilitation projects for inmates in prison is 300K, what projects will be implemented?

The projects that are in the process to be implemented are the GED classes. The purchase of Equipment, machines and tools for the renovated workshop. To Improve/spruce up recreational spaces (library, sewing room, computer room, living room, telephone area and so forth.

Anywhere in the budget that had increased doubled or more is what I am questioning across all Ministries when it comes to third-party expenses is very general and miscellaneous, 'diverse, overige' accounts. Get detailed breakdown what those costs relate to.

There were only two increases in the 2022 budget connected to the "third party personnel" accounts. Said increases were at HVB for the services of VKS and the other rise at National Detective due to the increase in the janitorial and cleaning services.

Kosten-plaats	Grootboek-rekeningen	Description	Vermoedelijk werkelijke uitgave 2020	Begrote uitgaven 2021	Begrote uitgaven 2022	Verschil bedrag	Verschil %
50		Minister					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	50,965	50,000	50,000	0	0.00%
5010		Cabinet					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	10,800	0	0	0	0.00%
5021		Staff Bureau					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	239,580	79,200	79,200	0	0.00%
5201		Police Force Country St. Maarten					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	140,292	100,000	100,000	0	0.00%
5202		Prison and the House of Detention					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	259,064	500,000	1,016,378	516,378	103.28%
5203		Immigration and Naturalization Service					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	23,491	60,000	50,000	-10,000	-16.67%
5204		National Detectives					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	32,220	35,000	36,750	1,750	5.00%
5205		Customs					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	0	30,000	30,000	0	0.00%
5206		Unusual Transactions Reporting Center					
	43000		120,000	120,000	0	0.00%	
5207		Guardianship Council					
	43000	Third Party Personnel	0	24,750	24,750	0	0.00%

For the off-duty police force, there can be conflicts with the job; consider allowing permission from the supervisor. Can specific rules be made for the police regarding 'nevenarbeid'? This can be capped between 8 to 12 hours. There must be a number of years of work. Would Minister JUS support a protocol or guideline to promote and encourage 'nevenarbeid' in the police force? This would be allowing private sector to help, Amsterdam and Fort Lauderdale does it also

I have taken note of this suggestion posed by at least two members of Parliament and same will be taken under consideration starting with a professional study being done.

In the interim, I wish remind all that that a policy does exist that governs this and if we really study the policy, the opportunity is there with guidelines to avoid conflicts.

For example, it must be clearly and carefully determined if an officer can use their service weapon to execute civilian/Private based services... This is a sensitive topic that must be carefully studied.

If this is a current and common practice and an incident occurs, let us ask ourselves who will be held liable?!

Ankle bracelet, if we take all the people sent to the Netherlands for over NAF 2 million, and be on ankle bracelet, would that not lead to an immediate savings? There will be considerations for the different types of criminals held. What is the number of detainees that are sent to the Netherlands? So if we can get the number and have them on ankle brackets, then the savings can be calculated. Then the Ministry JUS can then have the costs of the ankle bracelets transferred to the prisoner.

It's going to be difficult for us to have all the inmates be considered for an ankle bracelet. Consideration must be kept in mind that the Judge is who imposes the type sentencing a criminal receives.

Exchange of information with APIS – will tourist bureau be allowed to access the meta data for marketing purposes?

From the onset of this project, the intention has been to offer anonymized data as an aid to the Ministry of TEATT's marketing strategy. The Ministry of Justice and IBP in particular, understands the tremendous value API/PNR data will deliver to the Tourist Bureau/Department in gaining insight on how flight loads breakdown, what the landscape of traveler demographics look like, and the indication of which markets serves our marketing dollars best. Notwithstanding the abovementioned, a thorough assessment of API/PNR meta-data and master-data will be performed by experts to ensure the protection of privacy, and the maintenance of safety, security, and peace can be guaranteed to all travelling to and from our shores at all times.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

Please outline the procedure from the submission of a request for a permit to when the Minister is informed that a request is in.

Before an application for a work permit can be submitted, the employer must register the vacancy and advertise it for 5 weeks as per article 5 paragraph 5 subsection c of the national ordinance regulating foreign labor. Once that time frame has been completed all relevant documents outlined in the legislation must be submitted with the application. This is then assessed by the Department staff. If there are additional information required, the Department contacts the employer and prepares the advice in accordance with the legislation regulating foreign labor. The Minister legally has 6 weeks to then render a decision. Considering a mandate was provided to the Department Head of Labor Affairs to take a decision on all positive advices for an application, as Minister I only notified through an advice on an application that the Department has advised negatively on.

Do you not need legal support? Does the minister want to reinclude this? Please provide feedback as to whether to reintroduce legal support budget by means of an amendment.

There are many legislative changes and areas within the Ministry that will require legal support, therefore I would welcome such an amendment as there is so much that needs to be done.

Can the minister consider a policy to grant support through a grant via mental health for online therapy?

Persons who need mental health care can be referred to a psychologist or psychiatrist via their family doctor. The care is covered under health insurance. Since online therapy is not provided by a care provider on island, it is not covered by SZV insurance. SZV is looking into whether online therapy could be covered under our current structure. If persons have private insurance, depending on their policy with their insurance company, the insurance company covers the costs.

Changes to the minimum wage ordinances when is this expected.

At the moment we are awaiting advice from the SER as it pertains to indexing the current minimum wage.

Where are we with the recognition with the natural immunity against the virus?

On November 5th the QR recovery code was launched. This allows persons who have recovered from COVID-19 in the last six months to receive a QR code. We have made provisions within the 2022 budget to conduct anti-body testing to get a more precise overview to get a more realistic overview on how many persons have been infected with Covid19.

Personnel are letting go of their unvaccinated status. The indication MP is getting is that the vaccination status is being used to lay off staff. What is the labor department doing, can the Minister formally denounce that this is wrong? It is discriminatory.

Persons can seek advice through the Complaint section at the Labor Affairs Department, for collective dismissal they can receive mediation support the Department of Labor, and they may also request legal aid if they wish to take their employer to court.

Can you please clarify what the rules are regarding working during the holidays?

Any employee who actually performs scheduled work on a public holiday is entitled to at least twice the wages that he would have earned on that day during the normal working hours applicable to him, if that day is not a public holiday. An employee who performs overtime for scheduled work or nonscheduled work must also be paid at least 50 percent of his hourly wage, if the overtime is performed on his day of rest, or at least 100 percent of his hourly wage, if the overtime is performed on a public holiday. This is regulated in Article 15 and 22 of the National Ordinance of 27 July 2000 laying down new rules on working hours, working hours and overtime also known as the Arbeidsregeling.

Basic rules. What is the plan going forward regarding the basic rules of sanitization, distancing, wearing mask and washing hands? Will this promotion continue in the future?

Yes, the promotion of basic regulations of sanitization, distancing, wearing mask and washing hands will remain in place.

Project and activities: there is a cut. Can the elucidation be provided on that point? It is now at zero. What are some of the activities normally need to be done by this department? Can Minister VSA find some funds coming back to Ministry VSA for this?

First, I would like to clarify that any budget post with the project code 00013 is for COVID-19 related purposes. So in this case the MP is referring to the COVID-19 related Project & Activities of the department of Public Health.

So, when looking at the COVID-19 related Project Activities (43489.00013) ministry wide, you will notice that there was a decrease of in total Naf. 12,185,000. This was due to the ending of the SSRP program. However, we still made a budget available to put the necessary measures in place such as staff to secure a safe entrance to St. Maarten Naf. 1,4141,320 which you can find under budget post 7250.43000.00013 "Third Party Personnel" and Naf. 2,550,000 for the Vaccination Program at CPS under budget post 7250.43489.00013 "Projects & Activities"

However, I would like to point out that even though there was a decrease of Naf. 12,185,000 for the COVID-19 related Project & Activities (43489.00013) there was an increase of in total Naf. 10,832,600 for the regular Projects & Activities post (43489) of which Naf. 8,630,000 was reserved for "shock response activities". This could be for COVID-19 related matters, Food voucher programs, Unemployment programs, etc. We decided to place those contingencies under a general post for project and activities instead of placing it under a specific budget post for COVID thus giving us the freedom to use it for any sort of emergency.

So, in totality the Project & activities decreased by Naf. 1,352,400 therefore I would welcome any additional monies coming back to the Ministry of VSA.

What could Minister VSA do with additional half million or million coming back to Ministry VSA heavily involved in legislative collective and health work?

We have to now take up the costs of AMI, in case of overload of cases at at SMMC, we would need quarantine facilities, also the shortage on legislation needs to be addressed, a study on preventative care and of course the further drafting of marijuana legislation

Employers dismissing workers because they are unvaccinated? What about employers making vaccination a requirement? What is the impression? Do we have a legal issue there?

No, the Ministry has not received any dismissal applications, with the reason being employee unvaccinated, therefore we cannot substantiate this conclusion.

The Business must place reasonable conditions for the vacant position, which may include education, experience, proof of good conduct.

Antibody levels established yet? Standard in that regard established?

The discussion has been had and we are awaiting the official reply from RIVM regarding the accepted level for antibody titer

What is the list of legislative changes ref. SZV in 2022 and any cost tied to those? Who is doing this legislative work? Where are the resources allocated to the minister to do these changes?

1. ZV/OV
2. Schommel fonds
3. 62 plus
4. formalization Referrals

We are working on acquiring consultants to carry out this legislative work.

Members that are Dutch national but are not born in Sint Maarten, Curaçao and Aruba, if they are employed at the openbaar ministerie do they need a work permit to work?

All Dutch nationals have to apply for a legal statement at Immigration, they do not have to obtain a work permit. I am unaware of special immigration arrangements for persons who work for the public prosecutor.

With regard to your statements on vaccinations in the Netherlands. You stated 87% of the population of the Netherlands are fully vaccinated, I will like the MP to remember that Holland has a population of 17 million. If we take the 13% that is unvaccinated it amounts to 2.2mlj. And in conversation with health care representatives in Netherland I was told that 90% of the hospitalized is unvaccinated.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Economic licenses. 4.3M income for maritime. Can that be broken down? NAF 80.000 in 2020, 4.3M in 2021, 4.3M in 2022, How is that broken down? What measures are being put in place? It can't be found in the policy document.

The 4,342,000 consists of 4,000,000 for the port concession fee, 297,000 for the Meteorological department and 45000 in fees for the maritime registry.

Weather radar update? Where is the project and when will it be completed?

The partnership agreement between French and Dutch Side was signed. St. Maarten's part of the agreement for the replacement of the radar tower was paid to the vendor. Work will commence during the 1st quarter of 2022 and Installation by June but the full completion (I.e. testing & calibration) will be done by Quarter 4 of 2022.

Online application process or business licenses. Where are we with this? It will be easier for ppl to open their businesses and pay online.

We are currently in phase 1 of the testing, which is done with the Notaries. Phase 2 will commence with the Accounting/Business Administrative companies and will run until January 14th, 2022.

When will business licenses be included?

Business Licenses are already included in the online payment when we launch in February 2022.

When will that online application/website be in place?

The website is in place for business and director licenses for which we have been running our pilot. We plan on-going live-in February 2022 for these and most other licenses. Including the

operational licenses will require a bit more time however, our aim is to have them included in the online application process by June 2022.

What is the current backlog for business licenses right now, how many do we have right now that have been received but not yet decided upon, what is that number?

The new department head started last August, the cleanup of the license request database started in October, and the intention is to have this finalized in the first quarter of 2022, after which a thorough and accurate account can be given

How many business licenses per week/per month do we project the department to be able to process?

If all that is needed is in place, the intention of the department is to be able to handle 25-30 licenses weekly, and 100 - 120 monthly. We're currently working towards achieving this.

What steps are being put in place to achieve that goal?

The online application process is one step towards achieving this goal.

Secondly, the dept is reviewing its work processes to see where they can be adjusted towards greater efficiency.

Also, at the start of the new year the staff will be trained towards being all-rounders, meaning that all Backoffice staff will be able to process all types of license requests; this is not the case right now.

And the fourth step towards achieving this goal is to fill the vacancies that the dept. currently has.

Assistant drivers permits. It is taken much longer than in the past. Can we get an indication as to why that is? What improvements will be made in that regard?

This was correct.

However, with the employment of a department head we are seeing improvements with the processing time.

Based on recent reporting there are currently 4, of the 119 requests received, that are pending.

These requests are projected to be completed within the next coming weeks.

Does every single license/request go to Minister TEATT?

Yes, all requests come to me after the dept of economic licenses has advised. These are normally decided on the same day.

Outline the information procedure from a request to when it goes to the Minister.

1. The request is submitted to the department's Front office (administrative assistant) where it is checked for completeness of documents.
2. If complete, the request is registered and assigned to a Backoffice worker (license officer).
3. The Backoffice assesses the request against the relevant legislation and policies. This often also includes getting in contact with the applicant for additional information and sometimes having to wait on this information.
4. Once the Backoffice has processed the request by advising on it, the request goes to a File Reviewer who checks the work for completeness.
5. If not approved, the file request is returned to the Backoffice with a note for corrections
6. If approved by the File Reviewer, the request goes to the Dept. Head for a final check after which it comes to me for approval.

With the launching of the online services the manual check and registration will be eliminated.

If all documents are complete and no additional information is required from the applicant, this projects in a 3-15 day handling time depending on the type of license.

At what point is the Minister informed what licenses are pending? How does the information flow between business license and then to Minister/Minister cabinet?

I have an open and direct communication line with all of the departments in my ministry. The department of economic licenses I have appointed someone in my cabinet that is in charge of all that relates to business licenses and that provide weekly updates.

Civil aviation Dept.: everyone in that dept. is underpaid. Is Minister going to consider the salaries that are there, also for legal positions based on art. 18 of the LMA. U need those people to get u out of the deficit. Create a Lbham even temporary, otherwise, u will never get to category 1.

The Inspectors, Air Worthiness, Flight Operational, Security and Air Traffic Services should make a comparable salary to the industry. Next year (Jan. 2022) the Ministry will be focusing on the structure of the departments of TEATT, and this will also be taking along with the restructuring.

Online gaming. Economic diversification. Locals are excluded from this platform. We are not issuing any licenses. Where are we with this? It is credit card-based. Low risk. Is any attention being placed on that? Online gaming industry – curacao is going to downsize. A lot of companies are willing to migrate here. IS Minister FIN aware of this? Lucrative industry. See how we can get them to Sint Maarten.

The ministry has identified this as a potential new business and revenue stream. We have also taken note of the issues Curacao had in combatting money laundering in this particular industry. We have therefore reached out to the Financial Intelligence Unit, who advised to implement a halt on the issuance of these licenses until the relevant legislation has been updated to include safeguards against money laundering and terrorist financing. As such, given the legislative deficits surrounding online gaming regulations, the Ministry is not yet promoting online gaming as a diversification area. However, this will be done when the legislation is in place.

Ministry TEATT should issue an RFP to have an entity set up a Gaming control agency/Gaming Board. Is that in the plans? Can we confirm that it is not the NL taking the lead in the establishment of the Gaming Board for Sint Maarten? Can that confirmation be given?

The Ministry of TEATT is leading the implementation and execution of the Plan of Approach for the establishment of the Sint Maarten Gaming Authority which falls under Measure H2 of the Country Package.

TEATT + AZ: increase in facilities of 1.5 million. Usage of the BTP has that been completed, where are we with that?

To present we are aware of the following departments intending to occupy floor space in the BTP building: Inspectorate of Education, Exam Control, LVV (Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock unit.) and Casino Controllers.

The tourist office is in a deplorable state, it is unlivable. It deserves a new location where are we with that?

The STB has been given the opportunity to move into the St. Joseph Building on Front Street, which is ideal for a tourism office. The advice is in its final stages at General Affairs to be then approved by the Council of Ministers. This will give the opportunity for the tourism bureau to have a central location as should be, to welcome visitors to or location to provide proper destination information as well showcase our heritage and history in a welcoming atmosphere.

Breakdown on the marketing budget but to be provided.

As note to the minister:

Product Development	920,000
Marketing Film Industry	2,000,000

Music Film Culinary Fest	250,000
Cruise Conversion	50,000
US Market	1,500,000
Canadian Market	500,000
European Market	600,000
South American Market	250,000
Caribbean Market	500,000
Co-Op Campaign Airlines	500,000
Expedia	500,000
Carnival Marketing	600,000
Subsidies	<u>1,000,000</u>
total	8.300.000

Carnival we saw an increase. Execution should be done as a marketing contract and put out on bid. Carnival is more than the SCDF, you have a lot more stakeholders. A lot of sponsorship goes to SCDF but it should be the tourist bureau to provide support to different stakeholders (soca artist, queen show, calypsonians, etc). Booth holders that want to promote. What is the plans going forward? The marketing contract in 2022 for 2023 needs to be done in that way, does the budget still reflect that?

The bid did not go ahead as timing played a key role as budget 2021 was approved late. For 2022 Carnival subsidy has been reinstated and STB will support through the Marketing budget post named "events, festivals" other additional carnival marketing support, so that carnival 2022 will be supported. The plan moving forward to further develop Carnival in 2023 is that there will be public tender for RFP with Terms of Reference in 2022.

Hotel tax, timeshare tax expected to collect about NAf 4 million. We are the lowest in these taxes in the entire Caribbean. Would the Ministers welcome an increase to 8% in 2022, 10% in 2023 and 12% in 2024 and beyond, which would still keep us below average. What would the Minsters think in that regard? Are we analyzing the bills of hotels on Sint Maarten that are adding taxes and collecting it for themselves? We need to properly collect from the hotel sector. And put it towards hotel marketing.

Yes, I do welcome these initiatives which are looking into that.

Merge hotel and logeerbelasting – reconsider this. Keep it separate from the TOT. (MinFIN)
We certainly agree with this idea, as this is also considered to be a funding component for the St. Maarten Tourism Authority. Our role is limited to an advisory one when it comes to taxation. With this in mind, we will discuss this matter with the Minister of Finance and hope this can be incorporated into the planned fiscal reform.

IMF 2020 report – robust COVID measures for strong recovery in 2021. Opening the economy and resisting lockdowns helped us financially and contributed to where we are today to need less liquidity support. But where do we go from here, there is still a 3:00 a.m. restriction, will it be considered by Ministers VSA and TEATT to fully remove them?

While we understand and can agree, even support, the need for workers to make more money by working more days/hours however, certainly this interest has to be weighed against other factors such the COVID-19 numbers and the related contact tracing. For this past weekend alone there was a 36% percent increase in cases. Therefore, we will liaise and consult with the Minister of VSA on these issues as they resort directly under his responsibility from a Health and labor perspective.

Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve, are we going to fully reopen for these days? During New Year's Eve, businesses till 11:00 a.m., but forced to ask for incidental request to open, can we allow food and beverage industry to open past their time with a blanket

approval? If we let them continue to close at 3:00 a.m., there will be mayhem on the road. Last year was open till 6:00 a.m.

We are in favor of doing so and the Ministry will look into this together with the ministry of VSA seeing the recent COVID developments.

ICAO regulation requires a Hangar is needed (legally) and it affects of our safety ratings? Should we not pursue funding/loan for the hangar as collateral.

The regulations does allow for foreign Aircraft Maintenance Organization. (Hangar) However, seeing the limited space at the Civil Aviation recommends government to secure the hangar space at the airport.

Can it be clarified for the rules of the opening times for businesses, workers are actually willing to be open to work to make extra money, can the minister please explain that perspective?

While we understand and can agree, even support, the need for workers to make more money by working more days/hours however, certainly this interest has to be weighed against other factors such the COVID-19 numbers and the related contact tracing. For this past weekend alone there was a 36% percent increase in cases. We support business but we should also be pragmatic in our approach. Therefore, we will liaise and consult with the Minister of VSA on these topics

24 hour licenses, when can we allow businesses to apply for these, even at a higher fee? The fee can be double or triple the costs, what is the opinion of these happening?

The Ministry will look into this in conjunction with relevant stakeholders to determine the outlook for this.

Please ask the Central Bank of Curacao and Sint Maarten to provide the report it did on preclearance to Parliament.

Refer to word document: [US Preclearance Note (version 25-2-2019)] (attachment 2)

What plans are there to eliminate the red tape of government and improve business and reducing the cost of business, please elaborate on the plans.

This is part of the Country Packages, E6, to be precise. An advisory firm is currently performing a base study and we expect their recommendations within short, which also be shared with Parliament. Reducing red-tape and cost of doing business are important aspects of the review. To this end, it is imperative that further synergy is needed to attract investments by means of fiscal incentives.

Even the IMF sees the importance of tourism; when can we as government see it and start looking to focus on that vision? What sort of improvements can we see being implemented? Can it be explained what the core issue is? What dialogue is being had besides the IMF report, dialogue with the business community and labor force?

Tourism is indeed our largest economic pillar, which makes us vulnerable at the same time. The IMF also made note of this. This is why the ministry drafted an Investment Policy and diversification strategy. Most of the diversification are within existing and new sub-sectors within tourism and some are not directly related to tourism. Finally, we are researching our carrying capacity as a small island and looking to increase our regional hub-function. This will have to go hand in hand with the reducing of red tape and cost of doing business.

With Minister FIN and Minister TEATT, can we get an updated version of the CBCS report on preclearance, as this might even be more profitable now with more relevant statistics?

The working group on US Preclearance will be tasked to present an update on the existing reports and business case which will also be shared with and presented to Parliament.

In the amendment for Caribbean tourism, it was to make funds available for Winair, has the discussion been had with the Tourism Office to have Winair to take the lead to do the marketing within the region using the Caribbean tourism funds?

Preparation for a cooperative marketing campaign with WINAIR in the amount of NAf. 250,000 is being finalized to commence in Q1 2022 to promote the Caribbean region as WINAIR.

Can an indication be given regarding the Latin American budget? When do we think COPA will return to Sint Maarten? Important connection.

Due to the lockdown in March 2020 plans to continue and develop a new plan for the coop airline marketing were put on the shelf as priority was to strategize and develop a plan for reopening. Important to mention is Latin American Market (LatAm) was the last region to reopen as the numbers of Covid 19 were extremely high.

St. Maarten Tourism Bureau (STB) continued having dialogue with Copa airline and provided updates and webinar to keep the trade industry informed of the destination's development and entice to book for the future when reopening.

The ban was lifted in November 2021 for LatAm and STB immediately approached Copa to start strategizing the plan of approach to start flying asap. This also included St. Maarten's commitment to commit marketing funds for a coop marketing campaign. Which will be to increase our market share once again in South America in Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Columbia, and Central Panama. In addition, the west coast of the U.S, also makes use of the flight connecting in Panama to come to Sint Maarten.

Latest development: Copa Airlines informed STB in November that unfortunately due to lack of equipment they are not able to assign a plane to our destination and that they are looking at Summer 2022. Communication will continue with Copa and they did let us know if anything comes available, we will be notified, but at this moment they cannot commit.

Conclusion: it is vital that we market in 2022 the LATAM (Latin American Market) Market as this was a good market for us and due to a lack of action it has even decreased in arrivals more.

Any update for Sunwing, any finalization for cooperation agreement?

This is scheduled for Q1 2022. Discussion with Sunwing are currently ongoing now. The goal is to have an agreement between both entities supported by a marketing plan near the end of Q1 2022.

For the marketing campaign, is there any update with OTAs like Expedia?

Based on experience, Expedia has been one of the best Return on Investments for St. Maarten. Tourism Bureau recently started another Expedia campaign as of November 2021 to December 2022. This comprehensive campaign is targeted to reach various regions within, Canada, USA and Europe.

Philipsburg revitalization – there was a reduction, can it be confirmed that the reason was because it was already taken care of in 2021 budget?

The 2021 budget was amended by Parliament which led to a USD 350,000 increase on this project. The current budget is in line with the original amount of 2021.

Any update on Small Island Soca Cruise?

The Tourism Bureau is awaiting submission of the required information based on the Subsidy Ordinance from the organizers for the necessary review and approval.

Agriculture – did not see much on that, is there going to be in 2022 an official agricultural policy presented by Government?

Yes, as mentioned, the draft policy is currently under review and should be approved and published within short.

Carnival for bidding – the money is allocated as subsidy in 2022, is that necessary? Should that not remain a marketing contract in order to support Carnival next year and also allow the Tourism Bureau to support other Carnival stakeholders like booth holders? How possible is it to allocate 2021 funds for next year's Carnival?

A request for proposal with terms of reference for a public tender will go out for the 2023 carnival in order to give an opportunity to other entities to submit proposals. For 2022 this was not possible due to timing constraints.

The strategy moving forward is to utilize the Subsidy of carnival for 2022 allocate in addition funds from the budget post "events and music "in support of additional carnival related events.

Basket of goods – price control products - can Minister TEATT set a price randomly and try it out to see if profitably or not for supermarkets to use? Can any price be set and when do we plan to add other products? This needs to be looked at from a dietary perspective, maybe with VSA.

To answer the MP's question, no the Ministry of TEATT can not "randomly set a price" however a maximum price can be implemented on products deemed essentials eg. Before, during or after a disaster/pandemic. Food suppliers are therefore required to sell these specific categories of products at a price not exceeding the established maximum prices for said items. The Ministry is currently in discussions with stakeholders, in particular the importers about expanding the basket of goods and to ensure said items can be affordable and also have more than one brand option for the consumer.

Timeshare legislation – we need a plan of approach for the legislation turned down by the Governor for English language and inform Parliament about the updates. Can Government give details of the legislation and proposed solutions and inform Parliament of these?

Yes, an update was previously given in the response given to MP Wescot-Williams.

The amendment to the APK - plastic bag law for JUS – and TEATT – who is checking the businesses that are using plastic bags? Have you analyzed this legislation and if we are able to get the new implementation worked out, how ready is the Ministry TEATT to support the ban in the legislation?

The Ministry has a total of 6 Economic Controllers. The enforcement capacity to effectively enforce this prohibition across all businesses island wide that make use of plastic bags is limited and from a practical standpoint would be limited to spot checks. The Ministry is of the opinion that it would be more effective for enforcement to start at the point of entry into the island via the framework of customs/ border control.

The FIU advised not to proceed with online gaming due to money laundering. Can the advice be provided to Parliament to see where it is going?

That is correct. The FIU advised to make sure the legal framework is in place and in accordance with FATF requirements before issuing licenses for online gaming. We have provide you with said advice. (attachment 4)

Detailed breakdown on the line items was received. Unknowns: third party expenses and miscellaneous. Why is there an increase on third party expenses under your cabinet. Also for the MET office and EVT. However for Civil Aviation there is a decrease, why is this? What are the changes in the third party expenses?

Due to the strict timelines within the measures of the country packages, there is constant need for additional support to swiftly execute matters in the country packages. The

implementation agendas will only be released in a quarterly basis so room needs to be made for unforeseen support that may be needed to execute the reforms.

Ministry of General Affairs

National Archive (recurring topic). Is there a plan to establish an official national archive that is free of access for the public, the MPS, civil servants that there can be a continuous database? Is there a longer-term plan?

The government is in the assessment phase to be able to set up a virtual National Archive. This avenue is still being researched:

Additional elucidation

Difference between a virtual and a physical archive:

A physical archive is a place where public records or historical materials (such as documents, tapes, photographic material) are preserved and where people can go to gather firsthand facts, data, and evidence from these letters, reports, notes, memos, photographs, and other primary sources.

A virtual archive on the other hand provides users anywhere access to these same records online from the comfort of their homes, at any time without having to be aware of the source from which they came.

The user of a virtual archive is not bound to opening hours and can do his/her research at any time. Furthermore, a virtual archive requires very little physical space and is the direction all archives are moving into right now.

Longer term plan:

Once the virtual archive is in place Government still plans to establish a physical National archive, however this will be on a smaller scale and possibly in collaboration with the National Museum. This because there are several pieces of historical material outside of St. Maarten. As such, we must ensure we have proper storage capacity including regulated temperatures and other safeguards to ensure the integrity of the historical pieces remain.

Overheid.nl. Is it the actual Govt or a third-party containing legislation? What does PM have planned to expand on this to have officially, have all legislations National ordinance available online at one source?

It is a third party that is publishing our legislation.

Daadkracht, is the company which is assisting JZ&W with the actual execution, processing and editing of national laws and regulations in consolidated form. The Department of JZ&W sends its national legislation to Daadkracht, which is mandated by the Government of Sint Maarten to process and execute publication of national laws and regulations in consolidated form (in the most updated form to avoid duplication of laws or outdated articles that are no longer applicable) on behalf of the Government of Sint Maarten.

In the past, this service was executed in house (JZ&W), however due to Separate Status (10-10-10), Country Sint Maarten did not have ample manpower in-house to continue processing all of the national laws and regulations into "Geconsolideerde Teksten (GT teksten)". Daadkracht was therefore contracted to assist with this process.

This year, however, there were some challenges in accessing the website. Our department of ICT has proposed that the repository of legislation be hosted by government and accessing the Overheid.nl site for local legislation will redirect to our local repository. A plan to have this realized is being worked on.

We have been trying to find the national ordinance on expropriation, where is that? Can that be provided to Parliament?

Where does one go to find this explanatory memorandum legislation that has not been amended, or has been carried over from Netherlands Antilles and not digitally archived? The department has a (digital) archive, in which they can search for "old" legislation and their explanatory memorandum, if it is not available on the Government website. Also the department of DIV has an archive in which old legislation is registered. Furthermore, JZ&W is in contact with the Curacao to request "old" legislation which were established in the Netherlands Antilles. In this particular case JZ&W received the national ordinance, and two adjusted explanatory memoranda from Curacao, but they are still looking for the original explanatory memorandum. Once retrieved this will be forwarded

Personnel Department issues within government, there are things going wrong with that Department, who is determining what is not a critical function?

Can PM tell me how long is it taking from the moment a Minister informs P&O that I am ready to start the hiring process for a person?

From that point until the person is hired, what does that look like in terms of a time frame?

Why is the impression being given that there are huge bottlenecks there?

How is it possible that people are being interviewed for a position, you have waarnemend for that position, you are offered the position permanently and are being told that you cannot negotiate, this is your salary take it or leave it. When are we going to fix this?

The SG or department head will provide an overview of functions the organization considers critical. This is then approved by the Minister.

The recruitment procedure usually starts with an ad that is published, generally two weeks is given for applicants to send in their applications, the selection of the candidate is based on their letters and CVs, the job interview, and after selection of the best candidate, the drafting of the advice can commence. The advice then will go to the relevant ministry and at the end to the Ministry of Finance. After which the advice will go to the relevant minister for final approval. If it is a manager (dept head) it needs to go to the CoM for approval. The next step is the signing of a contract, or a national decree to be signed, first by the Governor. Candidates also need to have a VOG (verklaring omtrent gedrag/ certificate of good conduct) and a good bill of health. This sometimes takes time. During this entire process the advice can be delayed because it may not have been handled quickly enough by the relevant handler at a particular time.

The remark that there are civil servants who have been, for decades, in an acting position, could not be verified at this time. Known to me, is the current three acting SGs, for the last years.

It is important to note that positions are valued at a certain scale. So, it is not as in the private sector that management or the HR department can just determine the salary, Government has a scaling system, and this is established by law.

Another point I can mention is that the application of the some of the current HR-policies are a cause for great concern. As I have mentioned, some of these policies are already being reviewed with the intention of implementing the necessary changes.

JZW department 1.4M budget. Is that based on a complete FTE-filled budget? Or the reality of what we see not, not all functions are filled. What efforts are being made? Will the govt consider if it is not projected that we will be able to hire all these ppl within 2022, would we consider placing everyone in their rightful place and look to see what 3rd party legal support can be provided.

The complete FTE's for the department consists of 17 staff members. The department budgeted 12 FTE's of which currently the department is seeking to fill 2 critical positions. The 2 vacant positions needed are a department head and a legislative lawyer.

I would like to mention that the recruitment process for the 2 positions mentioned is a challenge as it has always been challenging to recruit legal candidates.

How many departments are dealing with the public? Can you explain how many different departments there are per ministry and how many of these are interlinked?

The departments who are providing services to the public, are the Civil registry department, and the Directorate of Foreign Relations (Ministry of General Affairs), Economic Licenses (Ministry of TEATT), Receivers' Office and Social Services & Labour (Ministry of VSA). The services are provided at the Government building and coordinated for the most part by the Public Services Center department in close consultation with the management of said departments. There are other departments such as the Fire Department, Immigration and CPS to name a few that also provide services to the public from their respective locations.

For the question on how many departments are per ministry, I would like to refer the MP to the National Ordinance on the Structure and Organization of the national government (LIOL).

As is known, the Ministry of General Affairs provides support for the entire organization, as mentioned in the National Ordinance (LIOL). Although there is no mention of departments being interlinked in the national ordinance, based on the national ordinance the Ministry of General Affairs is supporting the whole organization with Facility Services, ICT, DIV and Personnel DCOMM Furthermore, there is an SG platform established to discuss and handle challenges on inter-ministerial subjects.

Is there a plan in place to determine ahead of time when a tsunami will strike?

We are a member of the PTWC which stands for The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) and is one of two tsunami warning centers that are operated by NOAA in the United States. Every time that there is a Tsunami warning for the Caribbean we are alerted via email. There are several individuals within the disaster management structure who receive said email. These persons will then alert the necessary local organizations according to the established protocol.

Regarding the digitalization of government, this process will take 4 years. Can a time chart be provided on how this will take place? Will the public see the changes within the first year or only after four years?

Upon completion of the digital strategy and road map an official time chart will be available and will outline initiatives and outcomes for each component per year. The project has established baselines, yearly intermediate targets, and end targets. With these targets being set, it is expected that the public will notice the impact throughout the project lifecycle. A detailed implementation plan is being developed for all project activities that will be executed on an annual basis. The plan will be available as the project nears implementation.

On social media it was published that the new acting Minister Plenipotentiary was appointed; this is not reflected in the budget.

The cost of the new acting Minister Plenipotentiary is reflected in the budget under the cabinet of the Plenipotentiary Minister. The decrease in the personnel expenses has to do with personnel changes and does not affect the salary of the new acting Minister Plenipotentiary.

One of the common line items are the material costs in every ministry. What material are exactly needed?

Material costs are the operational costs for each department. This can consist of third-party personnel, travel expenses, office supplies, training, uniforms, and other expenses needed for the operation of the department. This can vary based on the functioning of the department.

There is a decrease of about 33% in insurance for the insurance for the buildings. Is this a discount or are 33% of the buildings not functional?

It was decided that the insurance of buildings would be shared between the Ministry of General Affairs and the Ministry of Education Youth Culture and Sport. The Ministry of

Education Youth Culture and Sport will facilitate the insurance for the schools while the Ministry of General Affairs will cover the insurance for all other governmental buildings. The insurance budget by the Ministry of General Affairs was reduced by the cost of the insurance for schools. Other than the shifting of expenses, the department Facility Services is seeking options to save on the insurance cost by moving several offices into Government owned locations where different departments will be housed together. In addition, several buildings are no longer functional (Old Government building, Post office, police academy, old fire department, Soremar building) which was also the cause of the reduced budget.

There is an increase in vehicle insurance, why is this so much?

The Government is responsible for insurance payment for all the vehicles in 2022. This includes the new vehicles that are all comprehensively insured including the brand-new fire trucks which resulted in a significant increase for vehicle insurance.

There is no mention made of an income from the parking lot, only the expenses. Where can the income be found in the budget?

The income for the parking lot would be listed in the revenue section of the budget. It would be included in the total amount of NAf 3.003.000, of the whole Ministry. The budget post for the income for the parking lot is 53489-3107 in the amount of NAf 151.455,-. The forecasted income for the parking lot is minimal. As the facilities need to be repaired and updated. This updating is still ongoing and once the electricity has been connected, we should be able to start to collect more funds and increase revenues.

Please explain for the public to understand how the APS pension works. Especially the civil servant's contribution part while working and while on pension.

Since the change of the Pension scheme as per July 1st 2020, the premium towards APS is 18% of the gross salary. This needs to be paid by the employer. The employer withholds 8% of the gross salary, minus the franchise, of the employee. The franchise is 10/7 times the amount of the AOV. On average employees pay about 6% of their gross salary. Employees with small salaries pay less, employees with bigger salaries pay more.

Once the employee retires, they will receive their pension from APS. They do not have to pay any contribution for that.

What plans does DCOMM have to structurally address when things go into the newspaper regarding Government so that there is a response to be provided both locally on Sint Maarten and in the Netherlands? Can PM elucidate on how this needed strategy would be done for responses, similarly to what was done during the pandemic regarding fake news on social media by DCOMM? Yes, the newly introduced Social Briefs have been indeed effective when informing the general public. This has allowed us to reaffirm the importance of getting information from the official channels of government. This has allowed us to strengthen the awareness of the sxmgov multimedia network that consists of the official government website sintmaartengov.org, the Radio Station 107.9FM, sxmgov YouTube Channel and Sxmgov Facebook Page. This plan exists within the timely update and distribution of government information via these official channels that we encourage the general public to utilize and share with their friends and family.

I have to agree with the MP and also MP Emmanuel that we need to address incorrect information in the papers or social media. A request can be made for DCOMM to monitor the papers, but at the end it is the responsible Minister or Ministry who is the expert in the content and needs to address this. I consider this a very important point and will for sure discuss this in the council of ministers.

Please repeat how many critical vacancies are open, only the number is needed, not an elucidation? I missed the answer due to another meeting with the Secretary General.

Currently there are 16 critical positions budgeted within the budget of the Ministry of General Affairs.

Is it that the PM gets daily report updates from the Department P&O on the process for critical vacancy hiring?

No. A very large part of the process is being handled by the civil service.

When the process is ongoing, from oversight aspect, is there an opportunity to clearly define the parameters on what the civil service is doing during the process?

Yes, the final check are done by the Ministers at the end of the process. The dossier should entail all the information.

Page 36: Per ministry, a clarification what functions are critical and what not provide ahead of Public Meeting.

The **Party for Progress faction** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions.

Ministry of Finance

What are some of the plans being developed for assisting in particular sole proprietors with their tax responsibilities. This is a demographic that often has issues in what is needed from them, what is required, what they have to do to be in compliance with tax responsibilities.

Currently the Tax Administration visits businesses including sole proprietors, check their administration and inform them of their short comings if any, and inform them of their responsibilities as a taxpayer. The Tax Administration intends to host information sessions geared to the different demographics in the future. Moreover, recently the program of tax reform and tax services have started shaping the initiatives from the country package. As part of the tax reform plan a communication plan will be developed that contains the ins and outs of all communication to and from the public. Smaller initiative: set up program through an entity to provide support to SMEs in filing taxes.

How far along is the Ministry with tax breaks for entrepreneurs which includes sole proprietors in certain fields and certain industries. This was mentioned last year too.

In terms of tax breaks for entrepreneurs, unfortunately, we have not been able to make any progress in this area. The focus for entrepreneurs has been on making financing available during the past two years. Considering the economically challenging period we have all been experiencing tax breaks have not gotten the attention we had hoped to be able to give it.

Why the rush? Why didn't Minister wait for the advice from Cft before sending the draft budget to the CoA, seeing that we are already late?

As MP Peterson correctly indicated: Both CFT and COA usually take 6 weeks each. The Kingdom Act on financial supervision and our National Accountability Ordinance regulates for draft budgets to be submitted at Parliament in the month of September, and the Cft has to receive an approved budget by 15 December or, in its opinion, there is prospect of a draft budget within a reasonable period of time and before the new year starts. With Cft advising to retract the timely submitted version of the budget, then to avoid further delay, we submitted the draft budget to both advisory bodies facilitating them to work simultaneously, enabling us to meet the deadline. Though we agreed with the MP that this is not an ideal situation.

Govt received a verbal answer from Cft that the entire budget had to be retracted, wasn't it enough? Was it incomplete? Can I get clarity as to what exactly was the Cft message to the Minister and why the draft budget was not accepted by them the first time according to the answers in the package?

MP Peterson through you madam chairlady, Cft does not “accept” the budget; they advise KCOM on the content of it. The secretariat Cft raised the concerns regarding the explanation of the multiannual projections, suggesting better explanations and more details, before proceeding to formally requesting advice. Additionally, there were some questions about elucidations regarding capital investments and backgrounds. Finally, there was some exchange of vision on the expected economic development as well as about the effect on the coffers (income side) and on the projected expenses. These issues have all been communicated with Cft and addressed in the adjusted budget as it was submitted to parliament.

Cft advice: Report from the ‘collective sector’, according to art. 24, section 2 from the Rft this report also had to be given for them to give a good assessment on the draft budget, this was not the case? When will that be done?

As it relates to the “collective sector” report, according to article 24, section 2 of the Rft, note that as of 2022 this report will be provided to Cft.

Art. 15 section 1, subsection 8 of the Kingdom law on Financial Supervision, the budget must be balanced. Art 25 of the same Kingdom law states that an exception can be made on an exception can be requested based on this rule if the decision is made by the RMR. PM sent a letter to Knops asking to deviate. Knops has asked to motivate requests to deviate. Has there been any indication/communication with State Secretary Knops about whether the 3-page answer dated November 19, was enough motivation to deviate from the law from Rft? How sure are we that we will get permission from RMR to deviate coming this Friday? And what if RMR decides to not give permission, what then?

The request to deviate from having a balanced budget is on the agenda this Friday (tomorrow) of the Kingdom Council of Ministers. St. Maarten provided further substantiation as requested by State Secretary Knops. Our response consisted of a 3-page explanation, motivation and additionally, the liquidity prognoses for the entire book year 2022. In our opinion, this covers the information requested by the Kingdom Council of Ministers. Cft already stated that the liquidity reserves that are available at year-end are enough to cover the deficit in the first quarter of 2022. No additional funds will be made available in Q1.

It is unlikely that a decision of the KCOM, allowing a budget with a deficit, will contradict the advice from Cft, which has already advised that such will occur. Of course, a decision is not confirmed until it has been formally taken and communicated. That concludes the answers to MP Peterson.

Comment - Cft review comment for budget – although the timeline is understood for sending to both entities, the law states for the Council of Advice to give the last advice with all info at hand. Sending from Cft to Council of Advice after is redundant as they don't give second advices.

In its conclusion (also known as the dictum) the Council of Advice does not indicate having any objections. The dictum states for the government to take into account the Council's comments before it can be sent to Parliament. This dictum is perceived as a light dictum and from a legislative stance, there is no reason not to proceed to Parliament, other than to take into account the comments of the Council. However, my intention for coming budgets is submit the budget earlier and to have the role of the Council of Advice as last advisor.

Do we have in Sint Maarten a ‘landsverordening financieel beheer’ like Curacao has? Our leading laws are the National Accountability Ordinance and the Kingdom Act financial supervision Curacao and Sint Maarten. At this moment no we concluded that there is no need to create a separate National Ordinance Financial Management (landsverordening financieel beheer).

This is from the N.A. We did not take it over, Curacao did. Section 6 LBHAM for "aanbesteding and uitvoering". Government has an obligation is required to establish additional regulations. Where is the LBHAM. What is the legal basis we currently use?

At this moment we use article 47 of our National Accountability Ordinance.

Before the hurricane there was a project on integrity legislation, of which the Ibham referred to in article 47, sixth section of the National Accountability Ordinance. As part of the integrity legislation project, which project was guided by the department of Legal Affairs, the Ibham was drafted by a hired legislative writer, based on discussions with the workgroup members and consultations with civil servants. However, after the hurricane this project was not continued and as such the Ibham was not finalized.

What does it mean if you are not allowed to have a deficit budget?

At this moment there is no immediate effect. The law provides for continuation of government's operations in the absence of an approved budget.

The Party For Progress faction noticed that in the explanatory notes, NAf 5 million being held back regarding the Constitutional Court; no indication where it is being held for, is that the post 'onvoorzien' as it increased with NAf 5 million.

Yes, the money is budgeted for by the budget post unforeseen.

The 182 % increase in 'bankkosten' with the Ministry FIN needs to be explained.

European Investment Bank (EIB) guarantee for Airport reconstruction:

1. Liquidity;
2. Additional Capex;

This was budgeted as guarantee for the airport to receive funds from EIB.

How many vacancies were received for Government, the critical vacancies received. Any actions taken to fill the vacancies for example for the Tax office. Applications per vacancies?

I will provide the list of vacancies that the Ministry of Finance advertised in March 2021 as was presented earlier:

- Concern controller position filled.
- Ads placed in March 2021 for 9 functions:
 1. Medewerker Heffing Z&P (interviews being held on 17 +18 june);
 2. Head Inspection ;
 3. Inspector of Taxes (1 selected advice through the line);
 4. Hoofd medewerker Aanslagregeling (2 selected, advice being finalized);
 5. Applicatie Beheerder (1 selected, advice through the line);
 6. Secretaresse (1 selected, advice through the line);
 7. Hoofd medewerker Financieel Beleid (candidate selected, finalizing the recruitment process);
 8. Diensthoofd Comptabiliteit;
 9. SG Ministry of Finance.

Applications per vacancy:

1. Medewerker Heffing Z & P : 32 Hoofd Inspectie: 6

2. Inspecteur Aanslagregeling: 10
3. Hoofdmedewerker Aanslagregeling: 14
4. Applicatie Beheerder: 13
5. Secretaresse: 79
6. Hoofdmedewerker Financieel Beleid: 10
7. Diensthoofd Comptabiliteit: 4
8. Secretary General Finance: 3

Budget parliament. In the area 'ondersteuning griffie' rechts en deskundig advies was increased with 225% but no accounting for this, please explain.

It will be more efficient if 'Griffie' of the Parliament answer this question. Checked all the data they submitted relative to budget 2021 and have not seen any elucidation on their budget.

Ref. ICT equipment as mentioned in the explanatory notes, what is Government usual approach to acquire ICT equipment and licenses as they become obsolete. Is Government inquiring into lease agreements with for example Dell. This matter ties into what the faction United Democrats mentions, it seems every minister for themselves.

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of General Affairs.

Clarity is requested on section 4 of article 4, for the mandate to SZV to take decision on behalf of Minister of Finance, what are the details of the decision: to mandate for only the SSRP or other sections of the articles?

This mandate only covers the execution of the payroll support as stated in the Explanatory Notes on said section and article.

Clarity is requested on article 5, section 1: the urgency needs to be proven. There is a list of four cases where urgency can be developed. It needs to be specified what the urgency is, 'regelt inwerking treding'. This is not in accordance with constitution and needs to be explained. Why is there no explanation of the budget for urgency? Why was this not taken up?

We thank the faction for its attention; the correction is included in the "nota van wijziging" to be sent to Parliament.

The Ombudsman was skipped in the process, this budget national ordinance is still also by the Constitutional Court, I did not get the memo on this. Can you provide clarity on that? It has not even been passed, Council of Advice gave their advice and it hasn't been changed to reflect this. If this passed as is by Parliament, there is lots of uncertainty, which Parliament does not want.

We thank the faction for its attention; the correction is included in the "nota van wijziging" to be sent to Parliament.

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

It is asked if the Ministry of VROMI is in any type of collaborative discussions with any other relevant Ministries, for example in issuing fines or other disciplinary measures to the owners of abandoned vehicles?

Based on the waste ordinance, it is prohibited to keep a car wreck on private property. Thus the owner can be notified to remove the wreck at their own expense by means of the legally required registered notice equal to a 'last onder bestuursdwang'.

The Ministry is currently creating a policy on the removal of car wrecks on public and private property. This will state clearly the responsibilities, contractual obligations and legal liabilities, legal framework, consequences in terms of the risk having car wrecks being dumped on public roads, logistics and capacity, contracts, whether or not to charge the owners of dumped wrecks etc. The policy will include who is financially accountable. The ultimate result will be a generic policy on car wreck removal to be used in future years.

Any discussion within the Ministry VROMI regarding a law or policy related to aesthetics even for private land, that persons keep their property to a certain standard? We are a tourist destination. Barbados has it.

There is a draft aesthetics policy, which is to be reviewed, adjusted, and finalized in 2022.

It is asked if the Ministry is having any discussions regarding local insurance companies covering damage costs caused by vehicles crashing into public property items.

A person who causes damage to public property with a motor vehicle, is in principle liable to compensate for the damage caused. Government has file to claim for the cost of the repair works, at the insurance company, along with a report from CARS and the Traffic Police. In special cases the department of New Works is consulted for assistance with the damage estimate.

For payments, two options are usually available, insurances can make the payment to the treasury or a payment directly to the company carrying the repair works.

The Increase from NAf 2.500 to NAf 120.000, is in relation to the expenditures for gratification, and overtime. Can this NAf 120.000 be broken down?

The increase in Budget post 41026 relates to the shifting of budget to allocate funds for the departments to enable retroactive payments related to delayed advices regarding bonuses, jubilee and increments which will be implemented for civil servants who have applied to new positions within the ministry in 2020 and 2021. The breakdown budget posts is as follows:

9021.

9110.

9210.

9230.

9240.

9250.

9220.

Ministry of Justice

I took note that in the explanatory notes under Justice there is a mention being made for a new office for KPSM to be placed in the Cole bay area close to the causeway bridge. I recall some years ago that there was a discussion whereby an advice was made for this to be placed in the St. Peters, South Reward or Dutch Quarter area and this was based on advice received from KPSM. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice what advice was received from KPSM to inform and support this office now being in the Cole Bay area instead.

It was always the intention to have a substation in Cole bay, St. Peter's, Lowlands, Dutch quarter and Belvedere. KPSM opened three substations Maho, Mount William (Former Justice Academy) and Cole bay.

Due to the building being sold in Cole Bay this substation had to move to a next location. The only substation that was not opened was St. Peter's because negotiations was ongoing with the owners of the building the then target building.

A new property in the St. Peters area has been identified and discussions and research is ongoing for this facility to material in the coming year.

As it relates to the once established station at Mount William Hill, this one was destroyed by Hurricane Irma and an alternate location is being sought.

Are there regular training scheduled programs in place for KPSM? How often do they go back to school to be upgraded based on their rank? Are they receiving proper training and given the best tools to do their job?

KPSM's training budget is NAF 75,000, which amounts to an annual budget per FTE of less than NAF 400. Despite a low annual budget per FTE, KPSM still manages to offer its employees a solid training plan. By being creative with scarce resources and seeking cooperation with other police forces within the Kingdom. In recent years 5 classes have been trained for the Basic Police Training. The costs for this training amount to NAF 400,000 per class. This brings the cost post to NAF 2,000,000. The Basic Police Training is provided and financed by the Netherlands. The post-initial and specialist training are realized through cooperation in the region and financed by the Quality Impulse. St. Maarten only has to pay for the travel and accommodation costs of the trainees. A total of 69 post-initial and specialist training were offered this year. The IBT training courses are provided annually by the internal IBT teachers. Each executive colleague has 3 to 4 training sessions per year. A training course takes 2 days per person.

The budget for training was increased; can the break down on how that budget will be distributed per unit in the justice chain be provided?

Such a breakdown can be provided once discussions with the Course Coordinator, Departments Head and HR-Justice commences.

The 12% increase for "voeding" under the prison was increased; where is this increase coming from? Does this have to do with more prisoners, more staff or increased cost of groceries? Can an indication be provided on which prices were increased? How was the budget on that post allocated? Can the calculation on what happened with that budget be provided? In 2020 NAF 453k was budgeted, however NAF 640k was spent. What kind of agreement is in place for nutritional groceries needed for the prison?

There is indeed an increase of 12% budgeted. This was done in order to reflect the actuality (reality) of what was being spent and what will be spent realistically. Previously the lower amounts budgeted and the amounts actually spent varied significantly. the 12% increase was made to reflect the reality of the amounts needed and to be spent. This does include the increase in the price of groceries, due to various reasons, such as inflation, rising costs worldwide in transportation costs due to the Covid pandemic, etc. Also in addition, the amount also takes into account the MLC, which also has to house and provide food for youngsters above the age of 16 who are housed with MLC due to the lack of a foster home (destroyed by the hurricane) and a projected increase in Staffing for both HVB and MLC. No, we were not privy to the line item price increases. (eg. the increase in price of a can of tuna, meats, vegetables, etc. for example from 2020, 2021, 2022). This was done based on HVB's indicated needs for 2022 and which follows logically looking at the actual expenditures of previous years. In order to avoid this discrepancy and overrun. the 12% increase was made to have this amount more accurately reflected. There is no formal agreement for specifically titled for 'nutritional' goods. HVB and MLC already purchase numerous fresh and organic goods, including fresh vegetables, freshly baked breads, etc.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

With regards to youth, under the policy action of the youth department, it mentions taking a programmatic approach towards the prevention of teenage parenthood. Is this going to be in

combination with the ministry's plan for improving and adjusting the overall curriculum of the schools, what schools have a comprehensive progressive sex education as part of their curriculum. What are the plans to effectively incorporate it in the schools in general not just the policy of the youth department

Sex education is an integral part of the curriculum in Secondary Education. All high schools are making use of the Real Talk and Girl Power programs which are carried out by the St. Maarten HIV /AIDS Foundation annually. Due to logistical circumstances in the chosen school to execute the pilot program in 2019 and again through the start of the COVID Pandemic in 2020, the Department of Youth was unable to execute the pilot program on teenage parenthood (Positive Action). The department would be able to formulate an approach after evaluating the program and provide recommendations to the curriculum.

The MP also questioned whether there were activities presently being executed within sport. I am happy to give a snapshot of the activities currently being executed at the various facilities (see powerpoint)

MHSC Calendar

Monday, November 29, 2021 – Sunday, December 5, 2021

Facility is booked, 5 days out of 7 and accommodates schools as well as sports organizations

JCJL Calendar

Monday, December 6, 2021 – Sunday, December 12, 2021

Facility is booked, 4 days out of 7 and accommodates schools as well as sports organizations

LBSA Calendar

Monday, December 6, 2021 – Sunday, December 12, 2021

Facility is booked, 7 days out of 7 and accommodates schools, sports organizations and National team training

RISC Football Calendar

Monday, December 13, 2021 – Sunday, December 19, 2021

Facility is booked, 7 days out of 7 and accommodates schools, sports organizations and National team training

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

When was the last time the Government did an assessment of unemployment?

The last Labor Force Survey which included unemployment figures was conducted in 2018 and published by the department of statistics in 2019.

Most countries do unemployment assessments quarterly, our figures are from 2018 and published in 2019 and for tourism destinations you aim to do it at the peak of your high season and then in your low season so at least twice a year. To determine how our economic season impacts our unemployment rate is there a plan for the ministry to adjust the measurements of this matrix to better capture this data.

In the past the Labour Force Surveys (LFS) were conducted both in low and high season.

Specifically, the LFS 2013 was conducted in the low season

The LFS 2017 was performed during high season, in February 2017, prior to the arrival of hurricane Irma

The LFS 2018 was conducted in September 2018, being low season; about 1 year post Irma

During upcoming consultations with representatives from STAT, it will be determined when the next LFS will be conducted. It is indeed preferable to have this survey done twice per year, once in the low season and once in the high season

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Lottery booths: Clarity on the proliferation of lottery booths in the country. Is there a proper policy in place or pending regarding, for example, for branch license for every seller held under the main lottery license? Has a study been executed to identify how much more income the country can generate with such a collection policy in place?

There is presently no policy on branch licenses for lottery booths, however the possibilities of establishing something similar is being looked into by the Ministry's legal. The functioning of the lottery industry on a whole has the attention of the Ministry of TEATT and has been deemed a priority. As such, we are in the process of having an independent assessment carried out on the lottery industry to support much-needed restructuring of the industry, which would include an overview of possible revenue generating opportunities for the country.

Food prices. Until there is a system in place at the ports of entry for cargo and goods, many social issues cannot be addressed as well as cost issues and income generating issues. What steps are currently being undertaken to deploy such a (automated custom) system at our ports of entry so we can begin collecting the type and level of data to allow for this and future government to make informed policy decisions.

The Ministry of TEATT has been assessing the possibilities to collect Trade Statistics to be better informed and indeed create the relevant policies as required. We are currently awaiting a study by SOAB that will assess the best option or provider to obtain the relevant information.

Can the timeline on the study mentioned of SOAB regarding systems at the port be provided? There has been 2 systems identified to be used to collect the necessary data. As this data will also in return improve Customs systems, Ministry of Justice been the main source of the SOAB review.

As it relates to what has taken place:

SOAB received request from Customs.

SOAB followed up with an engagement letter on Sep 12th and is awaiting final review and a response of approval.

Lottery Booth and policy, how are the booths operating without policy, what is the construction to be in existence and operating. Are they a B.V. , N.V. , eenmanszaak? Are they legal?

Based on the lottery licenses, the lottery license holders are allowed to sell lotteries in multiple locations. Based on initial legal advice, the structure that exists in lotteries deviates from the branch concept and as such a special, but similar arrangement must be made for this industry, which as mentioned before is being worked on.

Currently the lottery booths are operating without any additional or specific licenses.

SOAB has been contacted to do a full assessment on the policy. Meetings have been scheduled for next week to discuss further on this matter.

Ministry of General Affairs

The **United Democrats faction** has taken note of the draft with interest and has the following questions and remarks as it pertains to this national ordinance.

Ministry of Finance

There were valiant efforts made for tie-in connections with the 2022 budget to country packages and the associated costs. But what does country packages measures mean for SXM where money is concerned? Nothing under TWO or COHO for contributions that will be made to the budget. But we are not sure if the Dutch Government will agree if we can have a deficit. That will be taken

As it pertains to what do country packages measures mean for Sint Maarten where money is concerned. Momentarily it is not clear how all expenses that derive from the country package will be covered except for the tax reform project including financial management and for the new prison. The tax and financial management projects will be financed via a grant and 50% of the prison will be covered by another grant.

Is everything requested by the KCOM in order for the decision to be taken on Dec 17? There is a need to get a decision by KCOM to deviate from the norms of the budget, the conditions mentioned for that decision to be taken, were they all met by Government? One was for draft 2022 budget.

Yes, everything requested by the Kingdom Council of Ministers were met. The motivation behind the art 25 request was added to the budget dossier as well as the monthly report for October which includes the required liquidity prognosis for 2022. The 2022 draft budget was shared with Cft twice, the first version was supplied in September and the adjusted version before the mentioned deadline.

Regarding the capital budget, what is the outlook according to ministry FIN to get the approval in order to finance the matter mentioned under the capital budget?

Regarding the capital budget, Cft stated that no capital loans can be granted if the country has a budget with a deficit, but the Cft also advised the Government of St. Maarten to include capital investments budgets in the draft 2022 budget for infrastructure and for a new prison. Given these statements we expect capital will be made available through loans. It should be noted that we will also accept grants. Regardless of the method of financing, the determining factors include the terms attached to the financing.

In the national budget, it was tried to find a link and money to say we are executing the country package measures, but we have no idea except for the prison and financial reform projects for the NL financial input/assistance.

It is unclear how the financing of all other initiatives of the country packages will be financed. Probably they will become part of the liquidity support.

Government SXM paid out in contravention for cutting salaries in 2021, when asking FIN what is the intention,

The intention is to comply with the instruction given and at the same time limit the damage done to civil servants within the conditions.

Government was looking to address with unions. It is hoped that it is not the case that civil servants need to pay back. Also how far are these discussions now? Civil servants should not be held responsible for this. Will it be a redoing or undoing?

From Minister FIN, no kind of stimulus is indicated or expected in budget 2022, did the stimulus package in 2021, did that give Government that it is not necessary in 2022?

No Stimulus Programs have been included in the 2022 budget which is mainly because of the pressure from Cft and the State Secretary to close the stimulus program in September 2021. Given the uncertainty of Covid developments and changing expectations on economic recovery, we shared with Cft as well as BZK that there could still be needs for support to the society in the last quarter of 2021 as well as in 2022. We are trying to keep the negotiations with Ministry of Internal Affairs Netherlands (BZK) on going to keep additional support possible after the closing date.

Can the IMF report be shared with Parliament?

The link to the "Staff Visit Sint Maarten Statement" from the IMF was provided to the Chairlady of Parliament and Griffie on Monday December 13th 2021.

Can a status report for Government and semi-Government owned entities for the application of the 3 cost cutting measures law be provided?

Concerning the status report for Government and semi-Government owned entities. Government implemented all the instructed measures. On November 23, 2021 the (semi) public sector entities were informed that the laws went into effect retroactively as of July 1, 2020, and requested to submit numerical overviews of the way the 12.5% reduction of the employment conditions ('arbeidsvoorwaarden') is implemented. For the sake of clarity, the law and the ruling of the Constitutional Court were provided and it was requested for the entities to indicate whether the application of the 12.5% reduction has been checked by, for example, an external accountant, or when the application will be checked. For the entities it is possible to choose to follow the interpretation that has been regulated in the temporary national ordinance Covid-19 cuts in employment conditions for public servants, which also arises from the conditions imposed by the Netherlands on Sint Maarten for further liquidity support. However, it is also possible to deviate from this interpretation as long as the employment conditions are reduced by 12.5%. This is the responsibility of the entities and monitored by the relevant Ministers whose responsibilities these entities are. At this moment we are awaiting the responses of the entities; once received they will be compiled in one overview, after which a status report can be provided.

Has Government found an alternative for cutting vacation allowance and is it possible for 2022?

With respect to an alternative to cutting the vacation allowance in an effort to comply with the 12.5% cost cutting measure, please note that this is the alternative. The main reason for taking the vacation allowance as a main element in complying with the instruction given by the State Secretary, is that we did not want to cut the gross salaries. This was avoided because banks use the gross salary as the basis when assessing loan applications and therefore would decrease loan capacity. Additionally, the method used to apply the cuts also allowed the basis upon which the pension is calculated to remain unaffected.

Tax restructuring – what about those incidental issues that need to be fixed in tax reform?
Regarding local psychologists no capacity but in every ministry an amount is there for consultants. Why can't psychologists be addressed before trajectory of 3 years for tax reform?

Madam Chairlady, Members of Parliament as it pertains to Tax Restructuring, the shortage of manpower is an ongoing challenge at the Department of Fiscal Affairs as it is at many other departments. The situation is not improving among others due to the lengthy process of recruitment and the salaries currently offered for positions which demand scarce expertise and for which the private sector offers competitive salaries and has a shorter recruitment process. It must be noted that qualified people are interested, but often decline the offer when it is made because they have accepted a better one elsewhere or could not wait any longer. As such the remark was made to explain why certain matters either take a long time to be handled and not that they do not have government's attention. With respect to incidental Tax amendments such as– Psychologist TOT exemption. (ANSWER AFZ:) The draft Further Report on the advice of the Council of Advice was submitted to the JZ&W department on November 29th -2021 in the context of legal vetting. The AFZ is currently waiting for the result of the legal vetting in order to be able to take further actions.

Mortgage guarantee fund foundation – not clear if an N.V. established or to be established – what is it? If so, can the status be shared?

In the elucidation booklet page 27 (English version) an explanation is provided with respect to the legal status of the Mortgage Guarantee Fund, being an NV – Naamloze Vennootschap (Limited Liability Company): “The fund was established in June of 2003. The Central Bank of Curaçao and Sint Maarten issued an operating license in February of 2004 and the operation started in June of the same year. The license, obtained from the Central Bank, allows the Fund to conduct business within the framework of an Accident Insurance Company and provides guarantees on the risks associated with mortgages.

Current situation

The Fund has been dormant since February of 2005, when the last guarantee was issued. A total of 9 guarantees were issued in the period of one year. The Ministry of Finance is currently working on the re-establishment of the Foundation Guarantee Mortgage, with the goal to stimulate affordable housing effectively on the island.”

The workforce program, the amount for SMDF – what is this amount and what is an update on the reporting for that program?

The program, which carries the name ‘Learn SMART’, will run for two years at a cost of \$100,000 per year. The Learn SMART Program is an extension of the pilot Workforce Development Program launched collaboratively between SMDF and the Ministry of Finance in the latter part of 2020. Having seen over 1,286 people registered in the program and having received such positive feedback, SMDF is pursuing a two-year extension. For the two-year program, there will be a total cost of \$200,000.

Not sure if the budget will be allowed with deficit, if not and will get liquidity assistance.

Cft is requested to advise the State Council of ministers on the projected deficit for 2022 as well as on the amount of liquidity support needed for the first quarter 2022. The Cft advice for the first quarter 2022 has been provided and concludes that no liquidity support in this period will be needed. That conclusion is made on the projected liquidity reserves per year-end that will just cover the deficit of the first quarter. Regretfully, an adequate liquidity buffer has not been taken into account by Cft. This is what I mean when I state that we are living from month to month. There is no extra room, there is no buffer.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 14TH 2021

For all ministers, what specific minister-related strategic and policy plans are there? Publicize them and put them out there for the people.

To the question of MP Wescott regarding to strategic and policy plans, please note that most ministries are going or have already been through the process with SOAB pertaining to policy-based budgeting, this will result in a strategic plan for the Ministry. This process with Finance has been delayed due to preparations of first the 2021 budget and recently the 2022 budget. However, the training is planned to start in January 2022. Because of this I have seen a major improvement in the budget. In discussion with cft and in the remarks you can see they mention improvements in regard to policy planning and budgeting.

Was there ever a monitoring done in terms of this document and the strategic goals of this document since it is your source document? Very specific goals for where we are; if no monitoring was done, then why not? Is this still relevant to the ministry? Generally speaking, how many of these plans are there but not realized/utilized?

The monitoring of the progress made of the strategic goals and policies co-insides with the policy-based budgeting process. Once the process as mentioned before has been finalized the Ministry will be monitoring and evaluating the specific outcomes and outputs as stipulated in the strategic plan. In the meantime, the Ministry is closely monitoring the progress of and the execution of all the measures in the country package related to the Ministry and the policy priorities as set in the budget.

Clarifications: 16-12-2021.

Would like to have it confirmed that my assumption is, if this is correct: we are expecting tomorrow to hear from the RMR on 1. What deficit will be allowed which will tie in to liquidity assistance in 2022 as well as 2. The issue of the Capital budget. From all indications, we will not be able to have many capital expenditures projects in 2022. Are we expecting a clear-cut decision tomorrow from RMR?

At the time the question was posed the KCOM had not met yet. PM should be able to share the outcome with Parliament when she returns.

Matter pertaining to what the semi-government entities have done with respect to the laws that were vetted by the constitutional court, has a deadline been set for entities to respond to letter from minister fin to provide government with information so they can meet the cost cutting measures?

Yes, a deadline was set for the entities to respond before the end of November 2021. However, several of the entities also requested additional time, for example for the accountant to provide validation on the accuracy of the calculations. As the calculations are of a technical nature and the interpretation of the law and how this is then translated, will take time. As stated before, it is the responsibility of the entities to meet the cost-cutting measures and the responses are monitored by the relevant Ministers under which these entities fall. At this moment we are awaiting the responses of the entities; once received they will be compiled in one overview, after which a status report can be provided.

What general personnel cost would you say is being used as the ball park figure to say this is where the 12.5% has to come from? That overview of personnel cost if you would see in column of overtime under ministry justice nothing filled in there what exactly cft/minister fin is our personnel cost for the calculation of reduction of the 12.5%? What is the basis of which we are saying this where the 12.5% is coming off from? In the context of the discussion on alternatives rather than cut in vacation allowance.

The grand total of the "arbeidsvoorwaardenpakket" were calculated based on the September payroll of 2020. Which resulted in a total amount of about NAf 108 million per year.

Tax reform program will take 3 years to the optimum situation. The adjustment to the turn over tax law for psychologists and other paramedical professionals, the amendments to exclude non profit organizations from profit tax: when will these amendments be made?

The amendment to the TOT for psychologists is currently being finalized and is estimated to reach parliament in the first quarter of 2022.

Under the budget of third-party expenses the matter of SLA and contracts. Under the listing of the ministry of fin under SLA states there is for example an amount for fiscal support for about ¾ million guilders. However, this does not appear under that post under the ministry budget. Does not appear under SLA it appears under third party. Going into the public meeting, I would like to get a clear overview on SLA, third party personnel ect. Can that be clarified clearly?

Said amount in the overview of SLA's can be found at the Fiscal Affairs under "rechts en ander deskundig advies". Also, several third-party expenses and legal & professional fees can be budgeted with no direct or specific party being attached to the engagement. These would not be a part of the appendix of service level agreements.

In the context of tax reform on the basis of the country packages: Are some of the persons assisting the minister fin with tax reform part of the TWO group or team? Are they able to do other things for the minister such as amend the tax law and profit tax?

In the tax reform program a team is formed of our own fiscal department, the head of the tax department and SG-Fin. Subsequently counterparts from the Dutch tax department are added to that team as well as a TWO coordinator. These experts are indeed assisting us with all aspects of the tax reform.

Within discussion taking place on tax reform is there flexibility for the minister to do some incremental changes and amendments like for example the curacao minister of fin who implemented short term measures to which in his opinion should have led to better compliance. Why can't Sint Maarten look into something like that? Can Minister FIN indicate whether those short term measures had yielded the result they wanted?

The same thing is happening here; we also defined quick wins to increase compliance by taking measures to improve communication with taxpayers, agreeing to settlements and cleaning up our master data to prevent mistakes. We have no information on the results that were achieved in Curacao.

If you have specific items, please provide them so we can react. *Decision regarding collection, if they paid a certain amount within a certain time they would not have to pay the balance of the tax debt.*

Mortgage guaranty fun foundation: The foundation needed to establish an NV, what is the status of the NV?

The N.V is still dormant once the foundation is filled with the requisite members then the N.V will be re-established.

National workforce development program. Where is the budget for that? Where is that put in our budget 100k per year? It is now being increased. Where is that? What is the understanding with the Coursera for example? I noted that on the website for this program via SMDF registration is closed at this moment, why? Is there now a maximum arrived at? Is it the intention that next year there can be more?

The National workforce development program can be found on budget post 4100.43489 projects and activities. SMDF would like to provide access to digital learning for a two-year period. As such, they intend to work with Coursera for these two years. The program has a minimum capacity of 500 persons but can go up to 1500 and there are currently 417 persons enrolled with the SMDF reviewing additional applications, which is the reason that registration is closed at this time. SMDF has instituted rolling admissions. Should persons discontinue with the program, persons on the waiting list will be enrolled.

Can a general overview on personnel cost vs cost for consultants be provided?

Personnel cost vs cost for consultants can be found in STAAT H: Compilation - and consolidation statement - expenses (Economic Categories) depicts this information pages 76 – 81.

In budget 2022 the government is asking authorization of the government/minister fin with respect to PJIA. What is the projected financial status of the PJIA causing the government to propose to parliament that the minister fin be empowered to contract further loans if necessary? Why did that need arrive?

As indicated in the explanatory memorandum of the budget, Article 3, paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of the budget, provides for a possible additional grant from the World Bank and/or loan from the European Investment Bank for the airport reconstruction project. Authorization is also granted to the Minister of Finance to “on-lend” these funds to the airport. In addition, due to disappointing economic developments, the airport may have to take out a loan for operational purposes. The tenth paragraph authorizes the Minister of Finance to guarantee on behalf of the country of Sint Maarten any loan taken out by the airport. In lieu of potential future negotiations, no further financial details are provided.

What transpired between yesterday's presentation to parliament and today. We need clarity before proceeding.

As indicated in a previous response, we can proceed with the handling of the budget as there is no decision being taken in the Central Committee of Parliament.

The United Democrats-faction has taken note of the draft and states that this budget has been long in the making. Reference is made to the letters of Cft. The original draft of January 2021 was changed by the Government and resubmitted to Cft in April this year. Cft and Council of Advice have been very critical of this advice. Council of Advice mentioned it is an 'achteruitgang' in the budget presented. Serious lack of serious synchronization between the numbers in the budget and the policies identified and the priorities also in relation to the Governing program. These do not appear back in the budget as they are mentioned in the Governing Program.

The COA states; "The quality of the draft act of the budget 2021 (except the annexes attached to the budget) disappoints". The statement addresses the draft act and explanatory memorandum not the Numbers Book "getallenboek" or Explanatory Notes "toelichtingenboek".

Financial Management: in this case it was actualized, what is this actualized plan of approach and can it be shared with Parliament.

In the project for Financial Management, the Ministry will be looking at the following components:

- Get insight in the current work processes of the Ministry as it relates to the financial administration (IST situation) and design the future (desired) ones (SOLL situation)
- Based on the desired processes a fit gap analysis will be done to look for a suitable financial system
- There will also be a review of the organization to be able to carry out the new work processes
- We will also be reviewing the budgeting process

Revival of the mortgage guarantee fund, the government does not seem like feasible idea to council of advice. Mortgage guarantee fund is based not on creation of fund but objective of government.

The St. Maarten Mortgage Guarantee Fund in my estimation is of great importance to the housing industry and to the people of St. Maarten. The Fund will be able to offer mortgage guarantees to lending institutions for residents. This guarantee will serve as an additional security on the obligations attached to loans acquired by residents, which will not only incentivize homeownership but also provide residents with the necessary support to be able to acquire their own homes.

Critical about the translation: the word 'crazy' is used as well in the elucidation. How was it all put together. The elucidation was put in English, the government corresponds to the Council of Advice in Dutch and then the elucidation is translated in Dutch.

For the first time the elucidation was compiled in English to facilitate existing requests from parliament. The CoA was presented that English version and stated that this should be presented in Dutch. We did so and incorporated amendments in Dutch to translate Dutch back to English when finished. The last translation was mainly done will involve a certified translator going forward.

Where housing is concerned, what is that bigger housing vision of government that would necessitate that mortgage guarantee fund?

In principle, the mortgage guarantee fund can serve to incentivize homeownership on its own or as part of a comprehensive housing vision of the Ministry of VROMI.

What is Government's intention with the revitalization of the EDC? These matters seem to have fallen just in the budget.

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of TEATT.

Provide an update with respect to the specification of the financial administration of Parliament. This was received in the past and would like an updated.

I recommend that this information is requested from the "Griffie" in Parliament. The most up to date information regarding the financial administration of Parliament should be available within the Parliament's administration. Perhaps it can be scheduled in such a way that Members of Parliament receive a periodic update of the expenses made from the Secretariat of Parliament.

COVID-19 related cost: would like Minister to provide some kind of substantiation/motivation on following items:

- Subsidy for SMMC
- Amount estimated for the food voucher program (750.000)
- 127 M guilders
- Additional support for CPS EX at the Airport (1.4M) what is the basis?
- What is the basis for PPEs 500.000
- Quarantine facility and testing materials (2.5M) based on what has the amount been calculated?
- Vaccination program (3M guilders) based on what are those items estimated to that amount.

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of VSA.

Vacancies: numbers are being thrown out and a lot of miss information. 166 'formatie plaatsen' mentioned by Cft. What is the fact with respect to vacancies taken up in the draft budget 2021. What are the vacancies per Ministry?

Ministry of Finance	budgeted vacancies
Stafbureau	2

financien	6
FZ	1
Comp	4
Inspectie	7
Ontvanger	4
Ondersteuning	4
Controle en Opsporing	1
Total	29

The draft laws presented at the Constitutional Court: an amount of 5 million was estimated in case the decision of Const. Court to refund what is already taking place. Leaving in the middle that the measures that are not yet legislated. For now leave that in the middle. Government needs look at that. Government also reduced subsidies with 10% that also relates to what if. What if the Constitutional Court decides that the Government needs to retract.

If based on the decision of the Constitutional Court and the laws are retracted, government will find its self in an awkward situation as the Dutch Government thus far is insisting that St. Maarten complies with the instruction. The retraction would mean that we cannot reduce the labor conditions as intended. At that time, alternative solutions will have to be sought with the Netherlands. The situation is unpredictable currently. We tend to only consider a decision by the Constitutional Court that leads to a verdict of retraction of the law, however, we should also bear in mind that the Constitutional Court could recommend amendments to correct the law if it has been determined to be unconstitutional.

Whatever the outcome, the current liquidity shortage remains, and that is the principal point that determines the execution of whatever decision government makes.

Govt reduced subsidies for entities that fall under the Cost cutting measures to 10%. That relates to what if? What if the decision of constitutional court for Govt to retract what its been doing based on the measures posed by NED?

Depending on the outcome of the court, alternatives might need to be found.

What is the overall digitalization strategy of the government, is there such.

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of General Affairs.

Capital budget, 97 million guilders. Elucidation, some expenditures are explained, for example non-residential 10 million parliament, 6,5 new prison, dwellings, land improvement, ICT other equipment, etc, can I receive an explanation of these programs, what is the bases of these estimates, what is Government thinking of, please provide an explanation of these post, what

is the overall ICT plan/strategy over Government, this is a question for general affairs. Is the Minister familiar that the next pandemic is a digital pandemic?

For the breakdown for each SNA code we refer to page 75 in the Number Book (getallenboek) of the budget.

Reform of financial management as well as tax reform: You talk about fiscal developments, do not see back 1) specific references where tax reform is concerned. What direction tax reform should take?

Will be addressed when answering a related question.

In the Governing program there are specific items. But ref. fiscal development, I miss that in the budget. We need to be focusing on the reality of the COVID moving forward, Covid will leave scars, it cannot be business as usual. The only thing you say about tax reform is 'modernisering belastingregels', is that all you will focus on? Where is the synchronization between what the budget says and what the government put forward to the people of SXM? Refers to the proposed initiate homeownership. Budget, governing program and landspakketten: synchronization is lacking.

The modernization that we envision for our tax legislation will reach parliament separately by drafted laws. These drafts will be discussed in this house and that is the moment the synchronization takes place. The budget itself does not per se need to contain all details of all foreseen changes or adjustments.

National work force development program: any information to be shared seeing u would like to continue this. What has it costs thus far and what has it yielded.

The Workforce Development Program in the past came at no cost to Government. In total over 1300 persons registered for the program. Majority of the interest were in Business, Computer and Data Science, entrepreneurship and technology, but there are over 2000 subject to choose from.

Because of the amount of registered participants and general interest in the program from both Civil Servants and the General Public. We have taken the initiative to foster that interest that can lead to improvement of skills that can be an added value in the labor market. The cost of the program for the next two years will cost USD 200,000.00. The package will give access to educational specialist that were not previously available. The maximum participation is 1500 persons. We will provide Parliament with further details of the paid Workforce Development Program.

What should be considered as areas of the country packages, these are primarily the things Government will be doing for budget 2021, this deserved a much particular place in the budget.

The country packages are estimated to take 5 to 7 years to be fully implemented. That means that consecutive budgets will contain financing of the measures that are planned per specific year. 2021 will mainly contain additional surveys and planning. The execution will take place in following years.

Annex 2a: hidden documents but these are the items that government will be doing, they will be executing this on the basis of the budget 2021. What is annex 2a, what is it considered. That particular overview supposed to have a much more prominent place in the budget.

Annex 2 reflects the amounts that are budgeted in this draft budget for the purpose executing the proposed measures in the country package. Also included on that list are the projects that are funded by the Trust Fund and the EU that are also linked directly or indirectly to the Country Package.

The issue of the Trust fund, the projects being financed and to be financed: no new projects should be initiated because the execution capacity. Provide update on where things stand right now (the money and time left etc).

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of General Affairs.

Casinos: Gaming Control Board, the amounts mentioned in the budget. U expect to collect 4.9 million in 2021. 1.7 million in 2020. Under regular circumstances what is the amount per year. What is the projected income of the casinos based on the amount of casino on the island?

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of TEATT.

Information from IMF we use, do we have anything by the way this is how it turns out for Sint Maarten, were it concerns the recovery of Sint Maarten, this with TEATT?

We think that in the current situation still is unclear on what will happen next week, let alone what happens in a month. IMF projections represent a professional guess but takes the projections of CBCS and other entities into account for their published projections. Their estimations are also respected by Cft and World Bank that also assess our budget. This way we try to avoid misunderstanding and conflicts.

Do you have any financial but especially economic insight of the first five months of 2021 to give an indication as to whether the information from the IMF we use, do we u have any information to go by? What is happening on the ground ref. economic recovery.

Actual income booked up to May shows Naf 153.2 million while budgeted till May is Naf 154.7

The effective date of this budget ('inwerkingtreding'): strange combination. You mentioned urgent ('spoedeisend belang') but still go through the Constitutional Court. These two do not jive. You are saying to Council of Advice you are right, and u have adjusted, how far this has taken place and will the Government adjust that.

This issue is corrected in the amendment ("nota van wijziging") to be sent to Parliament.

Incorporation of the Country package in the budget 2021. Waar de aanbesteding plaats vindt , ook de begroting draagt. Where is the financing for the carrying of the country packages? Where the commissioning takes place, the budget will cover the cost. Needs to be explained.

One option is that the budget of COHO/TWO that is available for the Country Packages can be spent directly from The Netherlands, in which case The Netherlands will carry out the procurement of the required goods or services. Another route is that SXM government acquires goods and services locally. These acquisitions will need to be in our budget and will

be compensated by a donation out of the trust fund. The country that does the procurement has the money recorded in the budget.

Matter of the loans, loan conditions, and possibility that loans could be made into grants, what would make this possible or impossible, what government would have to do for loans to be made into grants?

From the very beginning of St. Maarten receiving the Covid-19 liquidity support the following paragraph regarding the conditions has been included:

Plan of Approach financial management, approved and actualized, what has been actualized and can it be shared with Parliament?

As mentioned in the presentation the government approved the Plan of Approach Transformation Tax Administration Phase 1.

Also the Sub project "Research Improvement of Financial Work Processes" was approved.

On the agenda for next week is the "Plan of Approach Research Budget Process St. Maarten.

A return to Parliament is scheduled after the Parliamentary Recess to present to Parliament an update, which includes the details of these plans as well as the Tax Reform. Your invitation for a meeting, although postponed, has my utmost attention. I want to ensure that the order we follow of providing information is one that is logical and NOT premature. At this time we will also be able to provide more concrete deadlines. As you can imagine setting deadlines is quite precarious as we are dealing with limited human and financial resources, possible burnout and

civil servants who are parents of young children who will take their vacation during July and August. Not to mention the fact that we are in hurricane season, but that is of course something that we face every year. We expect to have this meeting as soon as the recess is over.

Subsidized entities that fall under the 12.5 % measure, government has cut in the budget with 10%. Can Minister FIN confirm this?

Same as the second question of the faction of the United Sint Maarten Party: While I recommend that the Minister of ECSY addresses this matter as it specifically pertains to subsidized schools, all entities were requested to submit an overview of how they will apply the 12.5% cost cutting measures. The deadline for this in fact has passed. In line with taking cost saving measures internally, which includes the 12.5% cost saving in the salary packages of civil servants, Government is withholding 10% of the subsidy which is related to the 12.5% cost cutting measure which is to be applied to the salary packages.

Contribution to the pension political mandatories: I have been vindicated; the government is admitting that the way it was done was not the correct way. Government is saying it cannot be done yet. The Government will propose to have it done by LBHAM. Explain this matter a little more.

The Temporary Ordinance on the reduction of the employment package of Political Authorities covers the conditions from the Netherlands for now. Once this temporary Ordinance expires (no longer in effect), based on Article 30 of the Pension Regulation for Political Authorities, a national decree, containing general measures, will be enacted whereby an amount is deducted from the remuneration of the political authorities in accordance with the deduction from the remuneration of government officials regarding the pensions. This to contribute to a sustainable pension system.

Did I understand correctly that it was stated that there was no need to tap into the liquidity fifth tranche for salaries and alike for this month end? So in other words the government has sufficient funds to pay salaries for this month? Did I understand that correctly?

Yes that is correct, there are sufficient funds to pay the salaries as the payroll is at this time.

The issue of the 39 million guilders that was based on what? What did the Cft calculate to advise that the fifth tranche for the second quarter amount to 39 million guilders? I want to understand whether they propose liquidity assistance to include more than just the bare minimum than what government needs to comply with per month? Other creditors for government included? On the basis of what was the 39 million guilders calculated?

Initially SXM requested liquidity support for the first 2 quarters for an amount of NAf 70 million. Cft adjusted that projection mainly by eliminating the subsidization of "fixed costs compensation" NAf (- 25) million; lower payroll support NAf (-5) million and lower OZR NAf (- 1) million to a level of NAf 39 million. The "adjustments" were based on the realized figures up until February 2021. Cft presented the following calculation:

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HOUSING, SPATIAL PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

VROMI Ordinance, has been on the books for a while now. Given this fact, is this feasible?

Yes

Within which period of time will this ordinance come to Parliament to be approved?

This document will be sent to COM within short. Thereafter to the Council of Advice. It is expected to be sent to Parliament for establishment early 2022.

Which changes that consecutive ministers wanted to make in the different ordinances, in how far have these changes been reflected in the general VROMI ordinance?

The ordinance reflects the changes/input made by different Ministers. Also, the VROMI ordinance is a framework regulation that provides the possibility to create a number of national decrees entailing general measures (Lbhammen). This makes it possible to be more

flexible in the future when norms of other executive matters need to change based on new developments or insights.

With respect to Nature Foundation and the SLA agreement, what's government vision to up this SLA agreement with NF?

Tasks of the Nature Foundation include amongst others: Management of the Marine Park, carry out site inspections and advice on matters related to environmental legislation and issues related to the environmental effects of certain (new) developments (rapid assessments), management and protection of (endangered) species and control the population of invasive species, Education on flora and fauna in the primary schools.

Presently a new Service Level Agreement is critically being drafted by the Ministry whereas consideration is being given to a more proactive and inclusive approach to improve the quality of service rendered by the Nature Foundation.

Emphasis is placed on economic recovery on investment public and private. Public investment: hospital and Airport. From your perspective ref. private investments can you indicate what is on your desk? Most would indicate requests for building permit.

Various requests for building permits fall under private investments. Each year the Ministry receives a few large-scale projects which could generate good revenue for the Country once approved. Projects such as the airport, hospital, former Great bay - Plant Hollywood. Currently there are four building permit pending signature on my desk.

A desire to make Philipsburg a cultural area, what is the contribution of VROMI towards this goal and revitalizing Philipsburg in general?

The Ministry of VROMI has the responsibility for the general infrastructure management of the country. The infrastructure of the Philipsburg area needs re-habilitation and has our attention. In general, the vision is to maintain, as well as strengthen the diverse character of Philipsburg through the upgrading of the infrastructure and the land use regulations.

This will include the upgrading of the sidewalks, a proper drainage system and improving the current parking situation within the capital. As these progresses, the ministry will collaborate with other relevant ministries to ensure that our culture is represented in Philipsburg.

Please provide an update as far as car wrecks removal.

The Ministry of VROMI has identified approximately 70 wrecks in the Great Bay, Upper Prince's Quarter, and Cul de Sac areas since the commencement of the car wreck removal project at the end of October of 2021.

To date, the Ministry has taken inventory of 150 vehicles posing a nuisance to society and the environment. Nearly half of the inventory was categorized as abandoned vehicles, depicting a troubling synopsis of the way society contributes to an existing waste crisis. Within the list, a small number of vehicles were ordered for removal by their owner.

The Ministry anticipates the numbers to increase as the car wreck removal team progresses into Dutch Quarter and the neighboring districts, as well as the Cole Bay and Simpson Bay areas.

In relation to your question relating to strategic and policy plans for the Ministry, are as follows:

The specific policies that VROMI generally applies, which are also published on our websites are:

- The Hillside policy
- The Beach policy
- The Energy policy (in collaboration with TEATT)
- The Parking policy
- Storm water management strategy
- Comprehensive road network plan

Regarding monitoring, these policies are still relevant and being utilized. From this list, the Parking policy and Energy policy should be revised/updated and are on the agenda for 2022.

Other policies/strategic documents that will be established or revised in 2022 (and upcoming years) are:

- Environmental norms report
- A Tree policy
- Country sewage masterplan
- The Nature policy and plan
- The Spatial Development Strategy -
- Policy on the issuance of long lease land -
- Enforcement policy
- MINISTRY VROMI Tender Procurement Policy
- Aesthetics policy
- Housing policy
- Issuance of Land Policy

Regarding the Car wreck project, is this the same project that is executed by NRPB? Is there a limit to the amount available and if so, what is the limit?

The current ongoing car wreck cleanup project is being financed and executed by the Ministry of VROMI, the NRPB is currently not involved. The current ongoing project has no limit at the moment however assessments are being carried out in various districts. The Ministry will allocate funding within the budget 2022 to have the works carried out based on the assessments and urgency of the works required.

What is the financial position of Government owned companies, in particular NV GEBE? Or any other company that falls under the Ministry of VROMI?

The 3rd Quarterly report in which the Government has provided the latest update on the Government owned entities. This document was submitted as part of the draft budget 2022.

Updated SLA agreement between the Ministry of VROMI and the Nature Foundation, is that now complete?

The updated SLA with nature foundation has been drafted and is currently being reviewed.

Has anything been done via the ministry by nature foundation by budget of 2021 that had to do with monkey control project? With or without ministry is Minister aware of budget amendment to assist with this matter?

Yes, a (draft) amendment was made to the 2019-2021 SLA with nature foundation based on the motion approved in the 2021 budget regarding additional funding for monkey management.

In relation to your question on the updated road maintenance plan and legal obligation of WWR to government.

The works that were carried out for the road Maintenance were part of the regular Maintenance program and not the legal obligation of the WWR to execute works of 2 million USD to Government. A new tender is for the Road paving and patching program is in the process to be tendered start in the 1st quarter of 2022.

The road maintenance work specifically potholes, is that from our own national budget? Is there an updated road plan?

Yes, this cost will be covered by the budget Road paving and patching program.

The budget for public lighting. What is the reason for the reduction?

The costs decrease is projected due to the installation of LED fixtures which consume significantly less energy compared to the traditional bulbs.

In relation to building codes, when is the Ministry thinking of putting these stipulations into force as approved in the LBHAM general decree?

The building code will go into force after the relevant departments in the Ministry have been educated on the new code, which is expected to take place in Q1 2022

What is the relation between SLAC and VROMI, if any, in relation to permits and licenses in the lagoon?

There is no known relation with SLAC and VROMI. When a permit is issued in the lagoon, the Permits Department would contact the department of Maritime Affairs for their input, prior to the approval of permits.

Ministry of Justice

We are back on the topic of Border Control, what exactly is being done especially were border control is concerned considering the amount of support being received by the Netherlands?

In addition to twinning with our local immigration and custom officers at the borders, the KMAR created a tailor made curriculum for the personnel of IBPS and is also executing same. The KMAR personnel also assists the Police Force of Sint Maarten with its investigations and is a part of the multidisciplinary team at Princess Juliana International Airport this is known as the Alpha Team. The Dutch Customs also is assisting the local Customs with the execution of its curriculum of the classes hired under the ORVG project.

To execute the task related JVO. The JVO is a consultation between 4 Ministers of Justice's in the Kingdom. What exactly are the task agreed to in JVO that the Ministry of Justice is considering executing in the year 2022?

There are several fixed subject matters which are discussed during the JVO.

In addition to that, joint working groups and project groups have been established in the context of the JVO.

Examples of joint projects are the Taskforce Detention, PIJ/TBS, harmonization of data protection, administrative approach to subversive crime and the division of (management) responsibilities for OM.

At this moment, there are no financial obligations for Sint Maarten linked to these projects in 2022.

To both the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of TEATT, the APIS legislation is being finalized how far are we with it, when can it be expected here in parliament?

Due to the instability in administrations, there has been some delays with the APIS legislation. However, this is a high priority for the Ministry of Justice and I seek to have this completed in the upcoming year.

APIS has been delayed, is it because of objection to instituting that particular system, is it just a matter of negligence? Or is it the in and out change of the Government administration? What is the feeling of the minister for the change of administration being the reason? What is the ministry feeling about this as well?

I cannot speak for the priority list of previous Ministers. However, when I look at a department such as Judicial Affairs of Justice, there is an extensive list of legislations and policies that over the years remain undone. As such, that particular department has seen decisions made by this Minister to alleviate the Government of Sint Maarten but specifically the Ministry of Justice from stagnation.

This is why on Tuesday, December 14, due to the instability in administrations, there has been some delays with the APIS legislation. However this is a high priority for the Ministry of Justice and I seek to have this completed in the upcoming year.

That said, I will take this opportunity Madam Chairlady to announce on this public platform that vacancies for this department is currently published. Interested persons can visit the Ministry's website: www.ministryofjustice.sx and apply.

Is the system already there or awaiting legislation? Where does that put the system itself, do we have one or awaiting legislation to make it formal?

No, the system is not yet implemented and yes awaits the legislations being finalized and ratified.

Under immigration chapter, an objective to employ qualified locals first, how are you seeking to accomplish this goal? What is the ministry thinking of when it projects the in-depth review of the immigration function?

The relationship between the labor department of VSA and the Immigration Department of Justice are streamlining their services through shared systems and correspondence. As such, as the labor department moves forward with enforcing labor laws to ensure prior to granting a foreign person employment, there must first be assurance that local labor is available to execute this task. This is how we intend to accomplish this goal.

As far as the in-depth review of immigration is related, the fact of the matter is that overall the immigration department is beginning to fully exercise their authority. The staff are extremely enthusiastic about this and motivated to execute their work on a daily basis.

Under overtime in the Ministry's budget, significant cuts in 2021, similar amount for 2022, yet in 2020 was close to double the amount – does minister have any indication whether budgeted amount of 2 million for 2021, are we in that range, if in 2020 we had more than 4 million expended. How does Ministry expect to have overtime executed at that amount budgeted for in 2022? Is that efficiency or just cuts in overtime?

In light of the financial challenges the country plunged into with the pandemic, drastic measures had to be applied to manage resources. As such, overtime had to be capped and any time that exceeds must be accompanied with documentation and superior signatures. The reserved amount is believed to be sufficient especially when at least two classes were of manpower has been added.

This is about resource management, accountability and stability.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

USM: increase in the budget of 2022. Based on what is the increase in 2022 projected. It was 1.6 in 2021. Now just over NAf 2M.

The budget of USM reflects a projected increase based on plans to integrate the contract funding aspect of the funding model for Higher Education in the further implementation and evaluation of the model in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Online learning protocol: Has that been published?

Unfortunately, it seems that the Policy Guidelines for Distance Learning have not yet been published, despite a Ministerial Administrative Decision being passed on February 4th, 2021, in which it was decided that the administrative decision would be published in the National Gazette. The Ministry will work with the Ministry of General Affairs to have this matter rectified.

Is this the 2016-2026 strategic plan that the ministry is working on and by currently? Is that the manual for the Ministry? Or has that been put aside and the govt is working on a new overall policy?

The MECYS Strategic Plan 2016- 2026 was created in a collaborative setting, with the relevant stakeholders. The plan focuses on the Ministry making sure that the people of Sint Maarten are *self-confident, resilient, lifelong learners, creative and critical thinkers*. This document amongst others, is used annually as a basis for the creation of our annual strategic objectives which are further reflected in our department and division plans.

iStep renamed to ICT in Education: Is it a matter of renaming or is there a new thrust? iStep has a particular branding, image, and budget. How are these items been transformed/transferred to ICT in Education? Where did that stop and how are we moving forward?

The name change does not affect the goals or purpose of the project. The ISTEP project was to serve the purpose of a starter project, or an initialization, now the work of improving ICT in Education continues and it supported by the same key players. The items purchased for the project were always going to be turned over to be eventually managed by the public schools and this process continues.

Linkage needed for what Govt says will do and what is in the budget. Ministry stated that they will address/review culture law or prepare culture law: what does Govt see with respect to a culture law? Can Minster/Ministry be a little more specific, which legislation will be reviewed that has to do with culture and heritage?

- ◆ Give me all that the ministry is looking at reviewing?
- ◆ Like monument law and others to bolster our culture and heritage.

The Ministry will do a review of legislation ref. culture and heritage.

- National Ordinance laying down new rules regarding the foundations for the preservation of monuments (AB 2013, GT no. 336)
- National Ordinance laying down rules on the management of maritime areas in Sint Maarten AB 2013, GT no. 336
- National Decree and General Measures, pursuant to the implementation of the National Monument ordinance (AB 2013, GT no. 50)
- National decree pertaining to the criteria for the designation and protection of monuments (AB 2003, no. 24)
- National Decree monuments register (AB 2013, GT no. 49)
- National Decree on the he design and working methods of the Monument Council (21-02-2013. AB 2013, GT no. 47
- LANDSVERORDENING houdende regels met betrekking tot de in- en uitvoer van goederen

Vaping: if anything has happened? Has the ministry been able to do anything? The Minister mentioned he will do more research and make some contacts. Turning Point has reached out and wants to acknowledge the problem that there is. And would like to work with the MP who would like to work with Govt.

This situation has our attention as we indicated to the honorable members of Parliament of the Committee of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. We are still to carry out the research. We welcome discussions with all relevant stakeholders such as Turning Point to ensure that we can adequately address this challenge.

School bus transportation to develop a policy. How did that go? The matter of registering to be able to ride on the bus? What will the focus be on developing the school bus transportation policy? What will it be based on? What are we now looking at?

On July 12, 2021, I approved the Policy Brief regarding the Optimization of the School Bussing System. The policy option selected guarantees a more sustainable school bussing service through the introduction of a Service Level Agreement including that operators are required to adhere to routes assigned by MECYS. Additionally, the assessment of demand, introduction of bus cards, a digital tracking system and implementation of contracts as per 2021-2022 along with a one year research phase are expected to enable the required changes to be made to introduce an increasingly more efficient and effective service, over a two year period.

The Register and Ride campaign was successful and almost 1,500 students registered to obtain their bus cards. I am in the process of completing the decision making process regarding the purchase of the bus cards and the process to procure the digital fleet tracking system has begun.

No Integrated approach toward the youth: what attempts are being made towards getting ministries on board where matters like the youth. Elderly is another area that Gov should show that at all levels that there is an integrated approach. But the goal is that Gov on a whole is approaching the youth.

The department of youth is utilizing different approaches and projects to strengthen mechanisms for coordination and collaboration within and among Government and youth-serving organizations:

1. The use of Youth Mainstreaming strategies to enable young people and adults to benefit equally from, and contribute equally to, development outcomes.
2. Capacity Building of the youth-serving organizations and government professionals on meaningful youth participation.
3. In collaboration with our technical partners, UNICEF-NL a transitional Child Protection Work group was established with the ministries of ECYS, Justice, VSA and a NGO with the purpose to establish the National Child Protection Platform in 2022, for an effective and efficient inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination among all actors involved directly and indirectly on child protection interventions.
4. And as last the development of a Youth Monitor in collaboration with UNICEF-NL. This is an instrument used to provide consistent up-to-date data on several aspects related to youth. The overall data collection methodology for the Youth Monitor must be multifaceted and intersectional in approach assessments about the status and future direction of young people in society. An inter-ministerial advisory committee will be established with clearly defined Terms of Reference to oversee the functioning of the monitor.

Sport: in the dept. we have policy development and not execution. How is the relationship between the different sports organizations and the national sports institute? Are we doing enough to promote and help these persons/organizations to reach the highest level that they can reach?

The National Sport Institute currently works in collaboration with the various sport organizations in the execution of sports on St. Maarten. Specifically the execution of school and after school programs which is currently included in the subsidy issued to the Foundation and made available to the organizations for coach stipends and program materials once requested. The Department communicates with the organizations regularly to be able to bring awareness to the possibilities

of assistance and we rely on the organizations to inform Government and the NSI of their needs to assist them.

The strategic plan for ECYS for 2016 – 2026 – why would Govern SXM sit down and sign off to a country package that included review and reform of our educational systems as if we had no plan?

The Strategic Plan focused on overarching challenges of the Ministry and the individual challenges for the sectors of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports. The Plan identifies the priorities per sector and the role of each stakeholder in the overall realization of the objectives. The agreement in the country package regarding Education simply solidifies ongoing efforts.

For all ministers, what specific minister–related strategic and policy plans are there? Publicize them and put them out there for the people.

The Ministry also developed a recovery plan after the hurricane which is incorporated in the National Resilience and Recovery Plan of Country Sint Maarten and can be found of the government website.

Was there ever a monitoring done in terms of this document and the strategic goals of this document since it is your source document? Very specific goals for where we are; if no monitoring was done, then why not? Is this still relevant to the ministry? Generally speaking, how many of these plans are there but not realized/utilized?

Shortly after the ministry developed the Ministry’s strategic plan many situations occurred such as the country being struck by Hurricane Irma, and this shifted the priorities where we had to focus on recovery. We are busy developing a monitoring tool which will allow us to monitor our progress in a structural manner.

What has been done with respect to this document? Is this another document that was not mentioned because we came and met it there?

As was mentioned before the MECYS Strategic Plan 2016- 2026 was created in a collaborative setting, with the relevant stakeholders. The plan focuses on the Ministry making sure that the people of Sint Maarten are *self-confident, resilient, lifelong learners, creative and critical thinkers*. This document amongst others, is used annually as a basis for the creation of our annual strategic objectives which are further reflected in our department and division plans.

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

What specifically is the Ministry doing with regard to unemployment?

Combatting unemployment remains a focus point for the Ministry in 2022 and consists of a comprehensive approach in 3 areas’:

1. Improvement of the Regulatory Environment
 - Implement Labor Legislation and Policy approved Civil Code New Title 10, Book 7 of the Civil Code, replacing Book 7A;
 - Finalize the National Ordinance to stop the abuse of short-term labor agreements
 - Make Labor Law more flexible
 - Review the minimum wage
 - Enforce Labor inspection policies
2. Focus on creating Job opportunities
 - Facilitate the Creation of Employment Opportunities
 - Provide beginner, intermediate, and advanced skills training to create long-term decent
 - Strengthening competencies and mentoring of staff to ensure the delivery of the services and products

We have implemented the new incidental policy which guarantees collaboration with big projects to ensure there is job fairs in collaboration with the Department of Labor Affairs. Essential part of my vision is investing in our human capital – increasing the skills of our people. Through this incidental policy large projects also are committed to investing in our educational institutes through financial donations. From our commitment to investing in human capital businesses have begun to approach the Ministry to extend assistance with training. Today we just signed an MOU with the Simpson Bay Resort in collaboration with the NESC which will be offering free job training for the unemployed.

In addition, we have boosted our outreach to ensure persons are registered as unemployed, in the event opportunities arise we have a database for referral to businesses. One of the outreach programs recently launched is our Community Days.

December 18th we will be in Dutch Quarter to meet persons in their community who need assistance whether it be for jobs, financial assistance, medical aid, legal aid, and one on one discussions with the elderly.

Lastly, the online portal to match job seekers with job opportunities is in its final stages and the NESC (National Employment Service Center) has been collaborating with businesses to conduct trainings in the field of Hospitality, these trainings will be free of charge for persons registered with us as unemployed. These trainings will ensure that these persons become employable and will be given first priority for vacancies with the Hospitality field on Sint Maarten and possibly with affiliated chains abroad.

Please provide a more definite date as to when the Title 10 of Civil Code will go into force. In order to allow for a smooth transition, the aim is for March 31, 2022

Which national ordinance will be amended to stop the abuse of short-term contracts?

Short term contracts are part of the Civil Code Book 7 Title 10. Priority will be given to the amendments necessary to curb the abuse of the short/fixed term contracts through the workgroup of the Tripartite.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Link in the budget for money (CAPEX) for the Country Package. (Not a question, just a statement)

In 2022, it was stated that in the year 2021 that 68 vacancies were filled, is this correct? What has been filled in 2021 and was is to be filled in 2022? Can further elucidation be provided?

The Ministry has filled 6 vacancies for the year of 2021 and have 12 vacancies to be filled for 2022.

As it relates to TEATT:

<u>Dept</u>	<u>Filled Vacancies 2021</u>	<u>To be filled in 2022</u>	<u>Brief description as the need for the vacancy (2022) and the budgeted amount (2022)</u>
<u>Staff Bureau</u>			
	1 Dept Head EL		
	1 Stat Dept Head		The STAT department was without a dept. head so this was a critical vacancy.
	1 Financial Assistant		

<u>Stat. dept</u>			
	1 Senior Researcher	1 Senior Researcher	Two senior researchers left the department in 2021. These are critical vacancies as these senior researchers produce key statistics for the country.
<u>ETT</u>			
	1 Policy Advisor	1 Senior (Legal) Advisor	
<u>STB</u>	1 Section Head PD	PD assistant 2 Marketing officers	STB is understaffed and therefore is not able to execute tasks in effectively and efficiently
<u>Insp. TEATT</u>	0	0	
<u>EL</u>		1 Secretary	This is a critical function for the DEL as it is the function responsible for regulating the influx and outflow of department documents. With the other tasks, the dept workers have struggled but managed to include this task in their daily work process
		1 Adm. Assistant	DEL currently has this vacancy but is in dire need of another sr. economic license officer. The function book needs to be adjusted as such
		1 Senior License Officer	Critical position. Will be advertised soon.
<u>Civil Aviation & Shipping and Maritime Dept.</u>			
		1 Legal Advisor	
		1 Policy Advisor	
		1 Section Head Maritime	
<u>Met Office</u>			
		1 Met Observer	
		1 Technician	

For TEATT and JUS there is the APIS (Advance Passenger Information System) legislation, what exactly is that? Can it be expected by Parliament in the near-future?

The APIS (Advance Passenger Information System) is a system related to Law Enforcement, consequently, the Ministry of TEATT is not involved in the project.

A desire to make Philipsburg a cultural area, what is the contribution of VROMI towards this goal and revitalizing Philipsburg in general. And FIN in terms of money, also from TEATT I want to hear how they will also contribute.

For 2022, an amount of NAf 300,00 has been earmarked as it pertains to the Product Development, beautification and signage of Philipsburg.

In January, RFP with terms of References will be going out in collaboration with EVT for Beautification and Signage in Philipsburg.

TEATT is in discussion with the St. Maarten Monument Preservation Foundation. The board is currently being (re-)appointed. Exit interviews from cruise passengers show that they miss out on our history and folklore. The intention is, together with the foundation, the private sector and other ministries, to update the list of monuments and start the restoration works. Based on research, Curacao has been quite successful with their Curacao Heritage Foundation so we will use their approach as a best practice.

US preclearance pursuit, can we get more specifics like how, when and by whom this will be achieved?

Several studies were performed amongst others by the Central Bank of Curacao and Sint Maarten, in 2019. Since this report was done pre-Covid and we are entering 2022, we are in the process of reactivating the USPC work group consisting of the three ministries involved (GA, Justice and TEATT) and the airport to make it a joint effort.

Sint Maarten tourism authority in 2023, where does that really stand? If a company was created for it, and why is this authority so elusive? B) I want a better explanation of campaign in North America. C) And the website for Sint Maarten - some steps were made but much is still to be done.

A) The structure itself of the STA is currently under review. We are awaiting a proposal from a legislative firm to assist in drafting the legislation. Most likely this will be an autonomous agency (ZBO). We are looking at the framework Aruba chose which has proven to be successful. The existing structure did not materialize in the most effective and efficient way, became dormant and was abandoned.

B) The North America market has yielded remarkable results. The ministry would like to outline the following steps taken in 2021 and to be taken in 2022 by our marketing and branding partners:

1. Commitment to include local creators and local content.
2. Creativity including new branding, which is in the phase where local stakeholders are providing advice and is expected to be rolled out in January 2022.
3. With our partners we have the ability to track campaigns and digital marketing and report valuable data, for data analytics, actionable intelligence to improve our overall standings.

C) The official website for destination St. Maarten had to be completely rebuilt with all the necessary and newest techniques to assess data and measure results, all needed for a Destination Management Organization (DMO). Launch is planned for January 2022 which is aligned with our rebranding initiative. The website will only be available after the launch.

Micro, small and medium enterprise policy is still not by Parliament, when is it coming here? The updated policy was published on the Government's website on or around July 20, 2021. The small and medium size enterprises are currently supported through the Enterprise Support Project of the NRPB/World Bank.

Currently the ministry is working to approve the services of a partnering agency to efficiently execute components of the mandate of the National MSME Policy (2021), where structured trainings to guide individuals on how to start a business and effective ways to successfully sustain it will be provided and to prepare MSMEs for access to financing through the development of business and financial plans.

Food pricing and security, this was delayed in 2021, these type of priorities, if no money in 2021, will it be done in 2022?

I believe the MP is referring to the Price study that was to be carried out in 2021 by Infinite Observations. We can report that the project officially kicked off on December 6th, 2021 and is projected to be completed within 6 months, May 2022.

This study will evaluate:

1. the effectiveness of using price ceilings as a form of price control.
2. Suggest improvements to the current methods of price control and monitoring;
3. Propose an alternative mechanism to achieve lower food prices; and
4. addressing perceived state of market disequilibrium.

Agriculture, very specific steps and action to achieve promoting of Agriculture. Key areas planned in agriculture policy? Can we outline timelines, for the projects listed below. Timelines depend on the length of time for approval.

NAf 236k has been committed/ earmarked for agricultural related projects slated to start in 2022:

- For the Nature Foundation to support the Monkey Management Project.
- SXM Fresh Harvest Foundation as an incidental subsidy for the weekly Farmer's Market at Port de Plaisance scheduled between December 2021 and May 2022. A subsidy for 2022 is also being discussed.
- The agriculture in Schools project. A total of 10 (primary and secondary) schools have registered to receive subsidies to develop their agricultural programs.

Is there a specific plan of approach to regaining the status of Category 1 for aviation?

This is also (indirectly) part of the Country packages. The current plan is to focus on the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) audit. In the week of November 22-26, 2021, the Netherlands and the Civil Aviation authority did an assessment of the department. The deficiencies were identified, and a report will be drafted by the Netherlands. In January, a meeting will be held in the Kingdom workgroup and an action plan will be presented to assist St. Maarten to mitigate the deficiencies.

Want to understand the matter of the US preclearance and the Government's intention. It is the workgroup that was there before has been reactivated. Airport is also doing their own study or awaiting the outcome of the study to decide whether the US preclearance should be part of their plan. Is the airport a member of the workgroup or are they doing on their own. Pls elaborate and clarify.

Indeed, the prior working group was reactivated, with one or two new members, same composition over the three ministries, General Affairs, Justice, and TEATT. PJIA as the most important stakeholder will also join the working group to make this a joint effort.

SMEs/MSMEs: under your colleague (FIN) notes it is mentioned introducing tax breaks in eco sectors designated by the Government. does the Minister TEATT supports this statement, what is Minister thinking on, tax breaks for small business, what are we thinking on. Given where we stand economically speaking/business thinking.

Is minister considering any further type of zoning seeing it is talking about specific sectors. Repeat: Which sectors government sees to be promoted in the area of small business, how is this coordinated with the Ministry FIN, any need for economic zoning both on land and in water.

Yes, TEATT supports the position of the Minister of Finance and it should be seen in the light of providing incentives for MSMEs to establish businesses within the identified diversification sectors, which have been relayed prior. These sectors are also mentioned in the published MSME policy.

In general though, the Ministry does believe that MSMEs should be given some relief to compensate for the disadvantages of being small. The policy calls for the Ministries of TEATT and Finance to examine whether tax incentives for MSMEs can be introduced. Examples include:

- o MSME tax deduction;
- o Starters deduction (e.g. for 3 years);
- o Income/company tax deduction for investments made;
- o A grace period (for turnover tax and income tax) of for example 6 months for starters;
- o Simplification of the income tax form for MSMEs.

Fisheries: when come on Sint Maarten with historic dependency. Where does this fit if anywhere in the Ministry's plan? What is the minister/ministry thoughts on fisheries. Fisheries has also been taken up in the National Agriculture Policy. As mentioned prior, when we speak of agriculture, it also encompasses fisheries and livestock. Therefore, the subsidy amount of NAf. 250,000 for agricultural related projects also includes projects related to fisheries and livestock.

The proposal of Tax reform will be submitted to parliament in 2022 (FIN) – it is actually the approved tax reform from 2015 with some adjustments of IMF. If Ministry TEATT still looking into tax reform? Is the minister aware that the proposal is coming to parliament? Is it the same?

TEATT is not actively looking into tax reform as this is the primary responsibility of the minister of Finance. We are aware of the tax reform initiatives and current status thereof.

Ministries involvement in the revitalization of Philipsburg: the issue of the vending, in particular the market. Any plans to do anything in 2022? Does the budget provided allow for that to take place? What about vendors on the pond fill. What can the ministry inform us where it concerned the vendors have to move because the land has been sold.

The reconstruction of the marketplace has been budgeted as part of Capital Budget 2021; however, the Capital Budget has not been approved and/or been made available. Therefore, we are waiting for the finalization of the budget 2022 to proceed. In the interim, the ministry has developed a plan of action for the project.

At present, there is no update regarding the plans to relocate the pond fill vendors.

Specific research is being done in 2022 by STAT, assuming it is a population census. Seeing what is taking place in the country package, are we sure that the population census 2022 can take place in 2022 and by our bureau stat given the start of the sprucing up of that dept. Yes, the population census will be carried out in 2022. The last population census took place in 2011. It is the norm that the population census is repeated every 10 years. This to ensure that the population data is not outdated. The department has been preparing for this census since 2018 as it is a huge undertaking. This census has already been postponed in 2021 because of Covid with as a result, the island is now behind in collecting some pertinent population data.

Many annual and biannual surveys are planned to be incorporated in the census to avoid respondent fatigue and therefore, only going to the households once with questions. It is not advisable to go another year without establishing a poverty line or establishing the actual number of inhabitants. Another important result of the census will be the information on the household expenditure as well as labor/unemployment statistics.

Many government departments and other stakeholders are clamoring for data. Data generated from the census will satisfy most if not all requests for population data.

CBCS Dutch Caribbean is also aware of the population census taking place in 2022.

Where things stand ref. action undertaken/to be undertaken ref. timeshare legislation, should there be timeshare legislation on the island? Governor did not want to cosign because it was in the English language. Understood that the ministry is doing a research. If yes legislation, that is the ministry doing to get to that?

The Ministry is definitely of the opinion that a timeshare legislation is needed and we have been trying to get law redrafted in the proper format used within the Kingdom. It is important to note that it was not merely a matter of the language, but the fact that the law was drafted according to American (Anglo-saxon) format and not the Kingdom format, which could pose problems for the interpretation of the law by the courts.

The department carried out a closed bidding earlier this year, but received no proposals to fix this piece of legislation. Since then, we have updated the Sint Maarten Timeshare Association (SMTA) and enquired with them if they could assist in finding a suitable legislative lawyer/ law firm, possibly from the original drafters of the law, to make the necessary adjustments that would allow the legislation to be ratified by the Governor. The Ministry has reserved budget for this and is awaiting feedback from the SMTA in order to move forward.

Is the Public transportation committee still functional?

No, this committee is not functional. Therefore, it was decided that the representative of the sector from the EVT department, (Department of Transportation) would be involved when it relates to Policy matters related to Public Transportation (PT) matters and not on Operational & Procedural matters of the organization.

Current moratorium: Which of the current moratoriums are still valid today?

1. Lotteries: a cap of 7 lotteries
2. Casino's: a cap of 10 stand-alone casinos (5 in the Philipsburg area and 5 in Simpson Bay)
3. Gas stations
4. Adult Entertainment: a cap of 8 establishments (brothels)
5. Watersports and Beach activities

Public Transportation moratorium?

There is a moratorium on bus, and taxi licenses, which has been in place since Feb. 2014.

The moratorium on T- and G-plate licenses was reinstated as of March 2019.

And the moratorium on car rental licenses was re-instated as of September 2016.

The afore-mentioned public transportation moratorium excludes transfers and assistant driver licenses.

Ministry of General Affairs

In 2022, it was stated that in the year 2021 that 68 vacancies were filled, is this correct?

What has been filled in 2021 and was is to be filled in 2022? Can further elucidation be provided?

As all the other ministers have already provided their information for their relevant ministries. I will therefore provide parliament with the information of the Ministry of General Affairs.

Please see the attached table including the list of persons who were hired by government alongside the positions in which they currently function.

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Status	Start Datum	Intern/ Extern
DCOMM	Secretarese	Afgerond	2021	Intern
DCOMM	Documentalist	Afgerond	2021	Intern

Personeel en Organisatie	Personeelsmedewerker	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Personeel en Organisatie	Personeelsmedewerker	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Personeel en Organisatie	Personeelsadviseur	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Facilitaire Zaken	Hoofdmedewerker FZ (gebouw)	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Facilitaire Zaken	Hoofdmedewerker FZ (schoonmaaksters)	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Facilitaire Zaken	Sectiehoofd Beveiliging	Afgerond	2021	Intern
ICT	Helpdesk Medewerkers	Afgerond	2021	Extern
ICT	Helpdesk Medewerkers	Afgerond	2021	Extern
ICT	Secretarese	Afgerond	2021	Intern
Public Service Center	Telefoniste	Afgerond	2021	Extern
Burgerzaken	Hoofdmedewerker Back Office	In Proces	2022	Extern
Burgerzaken	Sectiehoofd Back Office	Afgerond	2021	Intern
Brandweer	Sectiehoofd Repressie	In Proces	2022	Extern
Buitenlandse Betrekkingen	Afdelingshoofd	In Proces	2022	Intern

Furthermore, I can mention that there were 21 resignations from the organization from August 2020 until now. Please note that the information of the Ministry of Justice is not included in this overview.

AZ

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Afdeling P&O	Personeelsadviseur	maart 2021
Brandweer	Sectiehoofd Repressie	december 2020
Buitenlandse Betrekkingen	Afdelingshoofd	augustus 2020
Secretariaat Ministerraad	Hoofdmedewerker Secretariaat	januari 2022

VSA

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Afdeling Volksgezondheid	Beleidsmedewerker	juli 2021
Afdeling Volksgezondheid	Sr. Juridisch Beleidsmedewerker GVO	december 2021
Sociale Dienst	Medewerker Zorg	juli 2021
Inspectiedienst	Controleur	juli 2021
Inspectiedienst	Controleur	december 2021
Dienst Arbeidszaken	Medewerker Bijzondere Arbeidsbemiddeling	oktober 2020
Collectieve Preventie	Epidemioloog	augustus 2021

TEZVT

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Dienst Statistiek	Sr. Onderzoeker A/Statisch Analist	augustus 2021
Dienst Statistiek	Sr. Onderzoeker A/Statisch Analist	december 2021

FIN

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Belastingdienst: Inspectie	Medewerker Heffingen	januari 2021
Belastingdienst: Inspectie	Medewerker Heffingen	juni 2021
Dienst Comptabiliteit	Hoofdmedewerker FA/IV	mei 2021
Stafbureau	Bovenformatie	juli 2021

OCJS

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Dienst Examen	Administratief Medewerker	januari 2021
Inspectiedienst	Hoofdinspecteur	november 2021
Dienst Studentenondersteuning	Secretaresse	augustus 2021

VROMI

Afdeling/Dienst	Functie	Ontslag Datum
Stafbureau	Beleidsadviseur	december 2021
Afdeling VROMI	Sr. Beleidsmedewerker	december 2021

E-governance, what is being prepared?

The implementation of the Digital Government Transformation Project is slated for implementation in the first quarter of 2022. The enterprise architecture is currently being prepared, which entails the design or the architecture of systems, data flow, business processes, and interoperability between the systems required for improved efficiency between departments and services. Also being prepared is the legislative review, which entails a review of what legislation would require an amendment to support initiatives under the e-Government project or other ICT initiatives. Finally, the digital strategy and roadmap are also being developed. It is the intention that once completed, that this document secures the consensus needed across ministries, to ensure the success of the project.

Salary scales for cost-of-living realities – for AZ and FIN, what about cost-of-living realities for civil servants right now?

Government requested a Cost-of-Living study from the SER so the cost of living can be assessed across the board. Unfortunately, the SER is still working on this and additional data from the Ministry TEATT is necessary to complete the study.

Legislative agenda for execution of legislation in country packages – NAf 650.000 earmarked for agreement with the University of Curacao.

Can I get a better overview of how this will be executed and what TWO is doing for other ministries to prepare legislation?

What can they indicate as tangible activities for regional collaboration?

The NAf 650.000 is on the budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture Youth and Sport (dienstovereenkomsten), so for a better understanding, the Minister of ECYS should be able to answer.

Are there any new policy initiatives that are not country packages related, which ones and where are they manifested financially in the budget.

In the answering of the questions in the first round, I already referred to policies of HR which in the first part of next year, will be discussed in the Council of Ministers.

This will not necessarily have an effect on the budget.

Vacation allowance for 2020 which was paid out in 2021. What will be done now when that payment is still under discussion? Second part of the question: if an alternative is found for this, thus not cutting vacation allowance, is it possible to pay out vacation in 2022.

As you are aware the Government withheld the payment of the 50% vacation allowance to the Civil Servants owed for the remainder of 2020. Given the lengthy hiatus in awaiting the verdict of the Constitutional Court, the government paid that portion of the allowance in July of 2021. Ahead of the decision to pay the outstanding 50% owed in 2020, the Ministers of Finance and General Affairs met with the CCSU members on June 29, 2021, to discuss the possibilities of payment and the reality of the non-compliance with the already approved laws, and possible repayment in the event the laws were deemed unconstitutional.

In response to the verdict of the Constitutional Court on November 1, 2021, the Council of Ministers met with the members and observer member of the CCSU on November 18, 2021, to discuss possible options for compliance with the approved laws, and in so doing proposed solutions to the impasse at hand. The members of the CCSU and the observer member met on December 2, 2021, and sent their proposal to the Council of Ministers for their review and deliberation. This will take place during the upcoming Council of Ministers meeting on Tuesday, December 21, 2021. Once a decision is taken in the Council, this will be shared with the CCSU members for their response. The negotiations are still ongoing, I look forward to updating Parliament once an agreement is reached between the Council and the CCSU.

In response to the second part of the question, if the Honorable Member of Parliament can recall, in my presentation of the answers yesterday morning, the negotiations for the application of the 12,5% cuts yielded the result we have today, which is the deferral in vacation allowance (50%) in 2020, and 100% in 2021. This is because of the cuts to the operational costs both Government and the Unions proposed were not acceptable by the State Secretary and by extension the Kingdom Council of Ministers. Pending liquidity in 2022, Government will negotiate the possibilities to pay out vacation allowance in 2022.

What is the implementation agenda for the 1st Quarter of 2022, is there already an agreement or will this be decided tomorrow. If there is already an agreement, can it be shared?

Just as was previously stated in my last appearance on the country packages once the implementation agenda is signed by both Sint Maarten and the Netherlands, and approved in the Kingdom Council of Ministers, I will provide parliament with a copy. The RMR is tomorrow, Friday December 17, so if approved, I can promise Parliament that they will receive it by Monday.

Policy plan 2022, the annex. Government indicated 7 main themes, important policy initiatives: good governance relates to AZ. What is concretely being proposed as part of the

promotion of good governance, if there is a cost involved, what is the cost and where can this be found.

Currently government have several initiatives ongoing for good governance. The main initiative is the policy platform. The policy platform is a technical platform that consists of the policy workers throughout government. Policy platform sessions are held on various topics. In addition to such, workshop and trainings are also provided to policy workers such as the policy process. A manual for the drafting of policies has also been developed, as a means to ensure uniformity in policy development. In addition to the aforementioned, operational manuals are developed and distributed on a quarterly basis.

These manuals serve to inform the organization on specific operational aspects in government such as the "shared services". Other initiatives that will kick-off in January 2022 are, the internal library and the intranet.

Electoral Reform: Is there still an electoral reform committee. Did the committee do anything in 2021? Is it the intention that this committee do anything in 2022, If so, what?

I have come to understand that the committee was installed, but never really got to work on the purpose it was set up for. In relation to the committee a sister committee was set up in Parliament. As I understood the two committees were to meet, at least that was the intention of government. Unfortunately, that meeting never took place.

The committee installed by Government had a few meetings but then some of the members, being member of a cabinet of the minister, left because of the change of Government. In the meantime, among others, because of the lack of capacity and the priority given to the implementation agenda, this year, no actions were taken by the committee.

For the coming year, together with the committee, we need to agree on the most practical way to function and advise Government.

The committee consists, representatives of: the Electoral Council; Main Voting bureau; JZ&W; the Cabinet of the Minister of General Affairs, chaired by the SG AZ. Secretariat is by BAK.

What tangible action towards regional cooperation has this government taken? Can those be outlined?

Per September 1, 2021, St. Maarten became a member of CDEMA. In addition to this, projects are underway with regional organizations such as the UNDP, mainly in the area of disaster management. In addition, the Government has strengthened the relationship with regional embassies and missions to secure Sint Maarten's national interests. Finally, we are in the final phases of negotiations with CARICOM for associate membership.

Integrity Chamber is in the budget. Does the Integrity Chamber have a policy plan for 2022? What are the activities for the year 2022, for example what will their focus, their priorities in 2022 be?

Politically, I too as a member of the Council of Ministers, and shortly thereafter as member of Parliament was critical of the introduction of the Integrity Chamber. We discussed the need for such a chamber given our small island state. Nevertheless, since becoming Prime Minister and Minister of General Affairs, I have grown to appreciate the supportive role of the Integrity Chamber in advising and assisting Government with the review of and amendments of existing policies but also the proposal of new policies to promote efficiency and effectiveness of Government.

The Integrity Chamber started an initiative to conduct baseline integrity measurements in the form of a QuickScan of the Ministry of Justice. The exercise will continue throughout the course of 2022 with all ministries within Government. The quick scan provides key recommendations to assist the Ministry in their planning and effectiveness when either delivering a service or executing their core tasks.

The Integrity Chamber provided the below response:

The 2022 budget of 2.4 million is divided as follows.

Budget items	NAf	Percentage of the total
Personnel costs	1,511,879	61
Fixed material costs: rent, GEBE, telecommunication, ICT infrastructure, travel and accommodation members, etc.	520,753	21
Other operational costs: office supplies, legal and expert advice, training, communication, etc.	440,300	18
Total	2,472,932	100

The budget is based on the planned activities for the year 2022. The Integrity Chamber makes a division in activities related to core tasks and general operational activities. The main goal is to make integrity a priority for Sint Maarten by strengthening the integrity infrastructure of the Government and its entities.

Core operational activities

Advice, Proposals and Consultation: The Integrity Chamber will submit advices and proposals based on the legal requirement of article 16 National Ordinance Integrity Chamber. Ongoing activities such as Quick Scans of the Ministries and Facility Services Proposals will continue. In addition, the Integrity Chamber will oversee the implementation of its submitted advices and proposals.

Awareness: The aim is to strengthen integrity within administrative bodies and create awareness on its importance in the society. This will be done via various media activities aimed at civil servants and the community. More focus will be placed on target-group-specific activities.

Investigations: Investigations will be handled according to the requirements in the relevant National Ordinances.

General operational Activities

Supporting activities: supporting activities, such as networking, financial management, and IT management, will be continuously executed.

Professional Development: The Integrity Chamber will continue to enhance the quality of its staff by providing trainings where necessary.

Cabinet GevMin increase in budget: guess it has to do with the acting GevMin. Personnel post has increased. Is MP's assumption, correct?

As mentioned, the personnel budget for the cabinet of the minister of Plenipotentiary was not increased. Contrary to the fact the personnel budget was decreased. The decrease is a result of the Director function no longer being paid for by Government but by the foundation. The decision was made, upon request of the director. As a result, the personnel budget was decreased, and the subsidy increased by the salary total.

Management committee of the Trust Fund/bestuurscommissie Trust Fund have these persons been paid in 2021, if so how much.

The bestuurscommissie Trust Fund is also known as the Steering Committee, our local representative is Mr. Marcel Gumbs. He was appointed by a Ministerial Decree on May 1, 2018, with the support of the Council of Ministers. His remuneration for the function amounts to NAf 4,297 per month and when necessary, covers the travel expenditures conform Governments' internal policy. Mr. Gumbs has been paid throughout the year 2021.

PSS budget: decreased from 2M in 2021 to 1M in 2022, based on what has this reduction taken place.

In the past Government had already aided the Postal Services to pay their redundant workers. Due to the uncertainty of the financial status, during the 2022 budget preparation the budget was reduced to NAF 1.000.000. However, the Government is busy ensuring that there is sufficient budget in the future to assist in the payment to the creditors.

Insurance matter. What is the overall picture of the insurance at this time, have the amounts be adjusted, are we insured for the right amounts.

Yes, currently, all buildings and vehicles under the responsibility of Government are insured to the correct values. A new public tender is under preparation for the renewal of the vehicle insurance as required.

Final version of National Development Vision (NDV) would come to Parliament within a month. It hasn't happened yet. When can we expect that?

That is correct. I will be happy to present the final version after we have handled the budget debates.

As part of country package, a personnel review needs to take place. Windward island allowance has been included in the salary. How does PM see this personnel review going forward?

As mentioned the review is in process. I already mentioned that a draft report was presented which P&O did not agree with, since the comparison made, was not correct. Considering that it looks as if this will be escalated to the political level, I will keep parliament informed, including how the windward island allowance is being considered in this study.

The **Independent Member Emmanuel** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and remarks.

Ministry of Finance

Would Government pay this Friday coming, and is Government attaching whether its half or quarter or anything of vacation pay to that? How soon and how early when payday will come?

Madam Chairlady in response to MP Emanuel's questions, please be informed that salary payments are scheduled for Friday December 17th and will not include vacation pay.

In June, it was said that country running on month-to-month basis, is this still the case? If so, can FIN explain why in terms of – still not seeing revenues generated to not be on this month-to-month basis.

When asking about the country running on "Month to month" the MP probably meant the frequency of analyzing income versus expenditures and determination if we realized a loss or if we experienced a balanced month. This comparison is made on a monthly basis. At this moment and moving forward the government deems it necessary to continue monitoring the financial situation of the government on a monthly basis. Due to the situation as it relates to Covid we are aware that things can change very rapidly on both a local as international level. Therefore the government will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Will civil servants get back any money owed to them?

We will check how we can pay the overtime.

Is Government considering letting go any civil servants or reducing their salaries?

Having moved on to question 4, please note dismissals and further salary reduction are not part of the cost reduction efforts.

Will civil servant get a reduction of their road tax costs considering the benefits cuts taken?

There are also no plans to reduce road tax for civil servants.

Can the Minister FIN explain how is it justified to cut in benefits of working civil servants to reduce personnel expenses, while hiring 60+ employees? Is this a justifiable action as an employer?

With respect to the justification of cutting the benefits of civil servants please refer to the explanation of the Constitutional Court regarding the justification of the 12.5% personnel cut. At the same time the government is in dire need of human resources.

Is it true that there was a voucher program to supermarkets? Is it true that there will be a reduction for civil servant GEBE bills?

I am not able to confirm or deny whether civil servants are receiving a reduction in their bills from GEBE, no information was received that GeBe would implement a reduction in civil servants' GeBe bills.

Will a voucher program be set up for civil servants at certain supermarkets?

Independent Member of Parliament Emanuel is querying the setting up of a voucher program for civil servants. Please be informed that a voucher program for emergency food packages for the public existed under the SSRP but is closed off after the 3rd quarter of 2021. No voucher program will be set up for civil servants at any supermarkets.

Will Government allow civil servants to have a side job to offset what was cut?

Having a side job as a civil servant is nothing new. After getting permission civil servants can have a side job as long it does not conflict the civil servants' function.

Government owes medium enterprise Sheriff Security for millions for services at Festival Village, how much money do they owe the same business for schools?

As it pertains to the potential outstanding debt to Sheriff Security for Services at the Festival Village as quarried by MP Emanuel, I do not think it is prudent to discuss individual debt positions publicly.

Where does IMF get their data from on St. Maarten?

Mainly from CBCS and the government itself (our budget, annual accounts and quarterly reports).

Where does Moody's get their data from?

Besides the government of SXM, Moody's obtains its data from other sources. Obtained from Moody's website on its press releases is the following: *"All information contained herein is obtained by MOODY'S from sources believed by it to be accurate and reliable. Because of the possibility of human or mechanical error as well as other factors, however, all information contained herein is provided "AS IS" without warranty of any kind. MOODY'S adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning a credit rating is of sufficient quality and from sources MOODY'S considers to be reliable including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources. However, MOODY'S is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the rating process or in preparing its Publications."*

Where does the Central Bank get their data from?

CBCS uses the data they receive from the banks about bank transactions and financial positions of businesses, data from sector organizations from public entities, CBCS also uses historical data and the statistical bureau.

And which data does the Minister of Finance use?

The Minister of Finance uses information from the IMF and CBCS, GAC, Statistics Département for its projections. Besides this the Ministry also uses financial historical data to be able to determine certain trends.

Which data does MinTeatt use? How consistent is the financial and economic data?

39/40: As a matter of fact, the statistical stakeholders like CBCS, IMF and our Statistical Bureau and FBBB intensively communicate and cooperate through the years. Data and projections are shared and mutually vetted to increase quality. Institutes, however, use their own models when reporting to the public what makes comparisons between the reports not easy when not a specialist. That discussion has been had to have the information broken-down so it is more digestible for the public.

What is the role of the Sint Maarten Investment Agency? How many investors has SMIA attracted? What is the investment policy?

It has been asked about the Sint Maarten Investment Agency or SMIA. SMIA was founded by APS in 2020 with the aim of investing in local activities and bonds/loans. The ratio of these forms of financing to be provided is currently being researched.

Cft proposed changes to the Kingdom supervision law(Rft), wanting more power. To me insane and serious issue with attitude and remarks of the Cft. We have representatives for Cft for SXM but don't say anything to us. It was mentioned that these loans should be grants. It is time now to have that discussion.

I have already addressed the issue of the maturing of the liquidity loans and the process we are in: The discussion of the refinancing of the Covid loans (that mature in 2022) has started and is planned to be finalized about February 2022.

Has the Cft discussed any changes to the Rft? If so, please provide Government's opinion on the changes, what does Minister FIN think of the recommendations? If not, please provide Government's opinion of Cft suggestion made in the media? What is the opinion if they were a condition for liquidity support?

Cft has not discussed any changes regarding the RFT.

Has the discussion on how we were on the road for 2016 and 2017 to pay APS and other payments with a balance budget taken place with the Cft or the Dutch Government?

Solutions for payment of outstanding continue. 2016 and 2017, till Irma hit were financially good years but, since Irma, Sint Maarten has shown consecutive deficit budgets which weakens our negotiation position with the Netherlands and hampers our ability to formalize agreements with respect to outstanding debts.

MP Emanuel is requesting and answer about the Netherlands need to do a detailed investigation as outlined in the country package A9. MP please elucidate A9.3 as this is not in the country package.

What actions can be expected as a result of these detailed investigations?

Clarification of the previous questions is required to answer this question.

How much will the cost cutting measures from Government owned companies and subsidized entities yield thus far?

There is no direct savings for the government as a result of the cost-cutting measures taken by government owned entities. Government would only be affected if these entities would not be able to meet their obligations which may result in the government having to provide liquidity. An exception is the subsidized entities that will receive 10% less subsidy.

Since these measures were put in place, how much of the saving will go to the less fortunate? That was the reason for the measures in the first place, for solidarity.

These savings as a result of the cost cutting measures will not be available for any policy purpose. The savings will mitigate the shortage but not add money to the coffers.

Please give itemized lists for the operational expenses not included in the 2021 budget, for some 22 mill NAF.

For this itemized list of the operational expenses not included in the 2021 budget, please be referred to the detailed listing on page 9 of the elucidation book.

Are these retrenchment measures like cost-cutting austerity laws temporary or will they be permanent? We keep hearing it's temporary. The government needs to say how it is.

The three laws that were recently passed are temporary national ordinances and expire based on a date to be determined by National Decree.

C2 is for information sharing by banking sector – what information is or will be shared by the banking sector to the tax and administration sector?

See answer already given.

C3 compliance program will be carried out, what is it and for who?

Continuing with questions of MP Emanuel, C3 of the Country Packages is about a

Compliance program. The program sets out to have all taxpayers who in one way or another are non-compliant to the tax regulations of Sint Maarten become compliant.

What happened to the money allocated to Bearing Point for the robust new IT system for tax office?

For Tax reform we requested Capital Investment. This was not forthcoming but instead included in the DPO financing scheme that was proposed by the WB, but is no longer available. Now the Tax Reform is part of the Country Packages.

Did Bearing point receive the money, was the project started, what is the status and when was the last time an update was given?

The Tax Reform Project is now part of the Country packages and implementation phase has not started yet.

A VAT system outlining B1 is recognized – why is it still mentioned and part of country package, will this system still be implemented even though will cause more harm than good? While the VAT was included in the initial Country Packages, the Government of St. Maarten is not implementing VAT.

3 board members, but only chairman mentioned, who are the rest, who appointed them and for how long? How will the foundation stimulate affordable housing?

As it pertains to the mortgage guarantee fund one member is appointed by government which is the chair, the other two are appointed by recommendation of the bankers' association and the Dutch mortgage guarantee fund. The bankers' association has already made this recommendation and the individual will be placed on the board. The foundation will stimulate affordable housing by standing guarantee for individuals that can afford monthly mortgage payments but are unable to come up with the initial capital that is required by most financial institutions which is around 5% or 10% of the purchase price.

In D5, complete independence of the CBCS is the main priority, can minister explain what is meant by this in relation to what the IMF recommended?

D5 refers to achieving an objective of absolute independence of CBCS, meaning not having any political interference. I would like to refer you to the report "Financial Sector Reform Program 2021-2024" which was submitted to parliament recently and is also available on the CBCS website. This report provides an overview of the reforms as described in the Country Packages.

What exactly is the liquidity position of Sint Maarten and how long can we survive without assistance?

Our Liquidity position: With strict Financial Management we are able to pay our monthly obligations. We do not have any buffer. Our latest liquidity projections cover up and include the first quarter of 2022.

Vehicle insurance increased significantly compared to last budget, is it true that not paid last time?

The Insurance payments were made in instalments in 2021. Premiums went up because of the new cars that were provided by the World Bank.

Article 2 paragraph 1 not clear budget differs from total amount budgeted expenditures recalculation. Difference of 694 764.

MP Emmanuel is stating that article 2 paragraph 1 is not clear. The council of advice indicated that there was a difference between the amount mentioned in the draft LVO in comparison to the attachments submitted, this was an oversight on governments' side and has been corrected when submitting the new draft LVO to parliament.

Article 2 paragraph 2 not clear why amount budgeted revenue differs to total amount budgeted income recalculation. A difference of NAf 32785326. They presume amount. Needs to be adjusted. Government response was that the discrepancy was resolved. Why such a big discrepancy and how was resolved?

I would like to refer to my previous answer

If the Cft is in place to oversee the budget and financial situation of the country, why does the Netherlands need to do a detailed investigation of the budgetary process as outlined in the country package under A1.3?

CFT does not look at the budgeting process of the country, they assess the budget once the budget has been compiled. The investigation under A1.3 is looking as mentioned at the process of the budget, so how is the budget being compiled. This includes timelines, reporting cycle, how information is the information being gathered etc.

How far along is that process so far and how in depth is this detailed investigation?

By February 2022, we will have the findings of the detailed investigation.

What actions can be expected as a result of this detailed investigation?

We will take the outcome of the findings into consideration to determine how they will facilitate an "improved" budget process.

How much has or will the cost cutting measures from government and government owned companies and subsidized entities yielded thus far?

There is no direct savings for the government as a result of the cost-cutting measures taken by government owned entities. Government would only be affected if these entities would not be able to meet their obligations which may result in the government having to provide liquidity. An exception is the subsidized entities that will receive 10% less subsidy. Not all government owned entities have started the implementation. Several have requested additional time to have their accounts make the necessary calculations.

Since these measures were put in place as an act of solidarity, how much of this "savings" will be directed towards the less fortunate?

See Previous question. These savings as a result of the cost cutting measures will not be available for any policy purpose. The savings will mitigate the shortage but not add money to the coffers.

What is the plan of action for the monies saved from the cost cutting measures?

See answer to the previous question.

Critical vacancy list to date has never been officially defined and approved by COM. What is the reason for budgeting 68 vacancies for a full year, yet the vacancies were filled for only a fraction of that year?

It is not clear how it was assumed that all vacancies were budgeted for a full year as statement B only shows a summary report while the details that make up this summary report have vacancies budgeted for the projected number of months persons are expected to work taking into consideration the recruitment phase per vacant position. Most of the vacancies are not budgeted for the full year, the majority of them are budgeted for 8 to 6 months.

Please provide an itemized list for the "Additional operational expenses: not included in the 2021 budget totaling NAF. 22 mil.

For this itemized list of the operational expenses not included in the 2021 budget, please be referred to the detailed listing on page 9 of the elucidation book.

A final study and report were completed by the Netherlands regarding employment conditions and fringe benefits. According to B5 in the country package, proposals will be developed and implemented for possible. Employment conditions for civil servants are governed by the LMA. How will these retrenchment proposals be reconciled with laws and policies set in place for civil servants? How much more will civil servants have to give up from their meager salaries? How much more will they have to endure, how much more do they have to lose. Are these retrenchments measures of a supposed temporary nature like the cost-cutting austerity laws or will they be of a permanent nature?

C2 in the country package speaks about information sharing by the banking sector to the Tax and Customs Administration. What information exactly is or will be shared by the banking sector to the Tax and Customs Administration?

See answer to the previous question.

Who exactly are these compliance programs aimed at?

This data primarily concerns data about the account holder, the so-called subject data. This concerns the following personal data: name, address, tax residence, tax identification number and, in the case of natural persons, date and place of birth. In case the account holder is a tax resident in multiple states, all tax residency states, and tax identification numbers must be provided. Furthermore, financial institutions must report data regarding the account, the so-called object data. This includes the account number, the balance of the account, the value of an endowment insurance policy and the total gross amount of interest paid or credited to the account.

What happened to the money allocated to Bearingpoint for the implementation of a robust new tax system/IT program for the Tax Office?

Was previously answered: Tax reform we requested Capital Investment. This was not forthcoming but instead included in the DPO financing scheme that was proposed by the WB but is no longer available. Now the Tax Reform is part of the Country Packages.

Did BearingPoint receive the money? Was the project started? What is the status of the project now and when was the last time an update was sought, given or received from and by BearingPoint?

The Tax Reform Project is now part of the Country packages and implementation phase has not started yet.

The Finance Ministry recognizes that a VAT system, outlined in C1 – C8 in the country package, is undesirable and burdensome. Why is it then still mentioned and a part of the country package?

While the VAT was included in the initial Country Packages, the Government of St. Maarten is not implementing VAT.

Will this system still be implemented even though it will cause more harm than good and it puts the country at a negative advantage?

See previous answer.

Why is there a need to exchange tax data internationally? Sint Maarten is party to tax treaties which we must comply with. This in order to combat tax evasion globally.

International data exchange (CRS) is that Sint Maarten complies with international standards and is not black-listed by the international community, with all the negative consequences that entails. Additionally, Sint Maarten also receives tax information from other CRS jurisdictions regarding Sint Maarten tax residents which can increase the taxable income that a tax resident declares.

How does this international exchange of tax data work?

Automatic exchange of information: Based on the CRS, financial information from financial institutions regarding foreign residents are collected by the Tax Administration and disbursed via the OECD to reportable jurisdictions and vice versa.

With whom will the tax data be exchanged?

CRS information will be exchanged with reportable jurisdictions. These are jurisdictions with which an agreement is in place pursuant to which there is an obligation to provide the relevant information, and which is identified in annex 4 of the national decree, containing general measures, regarding international assistance in the levying of taxes.

"The restructuring should ensure that citizens are willing or will be forced to fulfil their legal obligations: Forced how and by whom? We have a system in place now whereby persons can make a payment plan if they are not able to pay what they owe all at once. This is real threatening language.

This question is deferred to MINJUS. However, I will state that the translation does not necessarily reflect the intended tone of the legal obligation. The terminology more appropriate would be that the legal obligation is regulated by means of this law.

The Foundation Guarantee Fund has 3 board members, however mention is only made of a chairman. What are the other positions on the board, who appoints them and for how long?

We answered MP Wescott Williams yesterday. As it pertains to the mortgage guarantee fund one member is appointed by government which is the chair, the other two are appointed by recommendation of the bankers' association and the Dutch mortgage guarantee fund. The bankers' association has already made this recommendation and the individual will be placed on the board. The process is taking a little longer. For one the COCI fees have not been paid for years. Some cleaning up needed to take place. Old board members had to resign and so forth.

How exactly will the Foundation Guarantee Mortgage stimulate affordable housing in the country?

The foundation will stimulate affordable housing by standing guarantee for individuals that can afford monthly mortgage payments but are unable to come up with the initial capital that is required by most financial institutions which is around 5% -10% of purchase price.

The intended results in D5 in the country package states that the complete independence of the CBCS is the main priority. Please explain exactly what is meant by this in relation to what the IMF has recommended?

It is stated, and I quote from the Country Packages: " Monitor progress of recommendations as a result of the review internal organization. When following the recommendations from the IMF report, the absolute independence of the CBCS is paramount. The answer previously provided was: D5 refers to achieving an objective of absolute independence of CBCS, meaning not having any political interference. I would like to refer you to the report "Financial Sector Reform Program 2021-2024" which was submitted to parliament recently and is also available on the CBCS website. This report provides an overview of the reforms as described in the Country Packages. It is not clear to me what other response the MP is looking for in B5 of CBCS.

What exactly is the liquidity position of the St. Maarten and how long will be able to sustain ourselves without another liquidity support tranche?

With strict Financial Management we are able to pay our monthly obligations. We do not have any buffer. Our latest liquidity projections cover up to and include the first quarter of 2022.

The Council of Advice noted that the vehicle insurance has increased significantly in relation to the last budget. Who is paying the vehicle insurance as it was previously vehemently stated that government wasn't paying the insurance for the new vehicles, but the NRPB did.

Previously PROVIDED ANSWER: Premiums went up for 2022 because of the new cars that were provided by the World Bank through the NRPB. The NRPB paid for the insurance for the newly acquired vehicles in 2021. In Budget 2022 those premiums were taken over by the Government.

In article 2, paragraph 1, it is not clear why the amount of budgeted current expenditure of Naf. 535,533,900 differs from the total amount of budgeted expenditure in the

recapitulation statement" at NAF 536,498,664 (difference of NAF. 694,764). In article 2, paragraph 2, it is not clear why the amount of budgeted revenue ad NAF 375,927,708.- differs from the total amount of budgeted income in the recapitulation statement of NAF 408,713,034 (difference of NAF. 32,785,326). They presumed the amounts in Article 2 of the draft needed to be adjusted.

Previously answered: The council of advice indicated that there was a difference between the amount mentioned in the draft National Ordinance in comparison to the attachments submitted, this was an oversight on governments' side and has been corrected when submitting the new draft National Ordinance to parliament.

Government's response was that the discrepancy has been resolved. Why were there such big discrepancies in the 2 amounts and how were they "resolved"?

The corrections after having processed the recommendations of CFT and COA were not incorporated in the text of the draft National Ordinance, while the corrections were made in the number book.

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

Heavy equipment delivered to VROMI, the 500,000 Caterpillar, is it that they are talking about? If so, is the person qualified to operate that?

Yes, the person operating is qualified by the company CAT to operate the machinery.

What exactly constitutes the repairs to front street?

The Repairs of Front Street will be carried out in two phases, mainly emergency repairs to alleviate the present situation which is causing a nuisance to pedestrians as well as motor vehicular traffic, followed with structural upgrading of the entire road, whereas the drainage situation will be permanently addressed.

Where will the land be acquired for the construction of a cemetery?

The land envisioned for the construction of a new cemetery is currently projected between 10.000 and 25.000 m². The Ministry is seeking land in areas away from the sea and flood prone areas. The objective is for the cemetery to have a capacity to last the country 100+ years. For comparison, the Cul-de-Sac cemetery is 26.000 m² and Philipsburg Cemetery roughly 10.000 m².

How much space is left at the Cul de sac cemetery?

Approximately ± 107 M². With the ultimate remaining available, space of ± 107 M², the Ministry of VROMI can build ± 116 Vaults in Cul de Sac cemetery after which, additional property will need to be purchased for a new cemetery.

Where in the budget can this be found?

There is no provision for purchase of land in the budget due to the purchase of land being considered a capital investment for the country, also the magnitude of these costs cannot be covered in the operational budget. The Ministry's responsible for burials intends to finalize the identification of land and purpose solutions to have this plan realized.

Can the timeframe be provided on the space of vaults left at that cemetery? What is the projected time frame for land to run out by the cemetery?

The Ministry has experienced an increase in death rate in the 3rd and 4th quarter of the year 2021. With an average of ±3 burials per week. The Ministry expects that at the end of September or October 2022, the space for run out.

What are the plans for the restrooms at Mullet Bay? Who will manage this?

The Ministry of VROMI (Government) has no restrooms at Mullet Bay beach. The restrooms located at Mullet Bay Beach is from the private sector. The Ministry will investigate a business case together with the Ministry of TEATT, if public restrooms should be built on Mullet Bay.

What is happening with the restrooms in Philipsburg and KimSha? Are those operational? If not, why not? Who is maintaining them if they are operational? Who cleans them? Where in the budget is this reflected?

The restrooms in Kim Sha are being maintained by the Kim Sha Vendors. The Public Restrooms in Philipsburg is managed by the Ministry and maintained by a cleaning company. It is reflected in the Budget post 43430.9210.911, which covers the amounts related to this maintenance contract.

Who presently maintains the heavy equipment at the VROMI yard?

The Government Mechanic that works for the Department of Infrastructure Management maintains the heavy equipment located in VROMI Yard. If the mechanic is not able to handle the work, the work will be outsourced to a 3rd party.

Has a tender gone out for the large heavy equipment?

The department is in the process of preparing a new tender for the heavy equipment on the landfill. The current contract will end in May 2022.

What exactly are the special fixtures that GEBE does not supply?

With special fixtures, reference is made to the decorative light fixtures, that were implemented with the beautification of the roundabouts, the board walk, back street and front street.

In general, street light falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of VROMI, which is presently being managed by NV GEBE, by means of a management agreement. In the meantime, NV GEBE continues to replace the decorative light fixtures in the various areas with standard light fixtures.

Do the vendors on Kim Sha have their own electricity and water meters?

The vendors do not have their own meters as it was not regulated as part of the contract. The Ministry has prepared the paperwork needed for the vendors to obtain their own meter at GEBE. We are in consultation with the Ministry of TEATT to have this realized by the end of this year.

Is there any funding dedicated to Beacon Hill and Sucker Garden drainage? If so, how much?

A plan of approach still needs to be finalized after which a budget estimate will be prepared in order to determine and secure the funding for both projects, followed with a Public Tender Procurement procedure, to be executed in 2022/2023 subsequently.

What are the plans outlined for those two projects?

The Beacon Hill project is scheduled to be executed in 2022.

Sucker Garden drainage needs to be thoroughly investigated whereby drainage will flow into the Rolandus Canal and salt pond, estimated to be carried out in 2023.

How much revenue has the Permits Department brought in this year in processing fees and actual cost to finalize permits?

This year the Permits Department has brought an average of 50,000 guilders in processing fees. The total actual cost to finalize permits is approximately 1.5 million guilders.

What is the projected revenue next year based on the requests for permits to be finalized?
The projected revenue is paired with the output capacity of the department which varies between 1 million and 1.7 million.

How much revenue has domain affairs generated this year and what is projected for next year?

The total revenue generated from Domain Affairs as of November 30, 2021 is NAF. 5,917,634.
The projected amount for next year is forecasted to be 5.9 million guilders

How many companies have requested a waiver for roadside works? Does the ministry charge a fee for the waiver?

47 total waivers were requested. The Ministry does not charge for waivers, this is not regulated in the levy ordinance.

What happens when a company neglects to repair the area where they worked on? Who does the repair? Who closes it? And who pays?
In urgent cases the Ministry will execute the repair works at the expense of the contractor.

How much does Windward Roads charge the government for laying asphalt? Did Windward Roads live up to the court order towards government? Who is keeping track of this? How much work is still left to be done by Windward Roads to fulfill the judgement? The asphalt is purchased at a variable rate that varies depending on the quantity of asphalt purchased. The department of Infrastructure carries out their controls of the works executed. Windward Roads is presently executing the Foga sewage project, the Philipsburg West pumping station, and the upgrading of the A. T Illidge Road to the tune of US\$ 2 million. The works are being carried out in phases with the Foga project which is presently ongoing and the two remaining projects to be executed in 2022. These works are being supervised by the department of New Works and ICE.

Can the Minister look into the matter concerning a building permit submitted in May 2021 for property going into the last bridge of St. Peters passing Emilio Wilson? This will be investigated. Once available, an update will be provided to the permit applicant.

Concerning Front Street:

Can the Minister elaborate on the exact work to be carried out. How is this work going to be done? Are we going to remove the bricks, keep the bricks, lay asphalt etc.?
The scope of work for this project is to remove and reinstall the existing bricks. The contractor is required to reinstall the existing brick to the original condition with the existing brick pattern.

Restrooms in Mullet Bay:

What are the plans laid out for the construction of the restrooms?
Regarding the location, the budget, the maintenance, management, etc. Are there going to be construction of restrooms in Mullet Bay?
After many years, the Government has begun with the proper acts of ownership of the Mullet Bay beach. This has begun in the form of issuing rental agreements and building permits. Although not budgeted for in 2022, it is the intention of the Ministry to create general public restroom at this beach location.

How much does Government owe GEBE in electricity and water consumption on Kimsha Beach?

Together with the Ministry of TEATT we are currently looking into this situation and an amicable solution for having said outstanding paid.

Waivers: Minister mention that they charge the contractor and there is nothing laid out for the charging of the waivers. To charge the contractor, you have to find the contractor when the work is not done.

What is going to be done with that type of work?

How is that going to be dealt with?

During the application of a waiver, the company needs to submit all the necessary paperwork for the works to be approved by the Police Department (Ministry of Justice) and the Ministry of VROMI. The Ministry can then trace back who the contractor and the company was that executed the work.

Garbage bins in Arrow drive in South Reward Road, by the Vocational school (SMVTS): bigger metal bin removed, and smaller bins placed by individual houses. The bins are being

stolen. Please look into the situation with the garbage bins that are being stolen, forcing people to throw the garbage on the road, option to put back the big metal bin.

Residents whom receive a 65 or 95 gallon garbage container signed a form for receiving the garbage container. Each container has a serial number. The resident is from that point responsible for the garbage container. If a garbage container is stolen the resident is required to file a stolen garbage container report at the Police station. The department is moving away from large metal bins as these create an unfavorable situation. It is also in contradiction to what is stipulated in the TOR.

Breakdown of waivers: Can Parliament receive the breakdown of all waivers from 2020 until present?

The Ministry will provide this information to the MP at a later stage once the data has been compiled and exported.

Streetlights:

Has VROMI or GEBE inspected the streetlights to ascertain which ones are not working to replace them.

The responsibility and maintenance of the streetlights is carried out by NV GEBE based on a management agreement with the Government. The repairs to malfunctioning streetlights are assessed by the Government after which NV GEBE is requested to carry out the necessary repairs.

What exactly is the contract between VROMI and GEBE concerning the maintenance of the streetlights and payment?

The contract covers the upkeep, repairs and the monitoring of the proper functioning and efficiency of the streetlights.

What is the breakdown of how the streetlights are being paid for by Govt.?

The street lights are based on a unit price per streetlight and as the network expands the price increases.

Bathroom at Kim Sha.

Are they being maintained as the Minister said?

Do the bathrooms have their own water and electricity meters?

If not, on who water and electricity meter are they being operated?

Who is paying for that?

As stated previously when it concerns the public bathrooms of Kim Sha, The Ministry of VROMI will consult with the Ministry of TEATT on the restroom issue and the best way forward in the interest of the vendors and the public.

Under which Ministry does Kim Sha fall?

The present situation at Kim Sha Vendors falls within the Ministry of TEATT for the operating license and the Ministry of VROMI as it pertains to the usage of Government land.

Have there been any notices or warnings issued in relation to the tender requirements and the contractors not having the proper equipment to fulfil their contractual agreement?

Yes, the ministry has been in communication with the haulers who do not meet this requirement.

If yes, can Parliament be afforded the opportunity/rights to view these warnings?

Yes, this information will be forwarded to parliament.

Please provide an overview of who received warnings because of not having the equipment.

Communication has been sent to all contractors who do not meet the requirements based on the ToR. Please see below overview of warnings delivered to contractors:

Written Notices and warning letters as per April 1st, 2021		
Parcel	Written Notice	Warning Letter (on 4th notice)
1	4 (sent)	1 (drafted)
2	1 (sent)	-
3	2 (sent)	-
4	2 (sent)	-
5	6 (sent)	1 (sent)
6	3 (sent)	-
7	2 (sent)	-

Trenches and the Sewage plant are expiring at the end of this year. Have tenders been put in place?

The Terms of reference for the tender of the trenches is being finalized and will be publicized within soon.

The Tender for the sewage plant has been delayed and the Ministry is presently finalizing the Terms of Reference.

Can Parliament receive a breakdown for the last asphalt tender.

Yes, this information can be provided.

What are the amounts paid for the laying of asphalt?

- o Between 15-30 Mton at a rate of Naf 813,- per unit price
- o NAF 630 per unit price For Mtons Higher than 50

What areas were projected to be covered with the asphalt as a lot of potholes are still open.

The focus for this year was main roads. Our main constraint is the availability of funds budgeted for the annual road repair program.

When will these existing potholes be filled and where in the budget can this be found.

A new tender is being prepared for the annual road paving and patching program 2022, the intention is to pave as many areas as possible. This lies within the budget of the department of Infrastructure Management

If/When the Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CoCI) utilizes their property, will they be able to access the ring road?

No, as this is not foreseen in the Masterplan of the Ring Road. Access to the Ring Road will be from the Walter Nisbeth Road.

Mangroves: Has the Ministry or the Minister considered placing a ToR and tender for the proper cleaning of the mangroves.

The current situation of the mangroves has been assessed by the Ministry in consultation with the Nature foundation. The planning and execution of the works will follow in phases with the critical location in mind such as the intersection of the Prins Bernard bridge/ Bush Road.

Mr. Hubert Lopez created a policy laying and moving of cables to regulate the digging of the sides of the roads to place and remove cables. Is this policy being utilized by the Ministry to assist in collecting of monies for damages caused by companies who open roadsides to do cabling work? Has the Ministry made an overview of govt. drains that have not been concreted?

Lopez rule is still being used by Government and the Utility companies when determining the shared cost with the execution of trench works.

Government does have an overview of all drains and waterways that has been hard surfaced and still to be hard surfaced.

In relation to your questions on the guard rails situated in Cay Hill on the way to the hospital.

The Department of Infrastructure Management is in preparation to replace these damaged guard rails in 2022.

In relation to your question regarding the passageway by the Prince Williams Alexander School.

The cleaning of the trench area behind Prince William Alexander School was executed before however the area will be assessed by the relevant department to identify the scope of works required to address this shortly.

Ministry of Justice

What are the retroactive payments to the justice workers based on if the function book have not been finalized?

The provisioning for the retroactive payment on the budget in part responds to the motion passed by Parliament on June 30th 2021 and in part to the agreement of the previous Minister of Justice and the Unions representing KPSM workers to incorporate the 16.3% allowance into the base salary, as was done throughout the Government on 10-10-10. The retroactive payment is not based on the finalization of the Function book.

Recent decisions handed down by the courts, whereby the Ministry was ordered to address promotions of police officers, resulting in salary adjustments based on the promotions, differences in salaries were calculated back to applicable promotion dates and paid.

However once the new salary scales (current base salary plus 16.3%) are implemented, and placement in functions has occurred, where needed calculations will be made to establish whether or not difference in salary payments are due. When determined applicable these payments will be executed.

Has the basis for the previous payment been finalized/found?

I once again reiterate the that the instruments found on file to pay the retroactive payment that were processed in January 2020 was an MOU and CoM decision. Due to

the number of times this question has been posed, I am in the process of identifying a financial auditing company to execute a financial assessment and provide a report on the first half of the monies paid.

A soft review was received from the Salary Committee that is chaired by SOAB on December 10th, 2020 and an Action Plan has been presented to the Ministry to further guide the steps that should be taken for the remaining balance of the retroactive payment to be made.

To ensure the correct payments are made a verification of the calculations will be vetted by the independent auditing company to ensure all is accurate before any payments are disbursed.

How long will Sint Maarten pay for detainees?

It is important to be aware that the vast majority of inmates in the Netherlands are persons who are serving long-term sentences with very serious offenses such as murder, etc. We are all aware of the present state of the Point Blanche Prison and its limited abilities.

As such, the request to extend the stay of the inmates that are currently in the Netherlands is deemed as a wise and necessary status when safety and security of this country is considered. As such, this arrangement will remain in place for as long as necessary.

How many detainees do we have in NL?

As per December 8, 2021, the number of Sint Maarten detainees being housed in the Netherlands is 12.

When will they be returning if at all?

The group of inmates who are currently in NL consists of inmates who were transferred to NL after hurricane Irma as well as inmates who were transferred to NL for other urgent security reasons.

Their conditional release (VI) dates range from 2022 - 2032.

How much is it costing Sint Maarten monthly to keep paying for detainees?

The daily rate to maintain each inmate in the Netherlands is EUR 296 per inmate per day.

Why there is no amount budgeted for protection of personal data H9 country package?

The Ministry of BZK made financial means available for establishing a consensus Kingdom Act to harmonize the level of data protection within the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

H12 in country package speak of independent organization to monitor the fund for compliance on concrete functioning of the fund. Reorganization and setting up of crime fund unit will fall under staff bureau of Min of justice then why is an independent organization needed to monitor the fund?

The Law Enforcement Council (LEC) will have a monitoring role on the functioning of the crime fund whereby it will be assessed what follow up is being given to the recommendations from its 2019 crime fund report.

The Law Enforcement Council, being established by a Kingdom Law on July 7, 2010, is charged with the general inspection of the organizations of the judicial chain – with the exception of the Common Court of Justice – in Curacao, Sint Maarten and the BES islands.

As parliament is aware, the LEC has been providing recommendations over the years as to what policies and practices the Ministry and its agencies need to implement to function most optimally and in the interest of the community. The Council looks thereby at the effectiveness, the quality of the performance of duties and management and the Crime Fund is within line of their monitoring responsibilities.

The purpose of the Crime Fund is governed by law with access to finances that is to be used for initiatives that combat crime and is in the interest and benefit to support safety and security for the country.

For initiatives to get funding (financed) by the Crime Fund a request and project plan will have to be submitted. Staff bureau will do the first scan of these requests or project plans are complete to be processed further for possible funding.

Is there anything in relation to the gift basket like JUS personnel in Bonaire received for JUS workers in Sint Maarten?

As much as I would like to give the Justice workers a similar gift basket, the financial reality of Sint Maarten does not make this possible.

NRPB, they invested 100M in repairs to 410 social and private homes and police stations: when did they invest in any police stations? What was the budget for those repairs in the police stations? What was the damage? How much was invested before? Can Min provide a detailed breakdown of the work done and carried out? Can Minister provide the contractor that did the work on the police stations?

After doing some research, out of the 100M, the two police stations received the financial support of USD 1,6101,323. This amount is derived as follows:

Phase 1- USD 417,410

Phase 2 – USD 835,288

Extra works roofs repair Philipsburg section A - F & GI US\$348.625,-.

Phase 1: USD 417,410,. Date of awarding: January 8, 2019. Start of works: January 21, 2019. Contractual delivery date: April 7, 2019. Scheduled delivery date: May 22, 2019. Delivery date: May 29, 2019. Finishing of pending punch list items: June 17, 2020 and actual delivery date June 17, 2020. Project supervisor: I.C.E. and contractor: Aluminum Systems. A detailed delivery report is available.

Phase 2: contract sum: US\$835.288, contract sum Simpson Bay: US\$312.996,33, contract sum Philipsburg: US\$522.291 ,67,

Provisional sum: US\$400.000 and

Extra works roofs repair Philipsburg section A - F & GI US\$348.625,-.

Work contract signing date: June 14, 2019, start date: July 15th, 2019, initial completion date October 15, 2019 + 80 days (January 5, 2020. Contract extension April 30, 2020 and second contract extension October 31, 2020. Project supervisor: Ilaco Suriname N.V. and Contractor:

Drive Tech. A detailed report is available. Acting SG VROMI Ing. K.A. Ruan sent a letter not willing to agree with the delivery of the Project Repair and Upgrade of the Law Enforcement Building Police Station Simpson Bay until the issues with the roof and generator have been remedied.

Before this project started, only emergency repairs were carried out.

Mental Health patients: is there a working agreement with the Police dept. with MHF. If yes please provide this to Parliament, if no then why are they housed at the police station? If not, under what authority does the police station has to house these individuals?

Yes, there was a working agreement with the Police. However, at the request of the Ministry of Justice, all mental health protocols within the Justice Department have been put on hold until all outstanding discussion points have been discussed with VSA and MI-IF and new agreements have been made. In the interim, the police came to the agreement with the acting director of mental health; that the police will attend all calls where an MHF patient is disrupting the public order. In these cases it's agreed upon that the officers will assess the situation and if it cannot be solved by the officer and/or family members, the officers will be assisted by the MI-IF nurses. In cases that police assistance is needed in the MHF institution, the officers will assist as back up for the nurses while treatment is administered to the patients.

No mental health patients are housed at the Police Station. If crimes have been committed by a MHF patient, the person is arrested. It is then the prerogative of the public prosecutor if the person goes in to pre-detention or if the will be handed over to MHF for further treatment.

What constitutes incarceration? Is it when you're arrested for a crime? Or is it when arrested because you just need to sleep off because you were drunk? Whose responsibility if there is a death MHF or police dept.? For example the death of Lance. How far is the investigation of the death of the gentleman that passed at the police station to date?

When suspected of committing a crime and when permitted by the law. Pursuant to article 73 paragraph 3 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, a suspect arrested following being caught in the act may be arraigned. In the event of other arrests (in flagrante delicto), one can only be arraigned for any criminal offence for which pre-trial detention is permitted or other offences defined by law (Article 74 paragraph 1 Code of Criminal Procedure). In the interest of the investigation, a suspect may be taken into custody on the basis of Article 83 paragraph 1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

In the event of drunken persons, see article Article 39 of the Official instruction ("Ambtsinstructie"). It reads as follows:

"The official shall ensure, as far as possible, that persons who are immediately dangerous to public order, safety or health, or to themselves on account of the consumption of alcohol or for other reasons, are removed in the most appropriate manner from places which are open to the public by virtue of their destination or fixed use. Places which are open to the public by virtue of their destination or regular use shall include means of transport in such places, provided they are not used as dwellings."

"The official shall hand over persons referred to in paragraph 1 to his or her own subordinates in so far as the circumstances permit. They may, in the absence of reception facilities elsewhere, be accommodated at the police or brigade station by way of relief, if this is necessary for their protection and is not done against their will.

Detention of a suspect takes place under the responsibility of the House of Detention. Korps Politie Sint Maarten has no cells at its disposal, as soon as the suspect is taken into custody they are transferred to the regime of the House of Detention.

In the investigation into the death of Lance Thomas, the last interrogations of various parties involved are currently taking place. During a lot of the interrogations that have already taken place, the right to remain silent was regularly invoked, which has a delaying influence on the progress of the investigation. After completion of the

investigation, the file will be submitted to the Public Prosecution Service, after which a decision can be made about the follow-up.

Do we have trained personnel at the police dept. to administer medication to the psychiatric patients that are housed when MH doesn't take them and under what authority do they provide such? who monitors that situation when u have forensic, you have aggressive psychiatric patients at the police station?

KPSM can only assist in bringing the patient under control and cannot have a role in forcibly administering medication or bringing patients under control by force, based on its mission. The police monopoly on violence does not apply to (MH) patients or medical interventions.

Who is responsible for the uniform of in particular the police officers. How many pieces of uniform are allocated to police officers? What exactly entails uniform to police officers (ex. jacket, hat, raincoat, boots, etc.). What constitutes the uniforms, don't they have raincoats, a jacket, a pullover? Don't they have something to secure them when it is raining and they are directing the traffic? What is the budget for uniforms?

The ministerial regulation implementing article 16, paragraph 2, under d, of the Police Regulations prescribes what all is included in the uniform and equipment. Clothing must be provided every calendar year. For a detailed description, see this regulation. A raincoat, jacket and pullover are included in the standard equipment. Necessary equipment is ordered, budget permitting. The 2022 budget for service and work clothing and equipment is set at NAF 300.000.

Can the Minister give an estimation or when she believes how long it would take for a new Prison to be built? Male and female station at the Point Blanche prison, how many? As much as I would like to provide the MPS with a definitive answer to this question, as I too look forward to the day on which we will break ground for the new prison, and have same completed at this juncture with the on-going discussion on a final agreement, I do not have a date to share. The project proposal' shows that the entire project will be divided over several years and will consist of two phases. Phase I is projected at 13 months and Phase II is estimated at 48 months. I am eagerly anticipating reaching a final agreement with the Netherlands and UNOPS on this project and sharing the details of said agreement with Parliament.

Can the Minister give an update on the shooting death of Omar Jones that happened a couple of years ago in the prison?

In recent years, the investigation into the murder of Omar Jones in 2016 has involved a broad investigation into all possible indications, which unfortunately has not led to the identification of a specific suspect. When new indications arise, they will of course be taken into account.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

What exactly was paid to Sheriff Security on behalf of Ministry ECYS? Can details of these payments made be provided?

This question is not clear as to what the MP is referring to.

How many schools are or was provided security by Sheriff Security at this present moment?

Sheriff Security Services was the provider for security at all Public Schools until the contract expired in 2019.

Up to how long was Sheriff Security securing for government and in schools?
As far as our records indicate Sheriff Security Force has been securing Public schools from 2014.

Who owns the security system in the schools?
The current security system in place at the schools is owned by DPE.

What exactly have you paid for?
This is information is in the documents provided.

How many security firms are working in the schools at present?
Only one school currently has manned security, and this service is being provided by Checkmate Security Services for a period of six months because of the situation that presented itself at the school .

Did government go ahead with a bid for security? If not, why not?
No, the bid for security was not awarded.

Did the lawyer of Sheriff Security send government a letter concerning what government is doing right now? If it is so, is government hiring firms and using NAF 50.000,- to pay these security firms while still owing Sheriff Security?
It is not clear which letter the MP is referring to.

Is it so that the security system in the schools are being used by other security firms and not the owner of the security system? If yes, who owns it? government? or does the security system belong to Sheriff Security?
No security systems in the schools are being used by other firms.

How much does ministry ecys owe Sheriff Security in relation to security or securing of schools? If yes, what is it in details and how much is that?
Ministry ECYS does not owe Sheriff Security in relation to security or securing of schools. If there are outstanding bills we will await sheriff request.

MLK was tiled but does not yet have a new roof. What about the windows, bathrooms and cracked wall?
The windows will be repaired after the roof repairs

Is MLK part of the repairs executed via the Trust Fund?
These repairs were not part of the Emergency Repair Program (ERP1) funded by the Trust. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. school was part of the repair program for public schools from the advance insurance funds.

How much are these repairs?
The answer will be provided.

Can Minister ECYS justify the reason that the Trust Fund financed 100 million USD on repairs for social homes, private homes and two police stations yet no new roof for MLK?
No, the Trust Fund repairs has nothing to do with the repairs of MLK.

I am concerned about the group of experts from the 4 Countries. Where is the updated agreement related to Education and the Country Packages?
The Plan of Approach to meet the objectives of the Project Sint Maarten Education Review, approved by the Government of Sint Maarten as well as the Government of the Netherlands in February 2021, clearly describes that a Project Team of experts from the

Ministry of ECYS and its consultants, in close consultation with technical experts from the Dutch Ministerie of OCW, will conduct a review of the entire education system of Sint Maarten.

G1 country packages. Investigation in education system. Can Minister ECYS provide details into the interim report on what has been discovered thus far?

The Interim Report is slated to be concluded in the month of December 2021 and once received it will be provided to Parliament.

What is the intention and details of the investigation? Who are the persons/organization leading this investigation and will parliament be periodically updated on the findings?

The Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, is leading the investigation. The Inspectorate is working in close collaboration with the Inspectorate of the Ministerie of OCW of the Netherlands. Yes, the findings of the Education Review can be periodically provided to Parliament.

Shouldn't we want top quality in education instead of basic quality? What is meant by establishing basic quality?

Of course, the aim is to provide top quality education for our children MP Emmanuel. Factors that determine the quality of education include but are not limited to; educational content, learning environment, school management and funding. The Education Review will provide clarity whether improvements are needed and in what areas.

What is the desired link between education and the labor market?

The desired link that is being sought between education and the labor market is that the education system will better prepare students to meet the needs of the labor market. Is the labor department included in this investigation in order to form a link between education and the labor market?

Yes, the labor market have been consulted by the Inspectorate of ECYS and the Inspectorate of OCW during a joint working visit in August 2021.

How will the education inspectors of the four countries be involved in the investigation?

The Inspectorates of Curacao and Aruba are not involved in the review of Sint Maarten's education system. The Inspectorate of ECYS is conducting the review in collaboration with the Inspectorate of OCW.

Do we have Sint Maarten persons working on anything educational in other countries?

No, the Ministry of ECYS is not involved in the review of the other Countries.

Who came up with this idea?

Sint Maarten agreed with the Netherlands to enter into bilateral agreements with the Netherlands for the review of its educational system.

What about transition between the different stages of education like nursery taken up in the packages?

The transition between nursery, primary, secondary education and secondary vocational education refers to the flow of students throughout the entire education system from enrolment into compulsory education up until acquiring a basic secondary education diploma and proceeding to continued / higher education. This transition process is also being reviewed in the Project Sint Maarten Education Review.

USM is still not accredited, why is this so?

Higher Education recognizes two types of accreditation. Institutional accreditation and program accreditation. Institutional accreditation is not a requirement for program accreditation.

As such, USMF has pursued accreditation of its programs through relationships with other educational institutions such as the University of the Virgin Islands and the University of the West Indies. Such collaborations allow USM to offer a variety of programs.

Institutional and program accreditation is a process that takes an extensive amount of time and is a rigorous process that the Ministry expects that USMF will be actively engaged in, in the near future, in accordance with the criteria established in the Higher Education Ordinance, which is expected to be before Parliament in the first quarter of 2022.

What is the plan and vision of ministry ECYS? What are the priorities coming out of ministry ECYS? Who determines what the priorities are and what we need in Sint Maarten?

This answer will be sent in writing.

Where in the budget is a new school indicated?

The new school is part of the Trust fund project of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

What is the status of the school bus project? Will this project continue? If yes, can minister ECYS show what progress was yielded thus far?

It is my intention to continue with the school bussing project.

As indicated previously to MP Buncamper, on July 12, 2021, I approved the Policy Brief regarding the Optimization of the School Bussing System. The policy option selected, guarantees a more sustainable school bussing service through the introduction of a Service Level Agreement including that operators are required to adhere to routes assigned by MECYS. Additionally, the assessment of demand, introduction of bus cards, a digital tracking system and implementation of contracts.

The Register and Ride campaign was successful and almost 1,500 students registered to obtain their bus cards. I am in the process of completing the decision making process regarding the purchase of the bus cards and the process to procure the digital fleet tracking system will commence in the near future.

Please provide more information on the summer school policy and language policy?

Research indicates that summer schools can help students improve their academic year.

As such, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport (MECYS) of Sint Maarten has considered researching a summer school program, a policy option to combat two problems in the current formal education system. These are:

(1) High repetition rates from 2011- 2017 especially in secondary schools, with average repetition rate in forms 1 and 2 varied from 21.2% in 2011-2012 to 16.1% in 2016-2017 (Inspectorate MECYS, 2018).

(2) COVID-19 has led to learning loss by all students, and a summer program can help students grasp core material for their next school year.

What are the plans for the reformed secondary education?

The field of education has been signaling for several years the need for reforms in Secondary Education with a focus on including CXC programs into the existing legislative framework and for the further transformation of Secondary Education to meet 21st century skills, with a focus on meeting labor market needs. In order to accomplish this objective, the plans are to develop a secondary education plan that integrates culture, sports and education programs, labor market needs and innovative developments. This will ultimately lead to Secondary Education school leavers who are critical, innovative

thinkers that have the required skills to compete in the global economy, meet local labor market needs and are able to use their skills and talents for the benefit of the communities in which they will live. Secondary school leavers from the reformed system should be culturally, socially, and emotionally sensitive, and be able to work individually and in groups to solve complex social problems.

Are there any plans to reform primary school education?

The Ministry has plans to begin the review of Foundation Based Education in 2022 and NAf. 75.000 has been budgeted in budget post 43476, Rechts en anders deskundig advies to support this process.

Who owns the rights or license for Miss World Sint Maarten?

Posh Productions has been confirmed to be the license holder for Sint Maarten

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

The MHF is responsible for psychiatric care on SXM. What services do they provide? I was told they do not admit aggressive patients – these persons go to the Police Station, neither do they admit children, elderly or drug addict patients - they go to Turning Point. Can the Minister of VSA say if this is true? If so, why?

The MHF functions as a location for the provisional admission of persons in a mental health crisis, as well as a psychiatric asylum for voluntary and involuntary admissions. The MHF also provides ambulant mental health care. The MHF has concluded agreements and arrangements with other organizations, including the police force KPSXM and the Turning Point Foundation.

MHF provides care to a variety of clients independent of their gender, age, social background, etc. Saying this MHF also provides care to an increasing number of uninsured clients, care is not refused.

What is the MHF budget? What subsidies do they receive? What do they get from SZV?

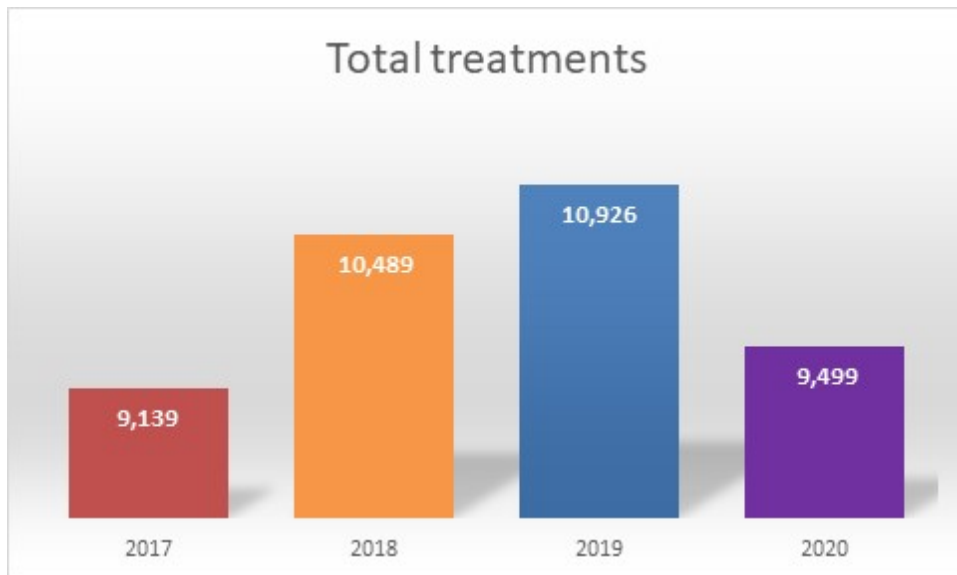
The ministry of VSA does not subsidize the MHF. Approximately 92% of MHF's income comes from two main sources, AVBZ contributions & SZV. The rest of the 8% comes from private insurance, contributions and donations. Private insurance is billed separately as is the Justice Department.

Donations and other funding organizations also contribute to the care products. In 2020, MHF received a monthly budget from SZV in the amount of ANG. 454,618.67 based on a budget agreement. For 2021, SZV has paid 5.45 million guilders thus far.

How many patients/consultations did they have in 2021, 2020, and 2019?

According to the information from MHF in their year reports in 2019, in total 10.926 treatments were provided and in 2020, 9.499 treatments were provided. For 2021, the numbers are not yet ready.

Currently, the MHF provides service to 3000-4000 outpatient and 500 inpatient cases annually, including approximately 20 patients in day care and 24 patients in need of assisted living. It operates with 48 staff, including 2 psychiatrists, 3 psychologists, 1 occupational therapist, and 10 nurses (4 admission, 2 outpatient and 4 ambulatory care nurses).



What falls under consultations? Signing of prescriptions? A phone call if no show?
 Consultations are consults and guidance provided to patients, these are: consults in psychiatry and psychology, counseling, nursing care occupational therapy, social work.

How can they receive 8 million for consultations?
 MHF is not receiving 8 million for consultations. In 2021 MHF has received a total of 5.45 million guilders.

Where in the annual report for 2020 and 2021 do they have it? Please provide to parliament.

The year report 2020 will be provided. The year report for 2021 is not yet finalized.

How can the number of transactions be the same for 2019 and 2020 when mental health was closed for COVID?

The graph provided under question number 3, indicates a difference of 1,427 transactions.

The MB for MHF will expire in 2021, will it be renewed? If so, how so with the poor care given and the number of fatalities?

Yes, the Minister has the intention to renew the decree, under a number of conditions aimed at improving quality of care.

Has the MHF implemented the advice given by the inspectorate? Please provide the advice.

There are several advices and Mental Health Foundation has followed up, however they are still working on key areas. Unfortunately, it is not a public document and can not be shared, however I can verified that a number of measures have been implemented and there are still some measures that are being worked out.

How many psychiatrists are presently working at MHF? Supposed to be 3, but isn't Heinkamp leaving in January 2022?

Presently there are three (3) psychiatrists working at MHF.

There was a FTE need for 3 psychiatrists. It has since been established that psychiatric care in St. Maarten requires 8 ftes - how are we going to meet the care needed? How do you revoke 2 of the only BIG registered psychiatrists on the island?

Although the draft manpower planning -indicate_ a need for 8 fte, legally the current policy indicates 3. Although the draft manpower planning requires has indicated a need for 8 fte, legally the legislation which is outdated only indicates 3. We are currently changing it to 8 however until the amendment is made it remains at 3. The revoking of the MB was based on the mere fact that their MB was restricting them to solely be able to provide service at Mental Health Foundation. Considering their employment at MHF ended the MB had to be revoked.

Is there a law that states having a MOU with MHF/ SMMC is a prerequisite for another clinic to open? Isn't it only a policy not a law? If the present ones need an MOU, how do you justify Mr. Gergens or Mr. Friday and others working without a MOU. Please state the articles on why you denied the 2 psychiatrists.

Based on the policy Beleidsnota zorgvoorzieningen (2005) medical specialists have to enter into a working agreement with the SMMC. In this policy is also stipulated that it is not desirable for independent medical specialists to open specialist clinics without collaboration. Although it is a policy it is a part of national decree containing general measures and therefore requires an amendment to the law.

Dr. Matroos and Heijtel flew in from Curacao to assist MHF, how do you justify paying for their travel fees when there are two on the island that know the system?

These psychiatrists have a Ministerial Decree to function as a psychiatrist and replace the in-house psychiatrist, when they are off duty (vacation, etc.) for a longer period, this of course is to ensure continuity of care.

How do psychiatric patients walking on the island affect tourists?

There is no known effect of psychiatric patients affecting tourists. It should also be noted that not all psychiatric patients cause problems and thus stigmatizing psychiatric patients is counterproductive and inhumane. To point out that mental health patients affect tourism is very discriminatory. Unfortunately, tourists may be affected by robbery and other crimes that are not psychiatric related. Only when a person causes danger to himself or others in public and this is likely the result of a psychiatric episode, the authorities could provisionally admit the person via crisis care to the MHF (involuntarily).

Has Pelswijks ministerial decree been extended? How can it be extended while judicial investigation is ongoing?

Yes, Dr. Pelswijk MB has been extended pending the outcome of the investigation.

How are salaries of 25,000 guilder each per month justified for the two psychiatrists that are suspects? Why not suspend them while the investigation is taking place?

As answered previously I am awaiting the outcome of the investigation.

How is the MHF meeting the needed care on Sint Maarten?

Mental Health Foundation together with all stakeholders in the field are working diligently to strengthen the care provided on Sint Maarten. As we all know there are significant investments and improvements needed to strengthen the quality of care for mental health. Recently, out of the Trust Fund there is a certain amount of money earmarked for the development of a facility. Within the region MHF is working with other facilities to upgrade their care protocols, and through the BIG legislation we are expanding the possibility to recruit medical professionals within the region to be able to boost the number of persons available to provide the needed care.

How can MHF refuse cooperation with institutions on the island but enter into cooperation with institutions that have nothing to do with mental health from abroad?

MHF cooperates with numerous entities locally and abroad. In the year report MHF has local cooperation agreements with:

1. Turning Point Foundation for addiction
2. Prison, Police (KPSM) and other Justice entities
3. White Yellow Cross Foundation
4. Department of Labor Affairs and Social Services
5. St. Maarten Medical Center
6. Safe Haven
7. SJIB Stichting Justitiële Inrichtingen
8. Kingdom partner institutes (BES, Curacao & Aruba)
9. and others.

Doctors are not allowed to refuse patients but this is done here by psychiatrists at the MHF? How can Minister VSA allow this when there is no alternative care option on Sint Maarten?

The Ministry has not been made aware of patients being refused by psychiatrists. Such reports are not known at MHF; however patient care is on appointment base (with exception of crisis intervention) based on urgency and availability, hence MHF does not refuse care to any patient.

MHF receives 2 to 3 million guilders from stakeholders - what is this spent on? The 8 million from World Bank - what is it for?

It is unclear what the MP means, however any money received goes toward the expenses of the operation. Further information can be found in the annual report. The Trust Fund Project that will be implemented by the NRPB seeks financing of US\$ 8 million to improve quality and access to mental health services in Sint Maarten over the period of four years and is focused on the most urgent needs.

What is the loan at Windward Island Bank for?

According to MHF, the Windward Island Bank loan is for mortgage payments for the land of the new building.

MHF recently signed a cooperation agreement with Curacao, Aruba and BES islands since there was a case for millions in overdue payment by the Capriles in Curacao, how is MHF cooperating with the Capriles clinic?

The cooperation is focused on sharing knowledge and cooperation with regards to education, quality development and legislative developments.

According to MHF's decree they must cooperate with mental health institutions like Turning Point, how does MHF explain the non-compliance with cooperation and as minister are you aware of this?

I am aware that MHF must cooperate with all health care institutions, however I am unaware of noncooperation with Turning Point. In my recent meeting with Turning Point, the Board indicated that there is good cooperation with MHF. They meet on a monthly basis.

MHF had a lot of stigma preventing people from going to MHF, what about the private patients - why only the mental health patients and why are people now refusing to go to MHF? Is the Government of St. Maarten saying that any mental health organization made here has to work with MHF? What about freedom of choice and democratic rights of patients to get the best treatment where you want?

Stigma unfortunately surrounds mental health care in general, this is not limited to the MHF. Our legislation restricts the establishment of medical professionals as well as

healthcare institutions (National ordinance on healthcare institutions and Temporary National ordinance restricting the establishment of medical professionals), for reasons of quality and affordability (cost control) of healthcare. While the policy is from 2005 it is what we currently have. In order to amend the policy, this requires an amendment to the national decree containing general measures.

When did you order the Ambulances and from where? When are the new ambulances coming?

The ambulances were ordered in February 2021. They will be custom made. The company *Wheeled Coach Ambulance Builders* are waiting to receive the General Motors Chevrolet ambulance chassis. They are expected to arrive in the 3rd to 4th quarter of 2022. The ambulances are coming from the Orlando, Florida in the United States.

If the two present psychiatrists need a mou with mhf/smmc how do you justify Dr Jergens, Dr Ferreiro, Dr Friday working without a mou?

Firstly, the legislation regarding the restrictions on the establishment of medical professionals does not apply to children of the soil.

Secondly, all medical specialists working outside established healthcare institutions are required to enter into an agreement with that institution. Dr. Friday and Dr. Jurgensen do have such agreements with the SMMC, while Dr. Ferreiro is no longer practicing locally.

In terms of the MHF working with other institutions away or off island, how are they going to cooperate with institutions off island?

What cooperation do they have? How will they do it? Wouldn't this put them in more financial distress?

This type of cooperation takes place mainly in the areas of sharing of knowledge and experience, education and training of staff, research & policy and legislation development.

Looking at qualifications and years of experience how are the salaries of 25.000 per month and 50.000 per month justified for the two psychiatrist who are suspects? Why are they not suspended while the investigation is taking place?

As answered previously, I am awaiting the outcome of the investigation. However salaries of a psychiatrist is based on qualifications, experience, expertise in the field of psychiatry.

Is there a policy specifically for ministry VSA, government or the Council of Ministers regarding the extension of the contract for a suspect?

I am not aware of this. I have my personal belief and experience.

Different health fund ZV, FZOG, managed by SZV: does this also include coverage for the MHF? Is there a budget agreement to ensure continuity of care of SZV insured population?

Yes, Mental Health Care is included in the packages covered by the insurances managed by the SZV. The SZV has entered into a budget agreement with the MHF.

MHF recently signed a cooperation agreement with mental health institutions on the BES islands, Curacao and Aruba. Seeing the Capriles institution in Curacao filed a case against the government for million in overdue payment, how is mhf going to cooperate with Capriles clinic?

No financial obligations are included in this agreement. As answered earlier, this agreement is primarily focused on cooperation/sharing knowledge and experience in the area of education & training of staff, research & development and legislation development.

Since 2006 MHF has been Capriles has been an important partner, they initially supported MHF with protocols and procedures, job descriptions and advised on any matter relevant to the development of MHF free of charge. From 2006 to 2011 Crisis patients were flown frequently to Curaçao for treatment. At current this takes place incidentally.

The mental health institutions in Aruba and Curacao have a shortage in medical personnel. The BES islands require the medical personnel to be BIG registered. How will mhf help patients on the BES islands seeing that their doctors are not BIG registered?

That is a matter for the authorities on the BES islands to decide on.

MHF has mandate of the government for the entire mental health on island. Patients cannot be refused, although this has happened. How does mhf explain failing to comply with this duty of care?

The Minister nor the MHF are aware of clients being refused. At the MHF, patient care is on appointment basis (with exception of crisis intervention) based on urgency and availability.

According to the decree of the MHF, the MHF must cooperate with institutions on the island including turning point however in practice there is no cooperation from the part of MHF. How does MHF explain this non-compliance with its duty of cooperation?

Both TP and MHF have indicated that there is a collaborative agreement between the organizations. They meet monthly.

What about private patients having a choice in where you can be treated?

As Minister of Public Health, it is my duty to ensure that the healthcare available on the island meets the needs of the population, is of good quality, is available, affordable and (financially) sustainable. Freedom of choice for a healthcare provider is one of the many aspects of this equation. All these aspects are weighed and balanced carefully in the decisions that I take as Minister.

MHF does not refuse patients. I have been informed they do not admit aggressive patients. Do they admit aggressive patients? The patients sent to police station. Why send these patients to police station?

Patients to be admitted in MHF are going to an acute mental health crisis which might be accompanied by aggressiveness. In those cases they are not refused, but assistance from the police is needed.

They do not accept forensic patients as they are too dangerous and are left on the street. Mhf also does not admit children or the elderly or drug addiction patients. Please explain or clarify if what I have been informed is true? If so, why?

No, it's not true. MHF provides care to a variety of clients independent of their gender, age, social background, etc. Saying this MHF also provides care to an increasing number of uninsured clients, **care is not refused**.

Addiction patients are admitted in case of a crisis after they have been stabilized, they are transferred to Turning Point (TP). MHF continues patients support for medication at TP and follow-up after the patients leave TP through Ambulant care.

*Crisis care is when a client (due to amongst other very aggressive behavior) is considered a danger to him/herself and his/her environment.

Forensic psychiatric care falls under the judicial as it pertains to convicted criminals.

8 FTEs, 3 are fulfilled, 2 of which are suspects – the answer was that there was a policy. Can you provide that policy to have 2 or 3 FTEs to Parliament?

The document has been provided. Take note that an updated study has recently been finalized, the new policy is currently in its final phases of external advice and will then be submitted for approval.

Are you aware of the number of psychiatrists that left MHF unhappy? I have their names and numbers; I would like for you to speak with them.

As is required based on the National Ordinance on healthcare institutions, the MHF has established a complaints procedure. Clients of the MHF that have a complaint should follow this procedure. Complaints regarding the healthcare services can also be submitted to the Inspectorate for Public Health.

Does the minister stand for good quality psychiatric health care? What is your vision for psychiatric care?

My vision for psychiatric care is that it is of good quality and affordable. That it not only deals with crisis and critical cases but one that can cater not only to persons not in crisis, but also persons in need of professional counseling.

Does Minister VSA agree that psychiatric health care should be affordable?

All healthcare should be based on the needs of the population, adequate, affordable, sustainable, accessible and of good quality.

In which way is the budget for the Mental Health Foundation, the only psychiatric care on SXM, calculated?

Approximately 92% of MHF's income comes from two main sources, AVBZ contributions & SZV (Care contracts). Both contracts are based on: number of projected treatments related to the different funds and find their origin in the following ordinances:

- *Landsverordening Uitvoeringsorgaan Sociale en Ziektekosten Verzekering Sint Maarten – **National Ordinance Executing Agency Social and Health Insurances***
 - *Landsverordening Zorginstellingen - **National Ordinance on Healthcare Institutions***
 - *Landsverordening Algemene Verzekering Bijzondere Ziektekosten - **National Ordinance General Insurance Special Medical Expenses***
 - *Landsverordening Ongevallenverzekering - **National Ordinance Accident Insurance***
 - *Regeling tegemoetkoming Ziektekosten Overheidsgepensioneerden - **Health Insurance Allowance Scheme for Government Pensioners***
 - *Regeling vergoeding en behandeling- en verplegingskosten Overheidsdienaren - **Reimbursement and treatment and nursing costs Regulations for Government Employees***
 - *Landsverordening Ziekteverzekering - **National Ordinance Sickness Insurance***
- The rest of the 8% comes from private insurance, contributions and donations*

Is there a financial report from the Mental Health Foundation? I do believe it was provided.

I provided the annual report over 2020 to parliament.

What was the budget for psychiatric care in 2020? This needs clarification.

There is no budget in the national budget for psychiatric care.

How many and what psychiatric procedures were done in 2020?

See the annual report I provided to Parliament

How was the quality for psychiatric care measured? For example, saying it is up to par based on policy etc.

The quality standards are in the legislation. The inspectorate VSA inspects the institute.

What was the suicide rate per 1000 people in 2020?

I was informed that there were 2 suicides in 2021, 1 in 2020, 0 in 2019, 1 in 2018, 0 in 2017

Requests a List of all 'medications' that cannot be sold in the regular stores. What is the policy behind that list?

The laws on pharmaceuticals and opiates are applied. Basically, no pharmaceutical as defined in the law is allowed, until approved and registered in accordance with regulations and procedures.

Jamaica just started a pension scheme for tourism workers. The safety of Sint Maarten tourism workers are important and their social protection, how will Sint Maarten secure our tourism workers and their families, and does it apply to the contract, self-employed or the permanent workers. Can the workers move around and work at different places in the tourism industry without being penalized.

Sint Maarten has first layer pension, which is the AOV, the 2nd layer is what the civil servants and the Government organizations such as Telem, Airport, GEBE and the harbor. There is also the availability of the private insurance pensions. Considerations is being given to the possibility of implementing a 2nd layer pension across the board, however the feasibility of this has to be further researched.

I want to emphasize however that as Minister of VSA, I want to protect all workers.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

Airport – why has local CFO counterpart at airport not been appointed yet? Need a straightforward answer. Can a new contract be provided that was signed with Schiphol? We are waiting on a firm update from the holding as it relates to the CFO counterpart standpoint, as soon as it is received the details will be forwarded.

Since the reconstruction of PJIA in September, what exactly has been done thus far? Which areas are scheduled to come online first and please provide details on the work done on those sections.

The mobilization process has started which includes project planning, zero survey, preparing for a job fair for local workers and site preparation.

Is there an active process to hire a new COO at PJIA? There was an expert from Rotterdam to train for operations on the airport for six months, I don't believe that, I believe he might be appointed the new CEO.

There is no new COO, this is an ongoing investigation and a very sensitive subject. Coach was hired from Rotterdam airport to support the newly appointed director of operations and manager of security. This expert from Rotterdam will stay on for 6 months.

Is it so that the airport is seeking more money since contractor indicated that they cannot complete construction with what is provided now, is there an issue with Balast Nedam with the reconstruction? Does this stem from the issue of Balast Nedam being terminated with Schiphol for not being able to finish on time the construction of the pier? The additional USD 20 million is not related to interaction with the contractor and there are no issues with the contractor. The issues between Schiphol and Ballast Nedam will not impact the reconstruction project.

Will there be a new COO? If so, will it be a local with long experience internally?

There is no new COO, this is an ongoing investigation and a very sensitive subject.

Government will improve the SME's (Small, Medium, Enterprises) but how? What is Government's market development program for SMEs?

The small and medium size enterprises are currently supported through the Enterprise Support Project of the NRPB/World Bank.

Currently the ministry is working to approve the services of a partnering agency to efficiently execute components of the mandate of the National MSME Policy (2021), where structured trainings to guide individuals on how to start a business and effective ways to successfully sustain it will be provided and to prepare MSMEs for access to financing through the development of business and financial plans.

Will Government provide tax breaks and tax holidays to MSMEs?

Our role is limited to an advisory one, Tax Holidays are the authority of the Minister of Finance. With this in mind, the Ministry has via our MSME Policy recommended for tax incentives for MSMEs.

As it pertains to a development program for MSMEs, the Ministry will soon be embarking on an intensive training and development program for MSMEs to better prepare them to access financing as well as teach them the necessary skills required to operate successful micro, small and medium businesses.

Will Government create a fund or subsidy entity for SME's (Small, Medium Enterprises)?

The Ministry of TEATT was instrumental in getting Qredits established on the island to be able to provide micro loans to MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). Recently we have celebrated the 500th candidate to receive a loan. At this present moment, there are no plans to establish a separate fund for MSMEs.

Will Government plan to organize and subsidize trade shows and such for SMEs (Small, Medium, enterprises) to participate in? To help attract business partners? Will Government help to do so to help diversify? Government says it will help to improve the role of performance of the private sector for SMEs, so how? This is for FIN or TEATT to answer.

There are presently no concrete plans to subsidize any tradeshows. However, the Ministry will take along this recommendation in the planning for 2022.

Government has committed to the realization of the pillars of SINT MAARTEN, what are the other pillars and what steps were taken to achieve the multi-pillar dream?

In the short term (tier 1), the Tourism pillar, which is by far our largest economic pillar, will be split and diversified in sub-sectors such as:

- Digital Nomad
- Residence by investment
- Boutique hotels
- Culinary and Agri-tourism developments
- Marine industry (including a marine training facility)
- Medical tourism

On the medium term (Tier 2), the following pillars are identified:

- Agriculture
- Logistics
- o Airport City (USPC)
- o Port transshipment

Please provide an economic report for post COVID? What plans do you have?

We are still in the COVID-era and as such the Economic Recovery Plan as presented by the former Minister of TEATT is being executed. To date, the following key elements of the plan are ongoing:

I. MSME Development: Updated Policy & Partnering Agency to execute Training, Coaching, Guidance for Financing.

II. Agricultural Development: Establishment of a National Policy and supporting initiatives such as:

- Agri in schools project (long term vision of self-sustainability)
- Made in St. Maarten Market (2022).
- SXM Farmers Market.
- Monkey management (and in the future iguana management) projects

III. Pricing Study: Execution of a Study in 2022 to determine effectiveness of Price Ceilings and recommend the most suitable price control methods.

IV. Culinary and Agri-tourism developments

V. Marine industry: Getting a full understanding of the economic impact of the yachting industry in particular and the possibility of getting our locals involved in the marine auxiliary services.

VI. Film Industry: we have received interest in the field and will be further exploring options in 2022.

New tourism plan 2022 – 2027 for new norms in every tourism industry, what are these new norms and how will Government capitalize on them, what the estimated costs for them?

In the first quarter of 2022, the dept. of Tourism will put a bid out for an RFP for the updating of the Tourism Master Plan (TMP) with a review in 5 years. The prior master plan will also be reviewed when creating the new plan

US preclearance – need to get airport going for this. Anguilla and other islands are getting direct flights even though small size planes. This needs to be paid attention to. Several studies were performed amongst others in 2019 by the Central Bank of Curacao and Sint Maarten. Since this report was done pre-Covid and we are entering 2022, we are in the process of reactivating the USPC working group consisting of the three ministries involved (General Affairs, Justice and TEATT).

PJIA as the most important stakeholder will also join the working group to make this a joint effort.

The working group on US Preclearance will be tasked to present an update on the existing reports and business case which will also be shared with and presented to Parliament.

What are Government's plans for an island-wide economic forum including all stakeholders, including the French side?

There are presently no immediate plans for such. However, there has been consistent dialogue and collaboration with the French side especially as it pertains to Tourism. The Ministry believes in promoting our island from a holistic approach and will continue on this effort for 2022. We think this is an excellent idea as St. Maarten is at a critical juncture of its development stages and building consensus on the way forward is critical.

Regarding Ms. Lara Mateo, the representative for Sint Maarten in the Ms. World pageant recently. Which side of the island is she representing? I am seeing the Dutch Sint Maarten flag. When did this pageant take place and what budget was spent? Was the

tourism office involved? Who allowed the person Laura Matteo to represent the person to represent Sint Maarten in Puerto Rico for Ms. World on December 6? How was this contestant chosen, if so, when and where? Budget and sponsorship, who gave this person permission? Do we even know if the person is a legal resident? I see no representation of me there.

No funding or contribution was granted by the tourism bureau, and as per discussion with the tourism director a press release will be going out together with the director of the culture department to provide the necessary clarification.

Cost of internet in Sint Maarten vs the download speed time in the Caribbean. Sint Maarten has the 3rd worse of download speed, but pays the most.

From a BTP standpoint, internet is not a so-called dedicated service (opgedragen dienst) and therefore does not fall under their authority. We will see if and how we can bring this under the authority of BTP going forward as supervision in this area is needed. Telem, through the honorable minister of general affairs, will be in a better position to answer this question.

Fireworks – a company got their import license denied but two others got approved, how is it that a local person that paid their taxes did not get it while another company did? This responsibility does not resort under the Ministry of TEATT. The approval resorts under the Minister of General Affairs, as the Fire Dept is the responsible entity that provides the approval for such.

Aware of a French operated helicopter making routes similar to Winair without paying PJIAE any fees?

This concerns a private helicopter, and all fees are handled by the FBO operators.

Does the aircraft have a certificate and an air operating certificate, please provide? This related directly to the Civil Aviation and Shipping

The aircraft has an air operators' certificate. Certificate is available. Please note the operator is not allowed to operate between Saba, Statia and St. Maarten. They only allow to fly based on the MOU between St. Maarten and France.

How could they operate freely; do they have a contract with Winair?

The private helicopter does not operate freely. It operates in the same manner as all private aircrafts coming in at PJIA. They pay all the applicable fees for general aviation.

Outline of how things work at PJIAE, take off, fees etc..

The fee schedule has been sent (Attachment 1).

What are the construction over runs at PJIAE, how are supply chain issues affecting the reconstruction?

The budget for reconstruction increased by some USD 20 million which include some cost overruns due to inflation. Supply chain issues are currently being assessed by the Airport.

Are you aware that the grocery stores and supermarkets on the northern side of the island are taking advantage of the high costs of food prices on the southern side of the island?

This information can not be validated as the cost components and pricing strategy of food suppliers and retailers on the Northern side of the island are outside of the ministry's purview. The SER is currently executing research as it pertains to the Cost of

Living on St. Maarten. The Ministry will use said research to further assist with our own research being done via the Pricing Study.

How much money do you believe Sint Maarten would lose if the Airport no longer functions as the hub for Anguilla, St Barts, Dominica ect ect. How much money did we make being the hub for these islands?

This information is currently not available. We do however see the need to maintain our competitive advantage within the region as a hub to the surrounding islands.

What is the role of the Sint Maarten Investment Agency? How many investors has SMIA attracted? What is the investment policy?

The SMIA is the investment arm of the APS and does not resort under the Minister of TEATT. An Investment Policy has been drafted and is pending review and approval.

Can it be confirmed if any action is being undertaken to address the pensionable age of the air traffic controllers?

The Airport is looking at the possibility to have traffic controllers that are approaching their pension age for them to be trained as trainers and/or are placed in other suitable positions is currently being looked into.

Regarding Ms. Lara Mateo, the representative for Sint Maarten in the Ms. World pageant recently. Which side of the island is she representing? I am seeing the Dutch Sint Maarten flag. When did this pageant take place and what budget was spent? Was the tourism office involved? Who allowed the person Laura Mateo to represent the person to represent Sint Maarten in Puerto Rico for Ms. World on December 6? How was this contestant chosen, if so, when and where? Budget and sponsorship, who gave this person permission? Do we even know if the person is a legal resident? I see no representation of me there.

As a point of clarification, the initial idea was a joint release by both tourism and culture department. It was decided that the joint release by the Prime Minister will suffice.

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Do you know how many grocery stores there are on the island?

There are (approximately) 120 supermarkets on the island.

Individuals of the towers have been requesting a meeting, can you please clarify why a meeting cannot be held.

I checked with the cabinet staff and no official communications has been made but this will be followed up upon.

The Caribbean GDP is expected to rise with 47%: What is Government projection for Sint Maarten GDP growth. What is the projection of Cft, IMF, World Bank, Moody's. How these entities align and which the Government consider the most accurate. Which one is used by Government.

Some calculations and projections for Sint Maarten GDP growth are as follows:

From the IMF 12% projected growth 2022.

From the CBCS 14% projected growth in 2022.

The official GDP of St. Maarten, is calculated by the Government, but specifically the Department of Statistics, in collaboration with IMF and CBCS.

What is the country's current Moody's rating; what is the airport's rating.

Current Moody's rating as of February 2021 is currently Ba2.

How much does the airport contribute to the overall country's GDP at present and pre hurricane Irma and pre-COVID. How much the harbor contributes to the overall GDP at present and pre hurricane and pre-covid.

Pre-Irma it can be approximated that the airport contributed to over 40% of the overall GDP while the port contributed to 1/3 (33%) while Yachting sector was approximated at 10-15%.

The contribution of the airport and the harbor to the GDP can be estimated by executing a Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) calculation. This research is very specific, and thus the Department has commissioned a consultant to assist. To obtain the updated GDP data, the TSA calculation is scheduled to start in March 2022 with results expected as of September 2022.

What is the current value of the airport bonds. And the current EBITA value of the airport. Also for the harbor.

As of September 2021, the outstanding bonds including interest is US\$73.8 Million. Information on EBITDA is considered classified information and cannot not be disclosed in a public setting. We can send it for confidential perusal.

How much is currently outstanding to the bondholders, how many waivers the airport received thus far from the bond holders and when was the last.

As of September 2021, the outstanding including interest is US\$73.8 Million. The last waiver was granted to the airport on April 24, 2020 and will expire on May 15, 2022. In total, 19 waivers have been received to date.

What is the current rebuilding costs of the terminal building including preclearance given the increase in building materials.

The rebuilding cost is now estimated to be USD 126 million (was USD 107 million).

When was last time government provided liquidity support to the PJIAE. How much penalty fees is government paying for the unused funds form EIB, the non-usage fee. MP is looking for a detailed breakdown, from when the loan was acquired, when the non-usage fee was implemented, and how much it is today in its totality. Nowhere in the budget of TEATT these things are taking into consideration. Repeats the questions, if winair defaults in the loan, nowhere mention in the budget so we can cover the default so we don't lose what we put as collateral.

Liquidity support was last provided in July 2021. Commitment fee/non-utilization fee is approx. US\$ 250,000. This is not a cost for Government, but for the Airport.

Who is the current director for PJIAH since firing Dexter and was there a selection process, does the candidate fit the requirements cited in the articles of incorporation. Currently the chairlady of the Supervisory Board, Mrs. Lisandra Havertong-Ellis, is the acting managing director of PJIAH until the selection process has been completed and a new managing director has been appointed.

Still no counterpart to the CFO at the airport despite a selection process.

We are waiting on a firm update from the holding as it relates to the CFO counterpart standpoint, as soon as it is received the details will be forwarded.

What is happening with the FBO, nothing in the budget.

The Airport is reviewing the business strategy for the FBO and is finalizing the plans and strategy for the upgrade of the General Aviation (FBO) facility.

How many businesses have not survived the pandemic, how many of these displaced employees are back to work.

Approximately 200 requests at Department of Economic Licenses permission to close down B.V's, N.V's, branches and Sole Proprietorships from the start of the pandemic until November 2021. The number of employees that lost their jobs and have or have not been able to obtain employment elsewhere is not known to us. That information could only be obtained from SZV and/or the labor department/Ministry of VSA.

What is Government doing about the high costs for the antigen and PCR tests

The Ministry of TEATT, based on discussions with the Ministry of VSA and in consultation with stakeholders, are looking into the possibility of establishing a price ceiling/ maximum price on PCR, Antigen and Serology tests.

What is taking place with the travel insurance by incoming visitors. How much revenue was earned. And where was that revenue earmarked. How does the travel insurance revenue compare to places in the region.

The mandatory C-19 insurance for visitors is provided by a private insurance company. Country Sint Maarten doesn't get any revenue.

Is the Minister aware of the situation of the taxi drivers at the airport where tour busses from hotels are picking up tourists from the airport and cutting work from the taxi drivers? How are taxi drivers assured work? Are they being by passed to earn some much needed revenue?

In doing research, the ministry has found that in accordance with NATIONAL REGULATION on the carriage of persons by motor vehicles on public roads for remuneration Article 3 sub. 1

That if the transportation provided by the hotels is done for free, then it is considered a service. Therefore, the ministry will have to look into this further.

When was the last time Minister took his MR and went to the airport for a visit?

Answered on the floor of parliament.

Ministry of General Affairs

Will civil servants get back any money owed to them?

This has been done. As per the meeting of May 28, 2020, and the letter of the unions June 1, 2020, the Government and the unions agreed that the Vacation allowance owed in 2020 would be paid out. This was done in June 2021. Further agreement was dependent upon the verdict of the Constitutional Court 2021. The court's verdict upheld the laws and as such, the 2021 vacation allowance was deemed to contribute to the 12,5% cut for us to be able to continue to receive liquidity support thereby safeguarding the monthly net salaries of our civil servants.

Is Government considering letting go any civil servants or reducing their salaries?

Government has since the inception of the 12,5% cuts imposed by the Kingdom Council of Ministers in May 2020, expressed that we have NO INTENTION of reducing any salaries or unjustly relieving any civil servants of service. We have done everything to ensure no net salaries were cut. Since some of the benefits we consider to be secondary and tertiary are not regulated as such in our civil servants' total package, they could not be cut.

Can the Minister FIN explain how is it justified to cut in benefits of working civil servants to reduce personnel expenses, while hiring 60+ employees? Is this a justifiable action as an employer?

This was partially answered in a similar question asked by MP SWW. I would like to remind the public that the cuts applied were not because this government wanted to apply them, but we were in a dire position with regard to our liquidity position and as such needed to comply to receive the much-needed financial injections. We applied the cuts as cautiously as we could, only cutting into fringe benefits.

These cuts, however, do not result in a literal reduction of personnel. In fact, as is known, the Government has been functioning for years under capacity. For years because of budget limitations not enough personnel were hired. Currently, especially with the execution of the implementation agendas, it has become clear that more civil servants are needed, to make the organization function efficiently and productively. This fact has also been discussed with the TWO and SS Knops. We have also expressed that these measures are more counterproductive than what is necessary to make this whole

project a success and to attract St. Maarteners to return home and contribute to the further development of Sint Maarten.

Is it true that there was a voucher program to supermarkets for civil servants?

The Christmas voucher program for Civil servants was not done in 2020 due to budgetary constraints and will not be done this year end as we are currently still running on a deficit budget.

Is it true that there will be a reduction for civil servants GEBE bills?

No, any relief that can be found with GEBE bills will be across the board and not solely for Civil Servants.

Will a voucher program be set up for civil servants at certain supermarkets?

No, as mentioned before if such a program would be implemented then it would be for each citizen on St. Maarten.

Will the Government allow civil servants to have a side job to offset what was cut?

Government has always had a legal basis allowing civil servants to have a "side job" "nevenwerkzaamheden". In fact, on June 18, 2021, all Civil Servants received a reminder from the Council of Ministers explaining the requirements and procedure.

These rules can be found in Articles 51 to 56 of the LMA, and Article 51 of the LMA states: "side jobs are activities which the Civil Servant performs in addition to his government job on the basis of employment, in conducting of business or trade, or in the fulfillment of a managerial or supervisory function." This includes many different activities. In addition to all commercial activities or activities for which one is paid, this also includes being in management or on the board of associations, foundations or companies.

The articles require that the Civil Servant request permission from their department head.

Why are some civil servants getting increment payments and some not? Please explain the process.

Based on the national ordinance on the cost cutting measures, no civil servant will receive increments, starting 2021.

However, when the national ordinances were under review by the Constitutional Court, the provisions regulating the freeze on increment were not yet enforceable. During that period, for civil servants who left the organization or were appointed in a different position, the increment of 2021 had to be included in the final establishing of their legal position, or to establish their new salary. Consequently, this small group of civil servants received increases, while the others did not.

There is something wrong with the management of TeIEm – GEBE did not implement cuts, but actually gave bonuses, please explain how they did this and how did they cut in detail without touching employee benefits?

Each company had to determine how they would implement the cuts. TeIEm is currently still in discussion with the union and mediator to come to an agreement on the application of the cuts. The austerity measures came into effect July 2020, so anything that was due to the employee before that could indeed be paid out.

What is going on with TeIEm?

The Council of Ministers has recently (November 17, 2021) received a letter from TELEM explaining their proposed implementation of the 12,5% cut to the total employees' package. They are in discussion with the union.

GEBE – can minister provide copy of the Corporate Governance Council (CGC) advice on new Supervisory Board of GEBE and the CGC advice for the new Management Board?
All advices issued by the CGC are shared with Parliament by the CGC.

Airport – why has local CFO counterpart at airport not been appointed yet? Need a straightforward answer. Can a new contract be provided that was signed with Schiphol? The Shareholder has requested an update on this as well and is still awaiting the plan of action for such. A copy of the extension agreement was shared with the Honorable members of Parliament ahead of this presentation.

The update provided by PJIAE:

During the project there will be support from Schiphol also in the person of a CFO as agreed between Sint Maarten and the Dutch government. Key points for the new CFO under the existing contract with Schiphol are:

- Assist terminal reconstruction to be within budget in time
- Arrange refinancing
- Train counterpart for transition

We will restart the selection process for the local CFO counterpart because earlier candidates were not approved by all relevant parties. Government will ensure to update the House of Parliament by Q1, hopefully with positive information.

Since the reconstruction of PJIA in September, what exactly has been done thus far? Which areas are scheduled to come online first and please provide details on the work done on those sections?

Teams of the airport and the contractor are working on optimal phasing with support of the supervising engineer as we speak. A general timeline for completion of the various stages has been made public.

Is there an active process to hire a new COO at PJIA? There was an expert from Rotterdam to train for operations at the airport for six months, I don't believe that I believe he might be appointed the new COO.

There has been no communication regarding a new COO, the investigation and a very sensitive subject. Coach was hired from Rotterdam airport to support the newly appointed director of operations and manager of security. This expert from Rotterdam will stay on for 6 months. However, we were indeed informed of the decision to bring someone to train local managers in Operations, (which is allowed based on the cooperation agreement) while the COO is out.

Is it so that the airport is seeking more money since the contractor indicated that they cannot complete construction with what is provided now, is there an issue with Ballast Nedam with the reconstruction? Does this stem from the issue of Ballast Nadam being terminated with Schiphol for not being able to finish the construction of the pier on time?

The additional money of USD 20 million is not related to interaction with contractor. This project has no relation whatsoever with Schiphol in the Netherlands.

Is the Minister aware of the Volkskrant article stating that there will be implications for Schiphol with the termination and consequences? Is there any rumbling concern regarding the situation?

I have not, nor has the Shareholder been apprised of such developments.

Will there be a new COO for PJIAE? If so, will it be a local with long experience internally?

This discussion is premature, however the Shareholder's vision is to see our GOC run by our own people remains a priority, and we will ensure that our representatives keep that in mind while carrying out their due diligence.

How many numbers/reforms are dependent on the COHO? Is liquidity support dependent on whether Parliament agrees to the COHO? What happens if Parliament says no? This is regarding the 3 laws.

The COHO is the entity which will monitor the execution of the country package c.q. the implementation agendas. So, all the measures mentioned in the country package. In the meantime, this is monitored by the TWO. In the agreement "voorwaarden brief", it is mentioned among others, that if Sint Maarten informs the Kingdom Council of Ministers that there is no consensus for the draft Kingdom law establishing the COHO, the agreement ceases to exist, which will mean that the country package and the measures will not be executed and therefore, the conditions to receive liquidity support are not present anymore. It is then up to Holland to decide how to continue.

The three national ordinances are the conditions for the first tranches of liquidity support, and the recovery of Sint Maarten. As mentioned in the law, the government can declare the end of the national ordinances by national decree.

Government owes medium enterprise Sheriff Security for millions for services at Festival Village, how much money do they owe the same business for schools?

This answer was already provided by the Minister of ECYS. However, I would like to clarify once again, as was explained in the SOG meeting held December 3, the Government of St. Maarten is in arrears with SOG, and SOG is in arrears with the security company for the festival village. This is a separate matter to the service provided for the schools.

US preclearance – need to get airport going for this. Anguilla and other islands are getting direct flights even though small size planes. This needs to be paid attention to. The Minister of TEATT provided this answer. An inter-ministerial committee has been re-established with all stakeholders to prepare an update on the possibilities for US Preclearance and determine the roles all stakeholders will have to play in realizing this goal.

What are Government's plans for an island-wide economic forum including all stakeholders, including the French side?

Government has prioritized the establishment of a foreign investment policy, this to streamline the recommendations of the IMF and lessons learned over the past 11 years as a constituent state within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

In addition to this, the Governments of the Northern and Southern side of the island have been collaborating on all aspects, and even more so now since COVID-19. We look forward to updating Parliament on our progress made by Q2 of 2022.

Regarding Ms. Lara Matteo, the representative for Sint Maarten in the Ms. World pageant recently.

a). Which side of the island is she representing?

b). I am seeing the Dutch SXM flag. When did this pageant take place and what budget was spent?

c.) Was the tourism office involved?

d). Who allowed the person Laura Matteo to represent the person to represent SXM in Puerto Rico for Ms. World on December 6?

How was this contestant chosen, if so, when and where? Budget and sponsorship, who gave this person permission? Do we even know if the person is a legal resident? I see no representation of me there

Based on information received pertaining to this, St. Maarten has not authorized any one to represent us in this pageant. Research is being done as to how this came about. Lack of budget for such endeavors has always played a role, however, the promotion of St. Maarten worldwide via these types of platforms could have a positive economic spin, and

St. Maarten will follow up to ensure the proper legal basis, policies are in place, and licenses to host such local pageants to select a representative to participate internationally are granted under the condition that said representation is sanctioned by the Government as authority.

In this geographical location, from Cuba to Trinidad, SXM is the third worst for internet download speed. Aruba is the best. But SXM pays the most. FIN needs to talk to TEATT and PM regarding TelEm and the internet speed.

With the move to FTTH – speed will continue to increase which we see as basic to the success of the individual, the Entrepreneur, government and St. Maarten as a whole.

What is the plan of action for money saved from cost cutting measures? They were put in place but 68 hired, how many of the 68 were critical? What was the reason for 68 hirings for the year but only filled for a fraction of this year?

I believe this answer was provided before and now Parliament has an overview of the personnel hired. (see answer MP SWW)

A final report by the Netherlands in reference to the employment conditions package B5 will be made for retrenchment measures, what are they? How will the retrenchment proposal be used for civil servants, how much more will they be enduring and giving up? What will they lose? I need that answer now.

I would like to refer to the information and update, I provided in the meeting in November, where all the Ministers provided the update on the implementation agenda. I can also refer to the following statements I made in answering the questions posed by the MP.

Firstly, for this measure, a plan of approach has been drafted to conduct a comparative study into the employment conditions and fringe benefits in Sint Maarten (Aruba and Curacao). The comparative study has been completed and so far, two concept reports have been drafted. By now we have received the final report.

However, there have been some delays. These delays are due to critical responses given by Personnel Department on the way the research was set up and conducted. P&O requested for adjustments of the research question for the comparative study of employment conditions;

P&O Requested for an additional research focus, namely the addition of a comparison of purchasing power in Sint Maarten, Aruba and Curacao.

P&O provided critical Feedback on how the research was conducted and the results thus far (concept report 1 and 2). No adjustments were made, and no proper discussions on our concerns as mentioned by Sint Maarten. Therefore, until now there is no agreement on the content of the report. As such I cannot provide the MP with the requested information.

Are these retrenchment measures like cost-cutting austerity laws temporary or will they be permanent? We keep hearing it's temporary. Government needs to say how it is.

I would like to refer to the previous question.

B9 is for strategic personnel policy, and strategic plans and limiting political influence, are they not already implemented by P&O?

Is performance management not already established by law?

The MP is right that the policies are in place, the same with performance management or what is called the HR Cycle. This is, however, more related to B5.

On B9, I already provided an update in the meeting of November 26, on the country package and implementation agenda.

Furthermore, I would like to mention that the first question of the MP is exactly what I have been sharing with Parliament in all my presentations on the country package and

the implementation agendas. Some of the measures mentioned are assumptions or based on information in other countries within the Kingdom. Next to that, I also consider that periodic evaluation of policies should be seen as a positive action in ensuring that the policies meet our needs.

Vehicle insurance increased significantly compared to last budget, is it true that it was not paid last time?

The insurance for new vehicles is financed by the Trust Fund for the year 2021 as the Government did not budget for the insurance for the new vehicles for the year 2021. However, it was agreed that the Government would ensure that the necessary budget will be available for the insurance of the new vehicles for the budget year 2022.

Why is the boom not working to collect pay for parking, even if boom not working, why not put people there to collect parking fees?

Due to electrical issues, the boom was not reinstalled, however, all parking in the lot is being handled and supervised by a temporary assigned parking attendant. Efforts are underway to purchase an electronic payment system and we are now awaiting proposals for such.

Further efforts are underway in collaboration with the Department of Finance to resume manual collection of parking fees effective Monday, December 20th, 2021 after the necessary public notifications and placement of proper signage. It was originally slated to commence yesterday, Wednesday, December 15; however decided to delay to inform the public properly over the course of the next few days.

Tuesday December 7, 2021, the Daily Herald article said Trust Fund is at halfway point of life span, SXM recovering well compared to other islands – in terms of what and how? How are we recovering better or well?

The Honorable Member of Parliament asked several questions concerning the Daily Herald article of December 7, 2021. This article is based on written questions posed by the Daily Herald and written answers provided by the Trust Fund Steering Committee. The article quotes the Steering Committee as stating that “St. Maarten is recovering well, compared to other countries in the region”.

The comparison with other countries in the region is based on the knowledge, experience and involvement of the World Bank with the recovery process of other countries in the region. Average economic growth figures for 2021 for Sint Maarten compare favorably to those of many other countries in the region.

EISTP – can I get detailed investment for the two projects for the 115 million – how much went to hospital and the airport. Don't leave out the consultancy fees of the Trust Fund and the World Bank.

In the article of December 7, reference is made to 115 million US Dollars in major infrastructure projects, including the new hospital and the reconstruction of the airport. For the Hospital project, an amount of 28.6 million is made available.

For the Airport an amount of 92 million from the Trust Fund and 50 million from the European Investment Bank. The administration fee of the Trust Fund is approximately 11.5 million US dollars and is not part of these amounts.

The NRPB will make themselves available to provide the information in regards to consultancy fees in a closed door setting, as they are always willing to provide this and any information to the Honorable Members of Parliament.

100 million to repair 410 social and private homes and the police station. Was in the newspaper. I want a breakdown detail lists of these homes, which districts are they in? That is 250,000 each. Where are these social homes?

The article of December 7, speaks of an investment of 100 million in repairs to 410 social and private homes and police stations. This is not fully correct. The Trust Fund has invested over 100 million dollars in Emergency Recovery Project I.

This project finances the repairs to the police stations and homes, but also many other things such as 19 schools, 11 shelters, the new fire trucks and ambulances, the expansion of the Fire and Ambulance Building, government vehicles underground cabling for GEBE and emergency equipment. If the MP wants more information on this project, relevant reports can be made available.

The MP also requested some further information on the districts in which private and social homes have been repaired through the Trust Fund. Private home repairs are done in Upper and Lower Prince's Quarters, Cul-de-sac, Cole Bay and the Philipsburg areas. Social home repairs is mostly in Belvedere.

School repairs started – some 100 SMEs are being supported with financing packages for \$7 mill and sub projects granted more than 1 mill. What are the 22 NGOs, I would like a list.

The NGO projects do not fall under the NRPB. Nevertheless, the following NGOs have received support through the Trust Fund:

- Animal Defenders,
- St. Maarten Foundation,
- Be the Change Foundation,
- Carib Swim Team,
- Discovery Kidz Foundation,
- Dow Musical Foundation,
- Excellence Learning Academy,
- Foundation Catholic Education St. Maarten,
- Freegan Food Foundation,
- GBNM Nanny Nursery Foundation,
- Helping Hands Foundation,
- K1 Britannia Foundation,
- Nature Foundation,
- Philipsburg Jubilee Library,
- Reading Rainbow Foundation,
- RISC Takers Football Club,
- Stichting Justieële Instellingen St. Maarten,
- St. Maarten AIDS Foundation,
- St. Maarten Senior Citizens Recreational Foundation,
- St. Maarten Yacht Club,
- SXM Early Childhood Development Association and the University of St. Martin.

More information on the projects can be found on the website of R4CR.

<https://www.r4cr.org/projects>

Isn't it so that Government identifies the projects concerning the TF, who put them together? How does that trajectory go for identifying the projects needed the most? How many projects that Government identified that the steering committee said yes to? Where are the projects that are producing visible results? How and where is the economy activity mentioned?

The Government, through the Council of Ministers, decides on the position of St. Maarten in the Steering Committee, in so doing when the Council approves a project proposal it is submitted to the Steering Committee for their deliberation and approval on consensus basis.

The Steering Committee has decided on the allocation of funding for projects. The prioritization of projects is guided by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the

Strategic Framework of the Trust Fund. Project proposals can be submitted by each of the three members of the Steering Committee. In practice, most project proposals are conceived and prepared by the Government, together with the World Bank and the NRPB.

All Trust Fund projects have been approved by the Council of Ministers and by the consensus of the Steering Committee.

All of the projects that are currently under implementation or preparation have been identified by the Government as important for the recovery and future resilience of Sint Maarten.

The eight projects under implementation are the Airport Terminal Reconstruction Project, the Emergency Recovery Project (ERP-1), the Emergency Debris Management Project (EDMP), the Emergency Income Support and Training Project (EISTP), the Enterprise Support Project (ESP), the Hospital Resiliency and Preparedness Project, the Resources for Community Resilience Project (R4CR), and the Child Resilience and Protection Project.

The three projects under preparation are the Fostering Resilient Learning Project (FRLP), the Digital Government Transformation Project (DGTP) and the Mental Health Project. On the request of the Government, the World Bank and the NRPB are also preparing a proposal for a potential housing project of up to \$20 million.

All the projects under implementation are producing visible results for the people and business community of Sint Maarten. While not always as fast as we would want, projects are supporting Government entities, many small businesses, NGOs and private citizens.

“The bulk of the contracts went to local contractors” – 44% of TF moneys gone into economic activity in SXM during this pandemic period. 500 million, please explain what is 44% of that? If you so, then we have some contractors that are millionaires on SXM. 231 mln \$ thus far. Who are they that benefited from it?

The article in the Daily Herald states that “some 44 percent of the funds allocated to projects have been disbursed. These resources are supporting economic activity in Sint Maarten during this particularly difficult pandemic period. The bulk of the contracts has gone to local contractors, with a few larger, more specialized contracts bringing international companies to the island”.

Let me explain this a bit further. The Netherlands has made approximately 515 million US Dollars available to Trust Fund. To date, the Steering Committee has allocated 313.2 million US Dollars to projects under implementation. Of the allocated funding, 44% has been disbursed. This means that an amount of 142.6 million has been transferred from the Trust Fund to the relevant project accounts and is used to pay contractors and suppliers under the different projects.

Over 110 million US dollars has already been spent and has as such supported economic activity within the country. A significant part of these funds has been spent on activities that are taken up by local contractors (or sub-contractors), think for example of the repairs to the police stations, the first batch of school repairs, home repairs and the upcoming first phase of underground cabling works with GEBE. All these works are financed through the Trust Fund and will be completed by local contractors.

The French side has more sunken wrecks and hired the Dutch company for 4 million, but we paid 14 million?

After inquiring, the Government was informed that scope of the French Side's contract excludes the export of waste, which is very costly. More information on the execution of this project would have to be sought from the Government on the Northern side, as this is their jurisdiction, and we are not collaborating on this project.

Which police stations are they talking about for the repairs? Make sure that FIN ask how much is being made in consultancy fees.

The Trust Fund has financed repairs to the police stations in Philipsburg and Simpson Bay. These repairs have been executed with support of the NRPB and the Ministry of VROMI. The works included roof repairs, asbestos and mold remediation, interior work, and the installation of hurricane shutters, generators and diesel tanks.

This has been reported repeatedly here in parliament and is a part of the Trust fund regular monitoring report.

The insurance and maintenance for new fire trucks are done by whom?

Government is covering the cost for the insurance of the new and existing fire trucks. The sales contract signed for the new trucks included a 3-year maintenance support plan and maintenance training for the staff. As such Government will ensure that the budget for maintenance of the trucks after the third year increased to cover the cost of maintenance of the trucks.

When are the new ambulances coming? If a purchase orders were made, can they be provided and when were they made and from where? Rotterdam, Haarlem, Amsterdam, etc?

The new ambulances are expected between Q2-Q3 of 2022. This is highly dependent on the global vehicle and shipping markets. The ambulances are from the USA.

Fireworks – a company got their import license denied but two other got approved, how is it that a local person that paid their taxes did not get it while another company did?

The two companies that received firework permits are companies that applied and received permits for the import, transport and display of **professional fireworks**. In their application they have provided all the necessary information and met all the requirements to import and handle professional fireworks.

The local company applied for the import, transport and sales of **consumer fireworks**. The requirements were not met up until today. The company has been informed which requirements still have to be met before the permit can be issued.

The Fire Department received a notice from the VROMI department on one of the stipulated requirements which is the hindrance permit. The requirements are stipulated by the Fireworks Ordinance / Vuurwerkbesluit.

The Fire Department had several sessions with the company in question to explain and guide them in the application process.

Government owned companies - airport: PM mentioned any monies owed before 2020 should be paid. Asking clarification on this. Airport workers have been asking for the monies that are before 2020. Hence the question for clarity.

I understand the Honorable Members clarification, however, the liquidity position of PJIAE is a very touchy one as the construct is a bit different as opposed to some of our other Government owned companies. The letter the Honorable MP read aloud this afternoon, reflected the NAf 1000 gross, that would be paid to employees working longer than a year for the airport, and ones working less than a year would receive a proportionate amount.

Indeed Government has asked all Government owned companies to comply as much as possible with the laws, however, the companies all have SLAs with their employees which also require compliance.

PJIAE entered into a settlement agreement with the ABVO St. Maarten Union and WISCU/PSU Union on July 3rd and July 22nd, 2020, respectively.

In this settlement agreement a one-time payment in July 2020 has been agreed upon for all PJIAE employees for outstanding remunerations 2017-2019. Parties closed off all historical outstanding rights for 2017-2019 with the exception of the COLA of 2018 and 2019 (both Unions) and a one-time and final bonus of 1.5% of the year salary of 2018 as stipulated in article 503 of the CLA (Only WISCU/PSU). This bonus was paid in November 2020.

PJIAE, ABVO St. Maarten and WISCU/PSU are still in negotiations pertaining to the COLA of 2018 and 2019 and Remunerations for 2020, 2021 and 2022.

How will the general public be informed regarding any sort of natural disasters (tsunamis) coming to SXM. How will the public be alerted seeing the horns are not working since hurricane Irma and have not been replaced, are there any plans to place them back or installed and what sort of budget this will be?

Since Irma government continues to inform the public by means of the media, social media, press briefings and national addresses. Also utilized is the speaker car, which drives throughout the neighborhoods (this took place for COVID-19). As indicated previously a study will be carried out to determine the most suitable and feasible warning system. This taking the landscape of St. Maarten into consideration, as well as diversity of the population, notwithstanding the need for a communication plan to ensure that the public is aware of what a "warning" means. Technical assistance for cell broadcast will also commence in January 2022.

Is there a head vacancy for VDSM. How long has this vacancy been in place, who are the candidates, what has been his/her role in filling this vacancy, does PM find this vacancy important, has there been a negotiation process in the CAPEX budget.

The vacancy was put out and we had a few candidates. The best candidate was vetted and made an offer. Unfortunately the offer was not satisfactory for the candidate and he decided to withdraw from the procedure. In the interim we have had acting heads to ensure the continued functioning of the department.

Is it confirmed that the PJIAE is seeking a loan from a Aruba investment bank and not the agencies in Sint Maarten? Why and do they have or do they need permission to do such?

PJIAE is not seeking a loan from Aruba Investment Bank. We are refinancing the existing indenture and are approaching, with the support of Aruba Investment Bank, potential investors in the region including pension funds, insurance companies and banks from Sint Maarten.

What is the role of the local pension fund in the airport financing. PM indicated that the liquidity support from Government is to support paying the bondholders. Is PM stating that emphatically? Is the PM therefor saying that the Bondholders are not paid from the airport departure fees that are in a lockbox for their payments. If that is the case, why are the workers not getting their COLA as agreed upon by the unions? It was reported that flights have increased therefor departure and other fees have also increased. Can PM shed some clarity.

The local pension fund has no role in the airport's current capital structure.

If component 4 is what is meant with Government Liquidity support, then the following applies: This component provides support to the operations of the airport company, PJIAE, through financing of select operational expenditures (OPEX), so that PJIAE can continue operations without disruption during the reconstruction period. Support is limited to expenditures incurred for salaries and benefits of PJIAE personnel and utilities. OPEX support to PJIAE is capped by the amount of debt service payments that the

PJIAE's earnings before interest, taxes, and depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) cannot cover during the terminal construction works. To simplify, the bondholders are paid by PJIAE's cash flow and PJIAE can only make use of component 4 in the event our cash flow does not suffice.

PJIAE can confirm that the aviation activities have increased, however, we are still performing below the numbers of 2019. PJIAE is still negotiating with the Unions pertaining to the COLA (see answer earlier).

Liquidity support will pay the bond holders. Pls provide more clarity. The \$20M additional financing for the Airport Terminal Reconstruction Project, as presented this morning, has allowed the airport to cover eligible operating costs and enable the Airport to continue to pay its debt service to the Bondholders and continue to operate.

See also previous answers on the airport financing.

VDSM: when will this critical vacancy be filled. Who is acting in this position and for how long, did the person apply for the position, what is the position in Government comparable to? how critical is that position within the organization, how many people have been screened since the position became vacant. What were the conditions of service for the first head of VDSM and have these changed and if so when did they change and in what areas.--> Clarify changes in writing.

See previous answer.

Who are the members of trust fund steering committee, who is representing SXM in this cie. How long is the contract and how long has he/she served on the cie, has this person's contract been renewed.

The members of the Steering Committee are Mr. Marcel Gumbs representing St. Maarten, Mr. Frans Weekers, representing the Government of the Netherlands and now replacing Ms. Tahseen Sayed as Country Director of the Caribbean, Ms. Lilia Burunciuc. As mentioned in response to the Honorable Member of Parliament Wescot-Williams, Mr. Gumbs has served as a member of the Steering Committee since May 1, 2018 (3 years). He was appointed by a Ministerial Decree by the former Prime Minister Ms. Leona Romeo Marlin and has since not been revoked.

Integrity Chamber 2.4 million. Can we get a detailed, intricate, line by line, number of the works that will be done for 2.4 million: electricity, furniture, are they renting cars, etc. What are they spending the money on or what are their plans to spend money on, what investigations are they looking at.

Was answered previously

P&O: has the dept changed the manner in which laws and policies are being applied since personnel laws and policies since they have been established. The impression is created that they acting independently, but they have a boss.

The department of Personnel continues to follow all approved laws and policies as established, under the guidance of their Department Head, DMO, and SG.

The **Independent Member Buncamper** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and remarks.

Ministry of Finance

According to the draft budget 2022 we used about 102.8 million guilders less in projected liquidity support and a projected loss of Naf 127.8 million is expected. I cannot find any documentation where the government has received any permission presently to in accordance with Article 25 sub 1 of the RFT law to deviate from the budget norms as stipulated by article 15 of the RFT.

Has any permission been granted thus far by the Kingdom Ministers council to deviate from the RFT law due to our projected budget deficit based on your letter of November 19th 2021?

The request in accordance with article 25 sub 1 of the RFT to allow the Government of St. Maarten to deviate from article 15 of the RFT – which is to have a budget deficit – will be handled in the Kingdom Council Of Ministers meeting of December 17th.

Have all the requested documents been forwarded as requested to the kingdom council of ministers due to the adjusted meeting dates of the KCOM?

Yes, all the requested documents been forwarded as requested to the kingdom council of ministers, we met with all requirements relevant to the request to the KCOM as it relates to article 25.

Has an agreement been reached with IMF and CFT which income generation based on a growth of the BNP of 16 or 19% in 2022?

Cft and IMF differ in opinion when it comes to income generation. While IMF predicts deficits till 2026 in their latest publication, Cft states that a balanced budget should be presented in 2023 already. We will have a role in bringing these visions closer to reality in the course of 2022 and present our multi annual projections accordingly. Government position in line with the IMF. We agree it is unrealistic that we back to pre-Irma levels without the Airport fully being operational.

How was the NAF 124.141.630,- deficit created when I understand that the IMF projected government cost was adjusted upwards by the government as a safety precaution? Can we get an indication by which cost projects these safety precautions were made and how much are they per ministry?

Please be referred to the multi-annual projections on page 4 of the elucidation booklet for the breakdown of the adjustments of the IMF projections.

How much of a positive effect was calculated that the new hospital and airport would have on the budget 2022 seeing none are operational in that sense yet in 2022?

The projections made by IMF of the growth in GDP take the delays of the airport and the hospital projects into consideration. There are no additional effects because of airport or hospital. All economic growth is related to the economic recovery that was estimated by IMF on nominal GDP growth of about 16%.

Did the government make any income loss projections if the corona crisis would continue for 3, 6, 9 or 12 months in 2022? If not why not seeing this can also have a serious impact on the needed volume of liquidity support.

The Government has indeed made assessments with respect to expected loss of income due to the corona crisis. These losses are incorporated in the budget based on the projections that were published by IMF.

Why are we putting capital expenses on our budget creating a serious deficit seeing whatever capital investment related to the country packages should be covered by the agreements made without creating a budget shortage?

Including the estimated cost of the Country packages in the budget provides the necessary provisions to seek the finances necessary to implement the projects and programs that form part of the Country Packages. The alternative would be to request permission for each project or programs for which we require financing and submit a budget amendment. To include the estimated costs already in the budget is way more efficient. If in practice the projects and or programs are not implemented, it simply means that the annual account will reflect a lower deficit.

Are the loans that mature in 2022 already approved for refinancing and what percentage was agreed upon?

The financing of the loans that mature in 2022 are being discussed in collaboration with Curacao and Aruba. All 3 countries were asked what set of conditions would work for them as a preparation of the discussion to take place in January. Target is to come to a conclusion in February.

Was any agreement reached with the Netherlands regarding the liquidity debt relief based on the IMF report of November 2021.

There is no agreement with the Netherlands regarding debt relief based on the IMF report of November 2021; we will negotiate such in relation to the refinancing of the Covid-loans that will mature in 2022.

How is the government planning to repay the 301.2 million in 2022 as per their loans review statement on page 64?

The government's plans for the repayment of the Naf 301.2 million as per the loans review on page 64; these amounts are mentioned to legitimize the refinancing as meant in the previous answer.

Has the government considered having various investments needed to be made by our pension fund by turning over the assets to them under a rent to purchase agreement? This will ensure that the debt ratio will instantly drop and your deficit can also be brought down quite significant. I'm talking about the parliament building (10 million), the prison (31.5 million) to name a few.

We are discussing possibilities of investments by APS that can lower our investment needs, but of course we also must balance the budget, therefore there is a limit to what you can ask APS to invest.

Has an agreement been reached for the cost coverage of the tax reform for the projected NAF 22 million?

TWO agreed to a grant of EUR 15 million to cover the Tax reform and Financial management programs; 22 mln fits within this amount.

A loan for Naf 67.590.020,- is going to be requested for Capital investments for 2022 while the total capital investment is projected at Naf 94.123.550,-.

The total amount of 94.1 mln in Capex includes the projects for tax reform and financial management which will be covered via other (non loan) sources. Therefore, only an amount of 67.6 mln is needed to cover the other capital expenditures.

Which projects/programs are not covered by the loan to be requested?

The projects for the Tax Reform and the Financial Management are not included in the capex loan, these projects will be covered via funding received via TWO/Trustfund.

The projected deficit of Naf 124.141.630,- is being requested as liquidity support by means of a loan. Is that correct and what sort of loan are we requesting exactly?

It is correct that to cover the projected deficit of Naf 124.141.630 , the government is requesting liquidity support from the Netherlands.

Is there an agreement or understanding with the Dutch government that we get operational budget support for 2022?

As per the understanding with the CFT, the financing needs are included in the budget, also those for operational expenses.

Seeing the bad compliance with the casino fee/tax income why is it that we still aren't prioritizing the gaming industry board? We lose millions per year on lost income, but we go after seniors for peanuts. If we collect what they owe can stop taxing our seniors!

With respect to the prioritizing of the Gaming Control Board I defer this question to the Minister of TEATT.

When I look at the income I notice that we have clearly more turnover tax yet our wage tax doesn't change nor does our profit tax. Isn't there a direct connection between these taxes? Also is it maybe fair to state that many persons are now minimum wage earners or less than that causing less wage tax income?

The projected increase in TOT compared to the stagnation of projected income tax and profit tax can be explained as follows: The income tax is not increasing as the jobs within hospitality, which are the jobs that will be created with the growth in tourism, are often low paying jobs and therefore hardly generate wage tax revenue for government. As for profit tax, we expect that some of the losses from previous years, due to Covid, will be carried forward and as such will not experience a significant increase.

The personnel cost went up with 14 million of which 6.1 million is for new personnel and 7.9 for past OZR cost. Was the to be expected OZR for 2022 for the new personnel of the new personnel also included?

The total estimated amount for OZR is based on total amount of Civil Servants so includes new personnel.

Why isn't the 10 million needed for social programs related to Covid not part of the liquidity support which presently is zero?

The amount of Naf 10 million is not presented in the liquidity support because no decision has thus far been taken regarding liquidity support for 2022 (expected December 17).

How much additional is exactly slated for the restructuring tax office or the overall tax reform? This must include capital cost and also (additional) operational cost?

Total amount in Capex for restructuring of the tax office/tax reform is Naf 22 mln and in de "gewone dienst" we have an amount of 2 mln budgeted.

Operational matters:

Why are the overtime cost by justice reduced with 2 million when this will effect the daily operations seeing we are going back to full economical operations in our country? (if we don't spend it we will only be happy to have a surplus years end?)

This 2022 budget shows a deficit of NAF 124 million. This means that we have more expenses than revenue. More cost than income, from for example, taxes, licenses fees, concessions etc. The NAF 124 million that we are short in income, we can only spend if we find alternative income through for example gifts, loans or selling assets, increasing tax compliance. These are the short-term solutions for raising these funds. Or we can

lower our expenses by the same amount and then we won't need to look for alternative sources of income. But the latter is not practical, therefore we are trying to cut cost, for example overtime, knowing full well that everywhere that you cut will be affected. One thing is certain: "there will be no surplus".

There were several projects budgeted for in 2021 but were not implemented. Some of these projects are budgeted for again in 2022:

Which projects were not implemented? AND

b. And in what foreseeable future can these projects be implemented not in budget 2022? Which projects have been implemented thus far?

In 2021 no loan was given for capital expenses. We transferred all priority projects to 2022 despite that we will probably not get a capital loan in 2022 but we might get liquidity loans instead for specific initiatives like infrastructural projects and the prison.

Dossier Koningsrijks Relaties – All three have rejected the COHO and so no liquidity support is forthcoming till further notice. Did we get permission to have a deficit?

Decision delayed.

What does this mean for the repayment of the loans due April 1st?

Discussions will continue on the administrative level between the Ministry of Finance and Internal Affairs in the Netherlands (BZK).

Are we busy legal or illegal budget? Do we have permission to have a deficit?

The decision was delayed. The next meeting of the KCOM will be held either on January 14th or 21st. In the meantime, we will operate for the first three months of 2022 with the budget of 2021. The approval of the article 25 of the RFT is indeed necessary to approve this budget. As there is no approval in the CC, I would like to continue this debate.

The United St. Maarten Party-faction has taken note of the draft with interest. The faction would like to know if at present the government can pay the salaries of the civil servants at the end of June, seeing the Daily Herald reported that SS Knops stated the country will not be able to pay salaries without liquidity support. How much of the liquidity support is being used for the payment of the June salaries exactly?

Salaries can be paid by the end of June no liquidity support will be used.

Why isn't vacation allowance being paid when we notice that other entities subsidized by government are paying?

While I recommend the Minister of ECSY to address this matter as it specifically pertains to subsidized schools, all entities were requested to submit an overview of how they will apply the 12.5% cost cutting measures. The deadline for this in fact has passed. In line with taking cost saving measures internally, which includes the 12.5% cost saving in the salary packages of civil servants, Government is withholding 10% of the subsidy which is related to the 12.5% cost cutting measure which is to be applied to the subsidized entities. In addition, in the Ordinances that were brought to the Constitutional Court, it is stated for those entities to implement a reduction of 12.5% on the employment packages, however, these entities are free to decide how they implement these reductions, they can follow the proposed implementation of Government, being to prevent to cut in the actual salaries and so to affect the pension

build up, but these entities are not obligated to copy the implementation method of Government.

With the planned automation of the various departments in the finance ministry lead to redundancy in functions and if so, what is the plan for the redundant employees? Will there be retraining of staff possible or early retirement with all benefits etc.

An integral part of the Plan Of Approach is the aspect of human resources – the people in the organization- that are currently keeping the ship afloat. The reviews that are being done take into account the possible redundancy that will result from not only automating processes, but also changing processes, or changing the laws. Simplification of the tax system should indeed lead to certain tasks becoming redundant, but also new tasks will be created. Government will ensure that our civil servants who are part of this process will get the necessary training where necessary to be able to carry out the new or adjusted tasks. However, at this time we cannot say with any certainty if we will have many people that will face this situation. Therefore, this important discussion will be continued when we have the results of the review and we can plan based on the facts.

How will the NAf 9,5 million budgeted for vacancies be divided among the various ministries when it comes to the implementation of the country reform packages and the acute shortages presently in a few ministries?

The 9.5 budgeted for vacancies is a compilation of the various ministries and the filling of the vacancies are done based on a priority, as it relates to the implementation of the country reform.

As it relates specifically to the Ministry of Finance these are the details:

Ministry of Finance	budgeted vacancies
Stafbureau	2
financien	6
FZ	1
Comp	4
Inspectie	7
Ontvanger	4
Ondersteuning	4
Controle en Opsporing	1
Total	29

Why is the old Receivers office which presently houses the post office also not been finalized fully so the receivers can go back to full force?

The tendering process for the completion of the old receivers building is currently underway and submittal of bids is slated for June 29, 2021. Tentatively, the Receivers are scheduled to move back into the building by the end of September barring any unforeseen developments.

Is there a reason why the closure is at 2.00 pm for the receivers?

The Receiver's office closes at 2 pm: Tax payers are encouraged to pay their taxes online. Accountants pay on behalf of their clients in bulk with checks, the same cashiers who receive these payments, at the window or from the drop box, book these payments as well as those coming in on the bank statements, after 2 pm. To allow for sufficient time to process the payments as they come in and because the same cashiers are handling the window and the administration, the Receiver is closed to the public. Paying with cash and standing in lines is being discouraged. We have discussed this issue with the Receiver and the Head of the Tax Office; the consideration in this is whether this will indeed increase tax compliance and as such the income. I am very much in favor facilitating the taxpayer, at the same time, we must evaluate whether this will be counterproductive to the goal of increasing online payments.

What is the reason or logic to send out so many automated tax assessments that we all know are not correct?

Assessments must be sent out to non-compliant taxpayers to strongly encourage taxpayers to file their taxes. Only the taxpayers know what is owed, and if they do not file, then the Inspectorate will send an assessment, which is intended to remind the taxpayer of their legal obligation to comply with their obligations. See chapter 2 and 3 of the General National Ordinance of Country Taxes.

The paper, ink, postage, returns that cost lots of work to get it done properly versus having some persons review these assessments before they go out?

See answer 7. the assessments are not incorrect they are additional assessments imposed because the taxpayer did not file or it has been determined that the taxpayer did not file correctly. These assessments expect to have the result of the taxpayer complying with their obligation of filing and paying their appropriate share of taxes.

Does government presently have a policy to handle the outstanding tax collection seeing the pandemic we are in, or are we bullying taxpayers into paying or lose their property?

It is definitely not the intention to bully the taxpayer or for the taxpayer lose their property. Collection measures are taken and the tax payer's situation is handled on a case-by-case basis. We encourage taxpayers to file; do not ignore the assessments, the reminders or whatever other communication that may be sent to you.

Successive governments have contributed to the laidback approach to tax compliance. Maybe it's because of understaffing, or not having the right staff, or knowing that the data is compromised. Regardless of the reason is it reasonable to go from one extreme to another, whereby the tax officials refuse to make arrangements with tax payers and rather auction their property instead of seeking solutions that suit all parties? Minister do you stand behind this type of behavior and if not, what can you do about and what will you do about it?

The improvement of tax compliance is part of the Country Package and included in the Implementation Agenda. With regard to payment arrangements, the Receiver's Office has a policy in place to make payment arrangements. However, the first step is for the customer/the taxpayer to request such an arrangement.

Has any consideration been held in budget 2021 that the covid-19 liquidity support/loans have to be repaid in 2022? If not, what happens if the Dutch government asks for the repayment as per agreement in 2022? No reservations have been included in the budget for the repayment of the Covid-19 Liquidity Loans. As mentioned in my presentation the negotiations will start in the last quarter of this year. Liquidity Loans are not regulated; as such this is a new area for both The Netherlands and St. Maarten. We have been offered support from Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) with debt repayment negotiation; support we will be making use of. It is more than likely that refinancing of the loans will be required.

How high is the borrowing ability in comparison to the IMF norm of 45% of our BNP? Was this all caused solely by the liquidity support loans given to us by the Dutch government? Next table shows the estimated GDP development according to IMF. The second line gives the ceiling at a 40-% level and the third line the actual loans according to the budget (see Staat E). When the liquidity loans are granted we will be below the loan ceiling in 2023. If loans are not granted our loan capacity is seriously hampered.

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
GDP	1871	2179	2410	2622
Ceiling	748.4	871.6	964	1048.8
Actual	1080	1125.6	1113.6	1106.9
Liq loans		237	237	237
After grant	1080	888.6	876.6	869.9

One of the criticisms of the budget every year by the CFT is the missing year accounts. When will the parliament receive the year accounts for approval of the years 2017, 2018 and 2019?

SOAB (Stichting Overheids Accountants Bureau) has completed the audit of the 2017 and 2018. The General Audit Chamber has subsequently received the 2017 Annual Account and has sent their Memorandum of Findings to the Ministry of Finance for input, in line with the audit protocol. Considering we are now in the process of handling the budget and the same staff who are expected to respond the GAC are currently providing support during this budget handling process and are also meeting on the Country packages, the response to CAG regarding the 2017 Annual account may be delayed. In any event all parties, including the General Audit Chamber are working as efficiently as humanly possible to complete these annuals accounts. Drafting of the 2019 and 2020 annual accounts are being compiled.

When it comes to the 10% pension premiums to be paid by the political office holders, will this be included as part of the present 25% salary cuts or not. The 25% is already sufficient, as the pensions for political authorities are being paid through Government's budget. However, once this temporary Ordinance expires (no longer is in effect), based on Article 30 of the Pension Regulation for Political Authorities, a national decree, containing general measures, will be enacted whereby an amount is deducted from the remuneration of the political authorities in accordance with the deduction from the remuneration of government officials with regard to the pensions. This too contribute to a sustainable pension system.

The proposed Naf 10 million Covid related liquidity support is to be given to the St. Maarten Medical Center. From which liquidity tranche is this money to be received and provided to the medical center?

In its recent advice on the 3rd quarter, being the 6th tranche, Cft included an amount of NAF 5 million for the hospital in the liquidity support, to be decided on in today's KCoM. Most likely, this liquidity support will be granted after Sint Maarten complies with again new conditions.

How much monies are the government making available to assist the SZV to cover its premium losses for the year 2021?

Government is currently providing monthly advances to SZV to cover medical expenses of persons who's medical expenses fall within the OZR. That amount has been increased and stands at this moment at NAF 3.8 Million. This situation is not ideal, a structural solution must be sought sooner rather than later. SZV has been asked to provide a new calculation to avoid the bleeding. In two to three weeks we should have this information form SZV.

In the budget NAF 128 million was allocated as funds to support the COVID19 related cost. Is this number still accurate seeing we have not really received any liquidity support other than 8.7 million in January 2021 to handle most if not any covid19 related expenses?

This number is probably higher than we can execute before the end of 2021. It all depends on how the liquidity support will be made available by The Netherlands. For example, we have a backlog of 6 months with the execution of the payroll support program of which uncertain if we can finalize the whole of 2021 by the end of 2021.

When will the government bring the adjustment law to parliament to increase the salary border to NAF 10.000,- per month versus the present 5640,-. I believe it is?

The legislation is projected to be finalized by the first of January 2022.

How many more of the working population will then become SZV members? Which risk all will be mitigated by doing this adjustment for the healthcare funds?

The additional persons that will be insured are approximately 1500 persons. This will lead to an increase in the collection of premiums, which is expected to exceed the additional costs resulting in a positive contribution to the fund.

When we look at the "dienstverlening overeenkomsten" I notice the following: There are no amounts listed for any contractual works for the justice ministry?

If no amounts are mentioned then it means no amounts were submitted by the Ministry.

Will the amount of Naf 5 million taken up cover all the withholdings of the civil servants and other effected personnel be covered if the constitutional court says the laws aren't valid and must be pulled back?

Yes this will cover the withholdings.

When it comes to the capital investments I that we have some NAF 97 million guilders reserved for such. How much will truly be used this year and why?

At this moment we did apply for the loan to cover the capital expenditures, that is pending the approval of this budget. With the plans given and the questions to controllers within a year.

How many loans has the government stood guarantee for exactly and for how much and what effect this has on our borrowing capacity

Please be referred to the "overzicht gewaarborgde geldlening en andere garantieverplichtingen "(page 115) that is part of the budget book. The PJIA (3,4 and 5) are granted with money that is loaned by government as well. These loans are in the loan total and therefore burden the loan ceiling. Our Borrowing capacity is reduced because of the loans.

When it comes to long term loan guarantees the airport has saddled up the government with 218.1 million guilders on loans with about 182 million @ a 4.5%. While the largest amounts are the Trust fund and EIB loans primarily @ 4.5%, what does this mean for our borrowing capacity as country seeing the country is guaranteeing these loans?

The loan for the airport is a pass-through loan. So we register this as a loan on one hand and a claim from the airport on another. So the net result is zero. So no effect on our borrowing capacity.

When it comes to concessions I notice that the airport doesn't pay the government one red cent. In 2012 to safeguard there Moody rating the government once again extended their concession for 15 years. Why isn't government reviewing the concession agreement to ensure that the airport pays it fair share for the concession? This question will be referred to Ministry of TEATT.

Why is the BTP concession so low Minister when in reality all funds should be turned over to the government after expenses or did that change?

BTP is lawfully obligated to settle these amounts every quarter. They have a backlog in their annuals that caused the settlements to be delayed.

When it comes to the collective sector entities on the island, I notice that we have taken along only some government NV's and not all? Why is that done this way?

Not all entities are considered part of the collective sector. Government owned companies are independent and self-sufficient and aim towards profit making. Collective sector entities' main purpose is not profit driven.

The collective sector entities are used when we calculate our debt ratio for the GDP if I'm correct. Under other entities I see many government institutions listed. How many loans do they presently have and what effect does it have on our debt ratio?

Only the collective sector debts effect our debt ratio and not those of the other entities. The amount of loans of the other entities can be found in the annual reports of these entities.

When I look at all the participation government has in the various companies, it's subsidiaries, Saba bank etc., has there been a value placed on all of these assets individually?

The value of participations varies yearly. The value is presented in the annual accounts based on the published value mentioned in the annuals of the participations. Because the values are not affecting the budget (P&L) they are not presented in the overview on page 112.

When it comes to the water distribution management contract with NV GEBE are there any obligations on the side of government towards the contract. If so what are they exactly?

There is a water supply agreement of 1996. art 6 paragraph b states: the proceeds arising from the production and distribution of water are for the benefit of GEBE.

Art 6 paragraph d: In the event that in a given year, the revenues (..) are higher than the expenses (..), the favorable result will be reserved to cover shortcomings of future years. In the context of the approval of the budget as referred to in Article 4, the Island Territory SXM (NOW country SXM) can give instructions for the size and indications of the reserves as referred to here.

Who owns the water distribution network and how much is said valued at presently?

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of VROMI.

How much monies does the government receive as profit from the water sales yearly and what's the solution regarding the serious water network losses we have on a yearly basis? Who is responsible for such?

In 2013 the water company had a profit reserve of 35,7 million. The COM took a decision to withdraw 5 million guilders from the reserves for the benefit of government. See also answer by 28.

Who owns the sewage collection and processing plant and what is that asset worth in monetary value?

This question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of VROMI.

Why were the funds transferred to the country decreased with some Naf 580.000,- in budget post 2100/44110? What does this mean that moving forward we need to pay more for the integrity chamber?

At the establishment of Integrity Chamber it was agreed that The Netherlands would pay 100% of the expenses of the Integrity Chamber in 2020, in 2021 50% and in 2022 all expenses will have to be by SXM.

I notice we have NAF 22 million guilders in the capital expenses for this year to carry out the restructuring of the tax department. What exactly is going to be done with the 22 million this year?

The costs for the upgrading of the tax department can be categorized in investments in software, consultancy and training. Since this initiative has been included in the country packages, the whole approach has been vetted by our Dutch counterparts. The first phase of the altered plan consists of executing additional surveys that might bring new issues to the table as well as the need for budget adjustment. We have decided to maintain the same total amount as previously budgeted, until we have made the assessments and at such time will be able to provide the assigned amounts to each part. For now this is a general allocation for the restructuring of the Tax Department.

What about the DPO monies (30 million dollars) that is being placed in the hopefully yet to be established COHO for the same program if I am not mistaken?

In 2020 the DPO was stopped before it came to a pay out and replaced by a promise by State secretary Knops to make the same sum (NAf 30 million) available out of the trust Fund.

Are there any reserves in the budget regarding the court case that government had with a certain company in the event the claim damages or will these damages be passed on to the responsible minister who created this mess?

Nothing was budgeted pertaining to this matter.

When it comes to the income of the country I notice that our projections are showing an increase in about 10% sales tax (TOT) in income. Also there a projection for about 10% increase in wage tax. How is this correlation to the 3% economic increase of the economy exactly?

All taxes were estimated based on available figures (realized) of 2020 and 2021.

Has the projected income of US\$ 52 million dollars income for the island due to homeporting been incorporated in the budget 2021? If not why not?

This income is not incorporated in the budget 2021. For further elucidation this question will be referred to Ministry of to the Ministry of TEATT.

Will we get approval of the budget and the deficit as an approval from the KCoM

The decision has been delayed.

Financial relationship with the budget and PJIA, is the answer current, in relation to any loan for operational expenses

it's not a matter of now, it is in anticipation of any possible developments due to Covid that are unforeseen. To include it in the budget now, we anticipate any developments, so we do not need to start a new long legislation trajectory if the developments are negative, and solutions are needed in the short term.

What is the matter with the ordinance on the top incomes what needs to be changed?

Internal Affairs Netherlands (BZK) made a comparison between the regulations of Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten, now the KCoM decided to adjust the top incomes ordinance, basically on the following main points:

1. The temporary character of the Ordinance, KCoM wanted it permanent, not temporary.
2. An amount of NAf 30,000 for pension build up must be used to establish the 130% norm.

3. The definition of top functionaries must be narrowed down, as now it includes everybody, but it would be better to include only the director levels, the C-levels, and not all the employees.
4. It is not clear that the Government itself is included as an entity.

Any amendments will of course be submitted to Parliament, for Parliament to handle

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

Clarity is needed regarding the 3 million budgeted for road repairs.

Due to the current deplorable condition of our road network and the increasing costs of road repair, 1 million is not sufficient to make significant improvements to our infrastructure. The budgeted 3 million will serve to reach a broader coverage in road repairs during 2022. The costs related to road repair are covered by the operating budget.

Where are funds allocated for the Protection of the eco system and the physical infrastructure of the country.

It is the intention of the 2022 budget to allocate funding towards nature and environment related research as this has not been done in the past. Therefore, the policy dept. submitted a position paper on the 'Strengthening of local species protection'. This initiative will work towards our Nature policy goals as well support the SDG goals and Governing program goals.

The law that is needed to protect the eco system has not reached parliament.

For protection of flora and fauna species and the creation of nature parks and management thereof we apply the following regulations:

- De LANDSVERORDENING houdende regels inzake het beheer van de natuur en de bescherming van de daarin voorkomende dier- en plantsoorten and;
- the LANDBESLUIT, HOUDENDE ALGEMENE MAATREGELEN, houdende regels over het beheer en de bescherming van flora en fauna alsmede natuurparken These laws will be taken up into the new VROMI ordinance which will be sent to parliament.

MP Buncamper asked for clarity regarding what is meant by the protection of the physical infrastructure of the country".

By the protection of the physical infrastructure of the country, the Ministry is referring to buildings, roads sewage etc."

Regarding the 'protection' of buildings and constructions, the new building code provides up to date construction regulations, also to protect constructions from (more intense) natural disasters. Regarding the draft Sewage Policy, care for Public Health and the Environment is crucial. This policy document provides an outline of both the current and desired situation in terms of waste-water and what conditions are set for the connection to the sewers of homes or businesses in the light of the wastewater to be discharged.

Is Front street a part of these protections?

Yes. As mentioned before Front street has our full attention.

Is there any urgency to get the VROMI ordinance to become law soon?

Yes, there is urgency. The Ministry is working towards having this done as soon as possible. At the moment, the VROMI ordinance is being reviewed by the Council of Advice.

How much funds are allocated for the maintenance of the sanitary landfill and how

much funds are for the security of such?

Budgeted for the Maintenance of the Landfill is 300,000.- and for the Security Is 521,760. Guilders

MP Buncamper asked about the plan for the car wrecks project in 2022.

The Ministry of VROMI has embarked on a car wreck project in 2021, which will be continued in 2022.

The total cost will be determined based on the government unit price per vehicle and the quantity of vehicles that will be collected in determining the final project cost.

With reference to the collection of big trucks and hidden heavy equipment in the bushes, the services of crane trucks will be sought in collecting the wrecks.

Have any funds been allocated for the reforestation of the country's nature reserves when it comes to being in line with the SDG's we have committed too?

No specific funding has been allocated to reforestation. However, with the reinstalment of article 28a of the Landsverordening ruimtelijke ontwikkelingsplanning, civil works permits are needed for the clear cutting and felling of vegetation. That way we can better monitor and regulate the removal of vegetation. Conditions may be included in a civil work permit such as the replanting of vegetation.

MP Buncamper asked about maintenance dredging in 2022.?

There is No maintenance dredging projected for 2022, at the moment.

MP Buncamper asked whether funds have been directly allocated in 2022 for Government owned machinery.

No, funds have been allocated for these directly, the Ministry is preparing a long term "maintenance plan" which will be reflected in the future annual budgets.

When it comes to existing contracts coming to an end, will these be presently extended? Is such possible, seeing that cost control is best guaranteed that way?

It is the intention of the Ministry of VROMI to have all existing contracts re-tendered, however, due to the shortage of staff, the re-tendering process continues to be a challenge for the Ministry to execute in a timely manner. However, the staff are doing their best to meet the demand.

Clarification – how is the Trust Fund intertwined with the budget and - where did the 300,000 for maintenance come in from for 2022?

Projects that are financed from the Trust fund are separate and not included in the Operational Budget. The contract of 300K reserved under budget item 9210.43499.91202 is intended to cover the expected maintenance and repair costs in connection with the heavy equipment employed on the Landfill. The total amount for maintenance of the landfill is 3.4 million.

Clarification - Car wreck program – Is the pickup of the wrecks a cost for Government or is this paid for by the Trust Fund? Who would then repay the Government for the money?

The cost for this project Car Wreck is being covered solely by the Ministry of VROMI, Department of Infrastructure Management operational Budget.

Based on Council of Advice remarks in general ledger 41026 – outstanding advices and bonuses would be dealt with and be paid, but they must be accounted for in the same

year for tax income. If 2021 is owed, will it be on the wage card as income for 2022 as the Council of Advice is saying?

Salary costs are recognized in the year in which they are paid. This means that the income of the person concerned will also be taxed in that same year, regardless of the year to which the payment relates. Thus, indeed what is owed in 2021 but paid out in 2022, will reflect on the wage card of 2022.

[Domain land] – the income has dropped in 2022 vs 2021, yet we are giving out more land – 33,000 square meters but getting less money – can this be explained ?

The answer to this question was provided by the Department Head of the respected department. The decrease can be justified as an error in the calculation of the 2022 budgeted revenue, which could have been caused by a backlog in the registration of transactions in Domain Affairs' registry (MTO Book). Due to this backlog, the information that was extracted by the Financial Controller at the time would have been incomplete and would have resulted in an inaccurate projection of the 2022 revenue.

What are the plans for increasing of land based on – requests for persons that applied for long lease?

Considering the scarcity of land, the Ministry will be looking into the possibility of land acquisition as this is something that is not done on a regular basis. This will also be reflected in future annual budgets.

Burial land – Will the government consider the implementing of cremation instead of burial seeing the government has no more access to land?

The Ministry will consult with the Ministry of AZ on the matter regarding cremations.

When it comes to the public restrooms why aren't the restrooms in KIMSHA maintained properly by government and kept open based on the permits granted in that area to the various vendors by the government that have clients until I believe 11 pm in the week and 1.00 am in the weekends? Is it the policy or implemented norm that vendors must have their own restrooms?

As stated previously when it concerns the public bathrooms of Kim Sha, The Ministry of VROMI will consult with the Ministry of TEATT on the restroom issue and the best way forward in the interest of the vendors and the public.

Garbage collection,

In relation to your questions about the garbage collection contracts and the equipment availability for usage by contractors.

Having reviewed the amount of notices/ warnings issued in the past few months, yes they are going according to the contract through good communication with the contractors.

The Contractors are performing overall according to contract. Several Contractors are picking up household garbage **daily** instead of 3x per week.

Are all contractors living up to all insurances of the various aspects of the contracts and does the ministry have those documents in their possession?

As of recently all insurance documentation from all contractors is in the possession of the Ministry of VROMI.

Is commercial garbage part of the contracts or not? If not, are the contracts being executed correctly?

Contractors generally cover household waste for all parcels. Commercial garbage is only contracted by the government for the Philipsburg area.

Will the drainage of Beacon hill be finalized? And How will this cost to execute this work be covered?

Yes, the plan is to have this project realized in 2022. The Ministry intends to utilize part of the operational budget from the department of Infrastructure Management to execute this project considering the urgency to solve this problem for the residents and visitors of the Beacon Hill area.

How much funds have been allocated for the Front Street repair and wasn't this repair to be executed by the Ministry of TEATT in 2021? Can this be clarified, what's really happening?

The Ministry of VROMI is collaborating with the Ministry of TEATT to execute the repair works of Front Street. The emergency work is expected to commence within short. A public Tender Procurement still needs to be pursued, hence numbers cannot be communicated at this point.

How much funds have been allocated for traffic and directional signage in Front street?

The goal of the Ministry for Philipsburg, especially Front Street, is to upgrade the beautification of the area, which includes benches, trees and greenery, garbage bins, traffic signs and boulders for non-parking areas. Budget post 908 covers all signage and traffic or pedestrian related goods. The Ministry will hold a public tender for directional signage for all major intersections and roundabouts in 2022. The intention is to also outfit Philipsburg, the Ministry expects to utilize its entire budget for this purpose.

How much damages have the government suffered when it comes to knocked down light poles, traffic signage, guardrails and traffic mirrors which aren't insured? Is there anything possible to ensure this infrastructure in 2022 and if yes where is that covered?

As stated previously, a person who causes damage to public property with a motor vehicle is in principle liable to compensate for the damage caused. The government has to file to claim for the cost of the repair works, at the insurance company, along with a report from CARS and the Traffic Police. It is the intention of the Ministry to establish a plan of approach to deal with recouping funds for damaged infrastructure.

Will the government look into enhancing of the usage of alternative energy or in maybe the earlier stages the usage of LNG to ensure that we are also working towards combatting climate change?

Towards the topic of alternative and clean energy, it is the intention of government (ministries of VROMI and TEATT) to work with/hire Grid-Market to create a sustainable energy roadmap for Sint Maarten, which will largely fulfil the role of an update to- and implementation plan for- the National Energy Policy 2014.

Is there any funds allocated for the enhancement/repair of the social homes we presently have at Belvedere, Dutch Quarter and Sucker garden?

There are no funds reserved in the budget 2022, specifically for this program. The maintenance and repair of the 3 housing projects mentioned fall directly under the SMHDF. The contribution provided by Government is solely intended to relief those with lesser income with their rent. In the Revolving Fund agreement there is a clause that enables SMHDF under specific conditions to be able to apply monies out of this fund towards the maintenance of the buildings. The Revolving fund is not part of the national Budget.

Any indication of when the Planet Hollywood construction will begin and have they already received their final permits? Would be a great source of income for Government. What income is projected for that permit fee?

Planet Hollywood has indicated their intention to begin construction in the first quarter of 2022.

Are there any plans to use locals' land to develop beachfront living by means of condominiums which include parking in the Philipsburg area?

There are currently no plans to develop properties owned by locals to create beach-front living or condominiums in the Philipsburg area.

In the 2022 budget there is not much in regard to parking in general in the Philipsburg area, what are the plans for this?

The only solution is to build more parking, whether in the form of a parking garage or regular parking lot. Space has to be identified for this purchase and investment.

It is the intention of the Ministry of VROMI to collaborate with the Ministry of TEATT to establish a parking authority. The parking authority will be charged with the creation of more parking establishments in Philipsburg.

When will a drag-strip be constructed on this island, which is a big sports here and in the Caribbean and will enhance the income of government and reduce the reckless behavior of many bikers as they now have a place to practice their sports? Was the 5 million budgeted for the ring road intended to do that? If yes it has my full support.

Seeking proper location for the drag-strip is still ongoing. The 5 million that is budgeted for the Ring Road is not intended to create a drag strip.

Court case NV GEBE

Regarding your queries related to the court cases of NV GEBE and the employees, leaking of information and the position of Government.

NV GEBE has not been with a CEO, CFO and COO for quite some time. The Shareholder of NV GEBE is dependent on the SBOD of NV GEBE to provide timely information and pertinent feedback within the organization. The Shareholder of NV GEBE has tried, to no avail, to have the relevant C functions filled during the tenure of the former SBOD of NV GEBE. It is Government's hope that with the installation of the new SBOD members that the functions will be filled as soon as possible. As for whether NV GEBE is toxic or not that is not a position the Government can take as we are not aware, nor are we allowed to interfere with the day to day operations of the company. As this decision of the Judge in said case is now available, the Government trusts that the newly installed SBOD members will address any issues pertaining to any perceived toxic working environment.

In regard to your question relating to the statements published by the law firm of BZSE on NV GEBE

The law firm BZSE does not answer to the government but to Management, which as stated above, NV GEBE has been devoid of for quite some time already. There were certain perceived conflicts of interests observed by the former temporary manager who also took government to court or was a party in court cases. It is unclear how much money has been spent thus far on the case in question. The Shareholder is responsible to bring about peace and a functional organization. I'm sure that Parliament has taken note of the very public and very bitter back and forth in the media pertaining to this case. Here too, appeals, etc is not a decision of the Shareholder but of the SBOD as it relates to initiating court cases in this respect. The Shareholder respects the decision of the SBOD not to appeal the case thereby dragging this matter even further out and costing the company more funds. The manner in which NV GEBE can restore a proper reputation is not in the court of law but in it's functioning on a day to day. The Government trusts that all relevant parties can move on from this and show improvement where necessary.

Can the Minister see why at present GEBE is still having issues with booking payments of their clients which in turn lead to automated disconnection notices?

The NV GEBE operating system generates a dunning letter. This is an automated response that is generated at the time a late charge is applied to an invoice. This letter serves as a reminder of past due bills and not as a disconnection notice. A copy of this letter is attached for your perusal. We are currently in the process of adjusting the content of the letter to avoid misunderstanding by the customers.

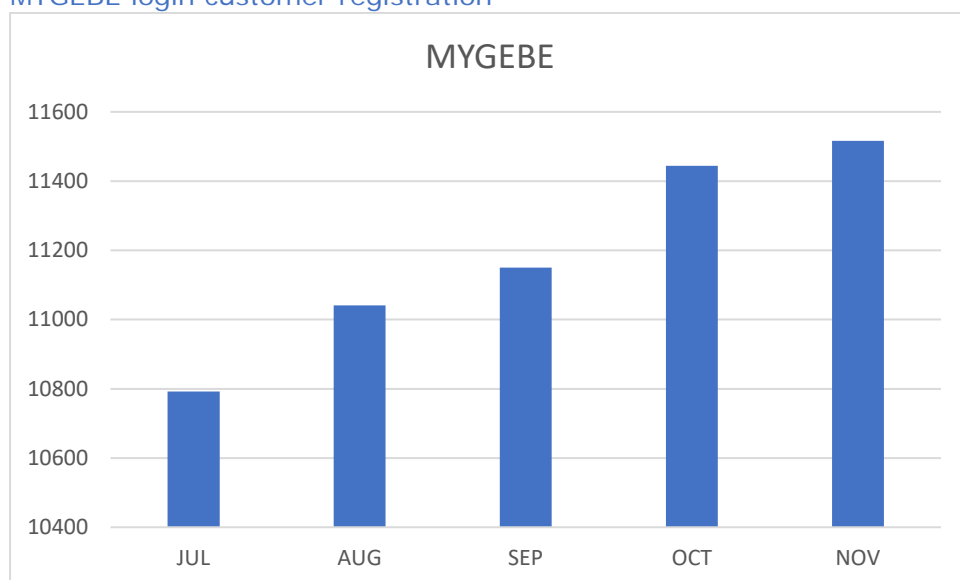
NV GEBE Portal

The NV GEBE portal for online payments is increasing monthly. Presently we have 11,516 online clients of our total 21,529 customers.

Viewing of receipts

Viewing the receipt online is currently not possible. However, payments are uploaded to the portal and can be viewed. The receipts are processed within 48 hours and then emailed to the customers.

MYGEBE login customer registration



Has the waiver cost now been incorporated in a permit format that started prior to my departure and what is that cost for the applicant of the permit? Please show all cost based on the various groups of waivers if such exist for the permit.

As mentioned previously, there are no costs for obtaining a waiver from the Ministry of VROMI. The legesverordening needs to be amended to this effect.

Demolition of old Government building - what is the status? I believe there was a tender with a winner and funds were allocated, but nothing has happened. If the tender did not happen or it was cancelled, can we get indication on when this will happen what is the cost as I believe it was publicly tendered for budget 2021?

The tender process of the demolition works for the former Government building has been temporarily placed on hold. The works are expected to be tendered and executed in the 1st quarter of 2022.

Has the government made a review of the lands made available to animal care organization in the past by the Zoo that presently still aren't being made use of? Seeing that the roaming animals is a serious form of animal cruelty, will the Minister of VROMI

make land available for an animal pound/shelter to a presently functioning animal group that can manage the center with the needed subsidy?

No review has been carried out for land in regard to animal care organizations. However, the Ministry will look into this matter based on a case-by-case request.

What's the added value of the hard surfacing of the ring road and drains section from the Prins Bernard bridge to the Salt Pickers round-a-bout but no round-a-bouts are included to connect the roads? So what's the use of the road honestly?

It is the intention of the Ministry of VROMI to have this project executed in phases, based on budget availability. The roundabouts will be executed at a later phase, pending budget availability.

The added value of this first phase of the project is that a "high power" connection will be created to and from Philipsburg. In a subsequent phase, the roundabouts will be constructed, whereas a connection onto the Pond fill road will be created.

The Ring Road will be executed in phases based on, budget availability, in accordance to the development plan of the greater Philipsburg area.

Ministry of Justice

Introduction The budgeted expenditure on the ordinary service for the other wage costs of the Sint Maarten Police Force rose sharply (121.55%) compared to the previous budget. In view of the budgeted amount, a link must be made to general ledger account 41039 which will be discussed below. In the general ledger 41039, the planned payments to KPSM were recorded retroactively. This was introduced at the request of the Minister in connection with the ongoing implementation of the Function Book of the Ministry of Justice in 2022.

How much funds are to be repaid to the KPSM officers for the adjusted salaries based on the new function books?

The process to identify the total sum that will be needed to be paid to KPSM OFFICERS is currently underway. A Salary Committee that is chaired by SOAB is in place and actively working to identify the total sum due. On December 10th, 2021 a soft report that includes an Action Plan was presented to the Ministry to further guide the steps that should be taken for the remaining balance of the retroactive payment to be made.

To ensure the correct payments are made a verification of the calculations will be vetted by the independent auditing company to ensure all is accurate before any payments are disbursed.

On the budget you will see that the remaining 50% of what was paid in January 2020, is 2.2 million. There is confidence among all involved that the total sum will not exceed this reserved amount.

Would it be more cost effective, while maintaining the same level of safety and security, to house the prisoners currently in Holland in a prison in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom? Would that be possible and safe? Bonaire was not mentioned by the Minister. Do they not meet the standards to house the criminals? Would be better to have them closer to home seeing the euro vs the guilders price.

Whilst we can all agree there is a significant difference in the daily rate per inmate per day between the NL and the Dutch Caribbean, it is equally important to take into consideration the Dutch Caribbean facilities are also experiencing capacity issues. As such, though close in proximity and cheaper in cost, when dire circumstances present

themselves, safety and security must take first priority. That was the mindset after Irma and must be maintained for as long as necessary considering all things known where it relates to HvB.

STATEMENT:

When asked about the questions regarding the FTEs in the Justice ministry, the Government answered the council of advice as following; By returning to the content of the action plans, although the internal structure is aligned with the current requirements, it has been ensured that the HvB Function Book does not contain any changes that require a change in the law.

Aren't all function books supposed to be approved by LBHAM as they describe the working contract of an employee with government? What changes and/or additions are being made that the Minister believes do not need to be implemented by means of an amendment? If there are more FTEs the organogram will change.

Yes, the Function Book of Justice will be established by LBHAM. As a matter of that is where the Function Book of Justice currently is as we speak. Complete with LBHAM at the office of His Excellency Eugene Holiday for approval and signature.

As it relates to the FTE's, the function books are an attachment to the Organizational Decree of Justice and as such, are part of the National Ordinance containing general measures. The additions of the FTEs require no amendment as these FTEs were part of the initial plan of actions for the Ministry. In fact, the Function Books are now in compliance with the agreements made at 10-10-10.

Are those employed based on these non-legislated functions afforded the same securities as those employed under the existing LBHAMs?

All employed at this time have been set in based on ranks which are covered by the Rechtspositie regeling in effect. All workers will receive equal coverage and securities with the ratification of the new function books.

Does this way of handling not leave those filling these new or adjusted functions vulnerable to the handlings of any Minister of Justice?

The vulnerability is not clear, however with the introduction of the Function Book an independent placement process will be undertaken with ample safeguards (waarborgen omkleedt). The decisions of placement will not be the Ministers choice but based on the recommendations per case. As such, no one is vulnerable to handlings of the Minister.

Joint border control at PJIA conform the Franco - Dutch Treaty"

What are the obligations of both parties regarding joint border control? Are Dutch and French authorities engaged in open communication towards realizing joint border control? Are they working with each other? Gendarmes need to be checking at the airport of people coming in, is this a future plan or right now in 2022.

In accordance the treaty of 2015 art 8 paragraphs 2&9 and the Q4 (2018/2019) work conference held in France offers the possibility to reach agreements on the basis of combating underground operations; mainly illegal immigration and also to develop current and future relations strengthening of authority forces of both countries.

However, it is expected that both authorities fulfill their tasks in multidisciplinary team controls that deal with migration on different ports and territories of Sint Maarten.

The Dutch and French are frequently communicating with one another to realize joint Border Controls. The SPAF (French Immigration) are working with the Dutch Immigration whereby they assist and are scheduled at PJIA).

This plan has been in place for some years now. An analysis was carried out by the operation team which consisted of officers of ALPHA team, Immigration and KMar on the bottlenecks at border points.

What role is the Netherlands supposed to play in border control and facilitating our joint border control?

As part of the protocol, Sint Maarten's border services shall jointly draw up an action plan setting out the objectives and arrangements for carrying out border control and detailing the resources that are needed. The Netherlands shall make financial resources available for the purpose of the action plan. The action plan is adopted jointly for a period of three years by the Minister of Justice and the relevant Minister(s) in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands will structurally make an amount of up to € 30.5 million available for support by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, Customs Netherlands and the Coast Guard Caribbean in strengthening border control in the Caribbean countries of the Kingdom. With these resources, the Coast Guard, among others, will be able to be deployable 24/7. In addition to the structural resources, the Netherlands also makes incidental resources available for investments in the equipment, personnel and facilities of the border services.

"Efficient and effective operations"

Does the Minister expect that simplifying and reducing the level and detail of the bureaucratic process involved in residence applications will affect the amount of applications granted or the duration of permission to reside in Sint Maarten?

Over the past year, IBP has worked closely with Central ICT in establishing a system to digitalize our appointment and the applications admissions methods. We need to modernize these systems as it would positively affect the speed and effectiveness of processing. However, I would have to err on prudence as I would not be able to say if these systems are changed if it would impact the application influx amount.

Simplifying and reducing the level and detail of the process involved in residence permit applications will not affect the amount of applications granted. However, it will reduce the duration of time it takes to process an application. In the past there was a significant backlog that intensified with COVID and the closure offices. However, the IBP department worked tirelessly to reduce that backlog significantly.

In terms of the duration to reside in Sint Maarten this is regulated with the LTU, and the Guidelines of the LTU.

How will this ultimately benefit Sint Maarten?

Fact of the matter is, overall compliance on Sint Maarten is needed. Over the years, our relaxed approach to most of our matters has developed into major issues and bottlenecks for us as a nation. We are a densely populated island with people and vehicles. That is a fact that no one can deny.

The efforts to properly regulate, streamline and simplify our procedures is expected to deliver not only efficiency but also gives statics and data that will supply all sectors within this ministry to be stronger with enforcement and maintaining law and order.

What is being done to address the continued importing of poverty? We keep importing people here for jobs that cannot afford to live here and they send half the money home. When the Minister goes into making adjustments into the entry into this country that this is taking into consideration.

I believe this question is similar to the one I answered above from MP Wescott. Indeed as a country we really have a comfortable practice of seeking foreign labor. It is imperative that provisions are made for those who we invest in with study financing are considered to want to return and contribute to the development of this country.

Over the years though the response too many encounter is answers such as being over qualified, lack experience and a number of other road blocks that eventually discourages the interest.

The Ministry of VSA being the Ministry responsible for the management of the country's labor market, it taking serious steps to mitigate the practice of bypassing local labor to import same.

By extension, the relationship between the labor department of VSA and the Immigration Department of Justice are streamlining their services through shared systems and correspondence. As such, as the labor department moves forward with enforcing labor laws to ensure prior to granting a foreign person employment, it must first be assurance that local labor is available to execute this task.

How does the minister intend to make her dedicated personnel feel safe?

By listening to the staff. The first matter that needed to be focused on was the Function Book and that was prioritized to the letter and is now with the Governor. This aspects brings with the stability which is a form of safety.

Next it certification and refreshers courses. Quite a number of staff wants education to be continuous for them. In response to this need, my team and I with the assistance of SOAB identified a Course Coordinator who will see to it that each officer of this ministry is up-to-date with certifications, skill trainings and much more that I believe will boost officers confidence in themselves and by extension confidence that their colleague equally qualified has their back in any situation.

Next to that, having proper gear and equipment is another aspect that the Course Coordinator and the HR department of Justice will work together to ensure in place for all officers within the sectors of this ministry.

Mental and emotional health is a part of feeling safe. As such, in the coming year, I will be looking into the installation of the specialized services needed to address the mental and emotional stress that officers endure in the line of work.

Is the Minister be offering Justice Personnel incentives in order to realize the type of organization she intends to? The pay is very bad which often leads to police officers looking for work.

On more than one platform, I have shared my intent is to hire the services of a qualified agency to execute a Risk vs. Compensation analysis of the Ministry of Justice. This exercise I deem necessary to identify what fair and suitable salaries should look like for the men and women who place their lives on the line for the protection of residents and visitors alike here in Sint Maarten.

What are the intentions with regards to managing and supervising the crime fund? Intended areas for these funds to be used or allocated to? Can these be used to combat crime or to facilitate those combatting crime.

Measure H.12 of the country package focuses on the strengthening of the management of the Crime Fund. To have this measure met as prescribed, the Law Enforcement Council has accepted the task of monitoring the projects and proposals that are to be developed to utilize the Crime Fund.

The purpose of the Crime Fund is governed by law with access to finances that is to be used for initiatives that combat crime and is in the interest and benefit to support safety and security for the country.

Seeing that many officers work for overtime due to their low salaries and the hardships in the country. Would the minister allow police officers work for 3rd parties and making use of their service revolver as that's the added value of the service for the business world? These police officers have a gun and there is a serious need in this country for armed services.

I have taken note of this suggestion posed by at least two members of Parliament and same will be taken under consideration starting with a professional study being done. In the interim, I wish remind all that that a policy does exist that governs this and if we really study the policy, the opportunity is there with guidelines to avoid conflicts.

For example, it must be clearly and carefully determined if an officer can use their service weapon to execute civilian/Private based services... This is a sensitive topic that must be carefully studied.

If this is a current and common practice and an incident occurs, let us ask ourselves who will be held liable?!

"A work environment which motivates good work ethics, morale and compliance"

The budget doesn't seem to have any posts related to achieving this goal.

Can the Minister elaborate on the actual intentions here, she intends to achieve them and where the budget supports this objective?

- A Code of Conduct exist for the Ministry of Justice and will be enforced – No budget is needed for this
- Each department is headed by leadership who has a responsibility to ensure their staff is working with good ethics, morals and compliance and all times – A additional compensation for this is not needed
- All officers take an oath – No additional budget is needed for this
- A Course Coordinator is coming on board in the start of the new year and will ensure officers get the trainings they need – Budget line Have ANG 800,000+ reserved for education. These courses comes with a level of discipline and this encompass good work ethics and compliance, etc ...

“Justice Chain that is sustainable and proportional to the needs of St. Maarten”

What are some of the enhancements Sint Maarten can expect to experience?

In the coming year, Sint Maarten can expect to see additions to the Ministers team. Persons with expertise in various areas and extensive backgrounds in justice, HR, Finance, Education and much more.

This is not a one man show and it is essential that persons with qualification and experience join my quest as Minister to address the various areas in this ministry that lacked attention for far too long and build a law enforcement chain that the officers and staff of this Ministry can feel proud to be a part of and the people of Sint Maarten can respect, appreciate and support.

For example, at the moment when a citizen reports a crime inflicted upon them, they need to separately request a police report of the incident from the chief of police, rather than automatically receiving a copy. Is this for example something that will be improved through automation or simplified procedures?

When a crime is reported at the police station, the person filing the report is given a copy of their statement. When a statement is taken elsewhere, the report is made up at the station and taken to the person for signature and given a copy.

The person can also be requested to come into the station to sign their statement and retrieve their report. A report of a traffic accident is made up by the traffic department and sent directly to the insurance company.

If an involved person wants to have a copy of that report, they will have to request it through the chief of police. Because of privacy laws this is the only way to obtain such a report at the police. The involved person can also request the report directly from their insurance company.

“Law abiding citizens”

What will be done to prevent illegal employment of foreign workers that is currently not being done? Blue has to be consistent on the street so we have law abiding citizens.

The relationship between the labor department of VSA and the Immigration Department of Justice are streamlining their services through shared systems and correspondence. As such, as the labor department moves forward with enforcing labor laws to ensure prior to granting a foreign person employment, it must first be assurance that local labor is available to execute this task.

Does the Ministry need to purchase new vehicles or have they already been acquired to execute their function properly? How many vehicles have been damaged?

Yes, various departments within the Ministry of Justice are in need of vehicles to function optimally. The wear and tear on vehicles are heavy and this obviously can't be avoided.

Where have the additional police vehicles been allocated in the budget?

The additional police vehicles has been allocated in the Capital Expenditures.

Description	SNA-code	Decade GL#	Prioriteiten lijst voor de komende jaren	Afdeling	2020	2021	2022
Ministry of Justice							
Computer Software	AN11731	1120	ReG-Tech Application Immigration	Immigration			441,000
ICT equipment	AN1132	1120	Hyper- V- Solution Application Infrastructure	Immigration			360,000
Computer Software	AN11731	1120	FIU SERT Portal 2	MOT			224,000
Computer Software	AN11731	1120	ReG-Tech Application FIU	MOT			283,000
Non-residential buildings	AN1121	1104	Phase 1_ Nieuwe Gevangenis	HVB		6,000,000	-
Non-residential buildings	AN1121	1104	Phase 2_ Nieuwe Gevangenis	HVB			31,500,000
Non-residential buildings	AN1121	1104	Multifunctional Detention Building	HVB			-
Non-residential buildings	AN1121	1104	Upgrading of the Simpson Bay Facility holding cells	Immigration			-
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Dienstauto's (5x) lease to buy or buy	HVB	150,000		250,000
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Dienstauto's (3x) lease to buy or buy	Immigration	150,000		150,000
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Dienstauto's (2x) lease to buy or buy	VOOGDIJRAAD	150,000		-
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Dienstauto's (2x) lease to buy or buy	Landsrecherche	100,000		-
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Dienstauto's (1x) lease to buy or buy	MOT	100,000		-
ICT equipment	AN1132	1120	ICT equipment for Summit	Landsrecherche	1,500,000		-
Computer Software	AN11731	1120	Summit	Landsrecherche	800,000		-
Transport equipment	AN1131	1103	Aanschaf autos	KPSM	161,700		161,700
Computer Software	AN11731	1120	APIS (per jaar 200)	KPSM	400,000		-
ICT equipment	AN1132	1120	Beveiliging equipment en system	Landsrecherche	200,000		-
ICT equipment	AN1132	1120	Beveiliging equipment en system	Immigration	200,000		-
ICT equipment	AN1132	1120	PC vervanging	MIN JUS	250,000		-
Total					-	10,161,700	33,369,700

How does the Minister intend to ensure that justice personnel maintain the “Friendly island culture” with both residents and visitors? In practice there is a different behavior to these groups.

Firstly, I believe for the most part, personnel in the various sectors of justice are already doing their best to maintain the Friendly island culture. However, to further boost their moral, I believe it is essential to address matters that have negatively affected these officers over the years. By supporting them with education and other professional support services that makes them feel like they are a member of an organization that appreciates, protects them and an operations that runs as it should, I believe we should see even more greatness.

When it comes to the data protection as part of the country packages I have a few questions;

We did not get answer yet if this can be done locally. And if so, how much monies are presently budgeted to get the data protection locally enhanced instead of using a kingdom consensus law?

Sint Maarten already has an existing National Ordinance on the Protection of Personal Data. Based on our current, a local supervisory body could be established. However there hasn't been any funds reserved on the budget for this purpose.

When is this data protection to go into effect?

The drafting process for the Kingdom Law has started. The date of ratification is dependable on several external factors (as in all legislative processes) and cannot yet be determined at this moment.

I understood that BZK made the funds available to make another Consensus Kingdom Law with regards to the Data Protection law as per the country packages. Recently while being in the Netherlands while at an expo Professor emeritus Gert Oostindie a well respected professor in the Netherlands in the field of colonial and post-colonial history, minced no words when he stated that Consensus laws are only made to Recolonize the former islands now countries. How do you see or understand such a statement? How does the Minister feel about the statement?

The statement is noted. As Minister of Justice and a citizen of this country, I recognize our constitution structure whereby I believe in the role and responsibility of each is clearly identified. Trias Politica exists for a reason, I believe its layers gives the opportunity protection on each level and those authorities of protection need to be applied when necessary.

I see that the justice ministry wants to create a Justice Boot camp in collaboration with the VKS to combat youth delinquency;

Who is it intended for and what is the objective besides the combatting of youth delinquency?

The intention is to give an opportunity to at risk youth as well as youth who is seeking another opportunity a chance to successfully increase their chances in the work force and be physically and mentally ready when applying for a of position within Law Enforcement.

This vision for readiness is through a "booth camp" training program for a period of two years. The target age is youths between the ages of 11-17 for at risk youth and 18-25 for second chance youth.

This booth camp training program will emphasizes on:

- Loyalty
- Integrity
- Discipline
- Perseverance
- Physical condition
- Respect

Has land already been allocated to build such an entity?

No, land has not been allocated as yet.

How much funds are located to start the preparation seeing there's NAF 60.000, - budgeted? What does this amount entail, is this for the plan of action or for the land? Maybe an option to use the forensic building in Cole Bay that is not being used or are we looking for something else.

The 60,000 Naf amount relates to the plan of action for the Justice Booth Camp. The plans for the Soremarr building which was damaged during the passing of Hurricane Irma is for the Law Enforcement Institute of Sint Maarten. As such other land must be identified for the Justice Booth Camp.

Who will be pulling this project and have funds been allocated to cover such? Maybe the commander of the VKS the former police officer can maybe partner before you get a whole committee together.

A member of my cabinet is working along with BAK (Ministry of General Affairs) in order to get the project off the ground. In addition to the VKS has also been consulted.

*Construction of the new prison is budgeted for NAF 31.500.000,-.

Has a final agreement been reached with the Netherlands and UNOPS? If yes for how much is the total contract for?

We have not yet arrived at a final agreement with the Netherlands and UNOPS for the prison project. When we do I will share this information with Parliament. With respect to what the amount of the total contract for this project is, I can inform you that the total amount included in UNOPS' most recent rule of law infrastructure proposal is US\$ 39,543,599.

Will the prisoners have to be moved to other countries while the building is ongoing and if yes where and for how long?

One of the components of Phase I of the prison project as noted in the UNOPS' proposal, is the installation of transitional facilities so called rapid deployment facilities (RDPs) for the accommodation of existing prisoners and pre-trial detainees in Sint Maarten. In its proposal UNOPS has not made mention of prisoners having to be moved to other countries while the building of the new prison takes place. As such we do not foresee large scale transfer of prisoners to other countries taking place due to the execution of building work, as we saw after hurricanes Irma and Maria.

*Retroactive payments for Justice Workers budgeted (H.1) budgeted 2.200.000,-.

Are the Justice workers going to be paid these retroactive payments in lump sums, likely causing many to end up in a higher tax bracket and now having to pay more income tax than if they had been paid correctly to begin with?

The agreement signed with a former Minister suggested the payments to occur in lump sums. The negotiations that lead to that decision may have involved tax considerations as the first payment was made without deduction of taxes as those were deferred for withholding in the second payment.

Will these workers be offered the option to receive recurring payments whereby they will not experience this climb in tax brackets, but still enjoy the benefit of their missing income over a period of time?

Relating to payments calculations and budget availability will largely determine when the payments can be made. So too will be any consideration based on payment in installments, however such a decision cannot be made by Government one-sidedly given the agreement at the base of this arrangement.

When it comes to ankle bracelets, I have a few questions:

Are the bracelets for all sorts of crimes or are they strictly for certain sorts of crimes?

The usage of an ankle bracelet, Electronic Monitoring (EM), can be used in different stages of a criminal procedure.

Firstly, EM can be used as a special condition of the suspension of pre-trial detention (Article 111 of the Penal Procedure Code). The judge can "ex officio", in their own authority, or upon the request of a lawyer or the prosecutor decide to suspend pre-trial detention. If EM is requested a special condition for such a suspension, the SJIB has an advisory role. The severity of the alleged offense and the possible risk for society of releasing a suspect on pre-trial detention into society on EM is taken into consideration when deciding on EM for the suspension of pre-trial detention.

EM can also be used as a special condition attached to a (partly) conditional sentence imposed by the court (Article 1:21 of the Penal Code). It is the judge who decides on the sentence and the conditions of a sentence. And therefore it is also the judge who decides if EM is a suitable special condition in relation to the crime committed.

Thirdly, EM can be used as a special condition of (early) conditional release (VI). In general, a detainee can be eligible for VI after 2/3 of their irrevocable sentence. The prison has an advisory role in the VI process. SJIB and the Central Parole Board have an advisory role regarding the special conditions of VI. In general, EM can be implied as special conditional to VI for all types of crimes.

How much does it cost per day to monitor a person wearing a bracelet and how much does it cost for someone to be housed in Point Blanche?

The cost of monitoring consists of the lease price of the ankle bracelet and the labor costs for Justice Personnel carrying out with one or more tasks in the EM procedure. The monthly lease price of an EM device is around \$300 per device per month/ \$10 per day. That excludes the personnel cost involved. The cost to keep a person incarcerated at the prison is approximately \$300 USD per day.

Who decides if a prisoner will ultimately be granted the right to be able to get an ankle bracelet? The Minister, the prosecutor or is it anchored in the law that if you adhere to these conditions you can get a bracelet.

The judge decides on the sentence and the conditions of a sentence. And therefore it is also the judge who decides if EM is a suitable special condition in relation to the crime committed.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

Budget post 6140

The budgeted expenditure on the ordinary service for other wage costs within the Sports Department of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport increases explosively (4788.56%) compared to the previous budget. The concrete reason for this increase was the correction to the scale of one employee with the amount of Naf 122.214,-.

What sort of corrections were being made for one such employee as that's about 10.000,- per month? Sport

The increase in other wage costs within the Sports Department has to do with the budgeting of an overdue correction of scaling for one of the employees. The employee has made a request to be placed in their correct scale and the Department is budgeting for the amount in the event that the process is completed and approved.

Most likely this will become a lawsuit if the correction is not made in 2022.

As it pertains to Ledger account 43450

The budgeted expenditure on the ordinary department for the insurance of buildings within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport now seems to be budgeted for the first time. This is in accordance with a decision of the Council of Ministers where Min ECYS has a budget of NAF. 1,133,420.00 over the years 2021 and 2022 should be included for the payment of the premium of the insurance of the school buildings (including school boards). Before Irma, there was a general/central insurance for the school buildings. After Irma, the schools requested separate insurances so that they can plan their repairs by consulting and negotiating directly with the insurance company after a hurricane or other undesirable situations.

Did the schools receive the correct amount of funds that they were insured for or were they underinsured?

Only (5) school boards received advance insurance funds for immediate repairs of the schools, these are:

Foundation for Catholic Education for St. Dominic Primary and Sr. Marie Laurence schools; Stichting Voortgezet Onderwijs- Sundial school;

Foundation for the Seventh Day Adventist

Foundation Academic and Vocational Education – The St. Maarten Academy Academic Campus; Division Public Education – and all Public schools with the exception of Leonald Conner School and Charles Leopold Bell School.

What was the procedure being followed in order for the insurance funds from the general/central insurance for school buildings to be released?

This question was deferred to Ministry General Affairs.

Have all the schools received any funds resulting from this general/central insurance?

No, all schools did not receive funds from the general/central insurance.

What have the obstacles been that have prevented schools from being repaired yet?

The obstacle for 19 schools listed under the Emergency Repair Program (ERP-1) is the required processes and procedures of operations that are part of the World Bank grant operations.

As it relates to the 7 public schools which were being repaired under the Insurance funds, the obstacle is that the contractor discontinued the works and we are busy with a new process for a new public tender for the repair of these schools.

There are talks about enhancing Culture and sport. Yet our facilities are either outdated, damaged, or nonexistent.

What plans are there to build the various government sports facilities for 3.5 million guilders? What exactly is being proposed and for how much?

There is currently no budgeted amount within capital investments for the repair of the sport facilities. However, there is an amount of up to US\$ 15 million was added to the ERP1 which will be available for the repair of the Sports facilities including school gyms and Community Centers.

Is a Cultural Center any place on the government agenda to be built or will monies be made available to upgrade the old cultural center and try to make something out of that or create a courtyard in the back where the artists can come and display some of their things?

The Cultural Center is also on the list of facilities to be repaired under the reserved amount of US\$ 15 mln.

We speak of sports tourism but I see no real swimming pools, soccer fields or any other needed fields and dorms being projected to truly enhance this diversification in the tourism field but simultaneously enhance the sport facilities on the island?

We do have two soccer fields, the Raoul Illidge Sports Complex and Belvedere. There is a challenge because of the scarcity of flat land and the availability of Government land in order to develop large sports fields.

When will the public library construction start and does St. Maarten government have to make any funds available for such?

The rebuilding of the Philipsburg Jubilee library is part of the Fostering Resilience learning program. The funds are coming through the world bank to the rebuild the Philipsburg jubilee Library. This undertaking is in the project preparation phase.

What is Government stance. What are the implications for the Sundial school once they start to break ground there – the noise.

The Ministry will follow the necessary protocol to ensure that there is no or little school interruptions.

Is there any intention to make our present court house our National Museum? Look at moving the Court house to Pond Island, it should not be in the center of town.

The Court house is a National Monument. At this moment, there is no relocation plans for the Hof van Justitie. There are discussions between the Library and Museum that the Museum will be housed at the Library.

When will we fix the St. Maarten flag at Marigot Hill? All flags are up, but not the Sint Maarten flag.

The Department will contact the Facilities management to have the flag on Marigot hill replaced.

MP Buncamper states that it is stated on page 28, "Required conditions are in place to achieve equal opportunities and accessibility to quality education, culture and sports for all residents of Sint Maarten".

Does this mean that the citizens of each district will have access to schools, culture, and sports facilities?

The Ministry's policy priorities are consistently in tune with the mission, vision and legal responsibilities of the Ministry ECYS and the vision is that all inhabitants will be afforded equal opportunities and access to quality Education, Culture and Sport.

If so, when will these facilities become available to the residents in their districts? With gangs, children cannot have access to other districts.

If the sports facilities and schools are not built in the various districts we cannot speak of equal opportunities for all. Do you agree with such?

The reference to equal opportunities for the Education Sector, in the 2022 budget, refers to several ongoing initiatives including the review to ensure that there is adequate funding for education. The introduction of policy to cater to students with special needs so that they are able to thrive within the regular education system alongside their peers and enhancing secondary education such that all students are provided with an opportunity to develop within their strengths and areas of giftedness. Human and financial resources are committed to realizing these objectives.

There are district multipurpose courts in Middle Region, Dutch Quarter, Belvedere, Cay hill, Cul de Sac, St. Peters, Cole bay, Cape bay and Simpson bay. All of these facilities have been refurbished in one way or the other in 2021 to ensure equal opportunities and access for the youth within those districts.

Does the government expect that all the projects regarding education that fall under the Trust fund will meet their goals as projected seeing the serious delays that are constantly being encountered?

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport expects that all the projects falling under the Trust Fund will meet their goals, albeit in an adjusted timeline.

The language of instruction in education is still creating an issue while English is the one language we commonly speak. Because of compulsory education, there are students that are attending schools that do not speak English that come in from other countries, what are the issues you are getting with this? Is this going to have an effect on cost in the schools and on the output of the schools that children can really meet the job market? Are the projected goals not being met?

The educational system in St. Maarten has been challenged for some time now with some students not speaking English when they reach to the island, however, these students are always assisted to help them to adjust to the educational system.

We speak of nation-building and identity development and I ask the following questions regarding such;

Many persons and organizations are having discussions to have a National Anthem. What is the governments' position on this matter?

The Government is open to the discussion on the National Anthem, however, no final decision has been taken on the way forward as yet.

Do the schools teach children about their own local heroes in the aspect of identity development of who we are?

Yes, lessons, topics and activities related to Sint Maarten's national heroes are found in the FBE Social Studies Curriculum under the theme " CULTURE AND HISTORY OF SINT MAARTEN / SAINT MARTIN".

Students are required to identify the national heroes and their contributions.

When it comes to the Concordia Treaty and our friendly co-existence of the 2 nations on 1 island, is this taught in our secondary schools under social studies or any other part of the curriculum?

The school boards are the competent authority responsible for the text materials taught in schools, once this is aligned to the curriculum. Over the years the various history subject have developed materials on the history of St. Maarten, which is taught in the schools.

Do we teach our children how our country is constitutionally put together?

The Sint Maarten constitution is included in the FBE curriculum for Social Studies provided by Ministry for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport for all primary schools.

Do the children know who they are? Which identity are we building if we don't know who we are?

This topic is taught in the schools under the subject areas for Social Studies in the primary schools and as History in the Secondary schools

When will a dragstrip be constructed on this island which is a big sport here and in the Caribbean and will enhance the income of the government and reduce the reckless behavior of many bikers as they now have a place to practice their sports? Cars need to be shipped, mechanics and supporters would come over, they will stay for some days – that all will generate income. It is just a strip of land that is needed.

Discussions have been had between myself and the Drag racing association regarding the provision of land. Once this is located and the process has been completed, the Department is willing to support the organization within budgetary availability.

When it comes to the orange industry I need to ask a few questions; While we are helping a lot with the enhancement of the arts we need a center for them to also perform and showcase their art. When will this become a reality for them?

This is an ongoing concern, however, until such time that land is identified and a new capital investment budget is established, upgrading existing facilities will be the first

step, the John Larmonie Center will be renovated, and the Cultural center has plans to upgrade.

Are the music schools supported adequately as I heard that our steelpan music school (Dow music school) is having serious issues with the outstanding rental and a shortage of income?

Indeed, the economic crisis has affected all sectors across the board. Most notably the creative sector. The department of culture supports all the artistic institutions through incidental subsidies for specific program that the cultural institutions identify as their urgency.

How is the film industry working out for the country presently seeing the hardships
Thus far the ministry has supported incidental subsidy request regarding the various projects.

With regard to promoting Social Cohesion I would like to know how this project/program will be accomplished and how much funds are allocated for this?

In collaboration with UNESCO SINT MAARTEN the Department is funding several in school programs with emphasis Intangible Cultural Heritage (IRCH).

In addition, the IRICH campaign is designed through the 5 domains of ICH to build building awareness of cultural heritage.

NAf 30.000,00 has been set aside for this project.

With regards to the psycho-social aspect of our children and teachers because of presently the hardships of the pandemic and economic hardships, what additional activities are being executed seeing the significant increases in cases in this field? How do we deal with this matter? After Irma, we did take out of the children.

The care teams of the various schools have been working diligently in responding to the psychosocial needs of our students. They are supported daily by specialists in external agencies such as the Student Support Services Division (SSSD) and Dr. J. Enterprises. The SSSD facilitated the roll-out of the Return to Happiness Program (Caribbean version) in schools, which was tweaked and executed by schools to respond to the psychosocial needs of students during the pandemic. Care Teams as well as SSSD staff conducted student check ins, well-being surveys, individual sessions etc. Students who are in distress are referred by the schools for individualized support (counseling etc) to the external supporting agencies.

With regard to safety on and around school premises what exactly is being done for such and have budgets for security being adjusted upwards accordingly? Are there any contracts, and are they covering the needs of the school?

The answer to this question will be sent in writing.

When it comes to the NIPA and the University of St. Maarten I ask if the needed fundings have been adjusted to ensure that the students can fit into the labor market correctly? And for NIPA to get the additional training labs NIPA needs?

The funding allocated to NIPA is for structural funding based on the Lb ham Bekostiging Onderwijs. Funds will be allocated from the capital investment budget according to the proper procedures.

In the development of a Ministry Management Information System (MMIS) a risk as observed by the Ministry is a lack of compatibility to link different government ICT systems.

What has the Ministry done to research software that is compatible with the various ICT systems used within government? Is the aspect of the education department being looked at, so is it taking along or will Minister go on a separate path.

Is this something maybe that can be worked on or advised by the 4 country consultation?

The approach in regard to the acquisition of the MMIS is aligned with the World Bank policy where factors such as the risk of duplication, overlap and incompatibility is minimized. The consultant hired by the World Bank together with the Ministry ECYS and the ICT department will perform a framework analysis where all considerations including compatibility with existing platforms or projects is taken up.

Ongoing and new policy initiatives for 2022 include:

Based on the Trust Fund financed Public expenditure Review Education:

Development of a New School Bussing Policy;

What are the issues with the current system that the Ministry aims to improve or remedy?

Is it a complete new system or was it an x-amount of things that need to be fixing?

The key dilemmas within the current student transportation system include the following;

- o There is no GPS monitoring system installed on buses to verify trips carried out and/or carrying capacity;
- o There are no security measures or regulations in place for school bus drivers i.e. need for certificate of good conduct, acceptable conduct and attire.

Furthermore, to date, there is no legislation and comprehensive policy regulating student transportation on St. Maarten. The adjusted policy seeks to remedy these shortcoming of the current system.

Development of a Summer School Policy; Is the Summer School Policy intended to act as a means to reduce the amount of students repeating an academic year?

MP Buncamper, Research indicates that summer school programs can have many goals, including youth development, college prep, and remedial support. As stated previously in the response to MP Emmanuel, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport (MECYS) of Sint Maarten has considered researching the development of a summer school program.

Which levels of education are being targeted or prioritized?

Primary and Secondary Education students are the target group for the Summer School Program.

What is the expected timeline for completion of this policy and how long before it will be able to be executed?

The expected timeline to have the Summer School Policy completed is in Q1 of 2022 and the goal is to launch the Summer School Program in the summer of 2022.

Development of a plan for reformed secondary education;

This will not be the first time we are reforming our education system. As we know, reforming the education system will not have the intended improved results without the proper implementation. The deficit of qualified teachers has been taking its toll on our education system and prevented it from reaching its full potential. What is the Ministry

going to do with regards to the deficit of qualified educators? How do we prevent this for the new system (getting qualified teachers)

The Professional Development Plan addresses the qualification of teachers by providing in-service Primary and Secondary school teachers with the necessary qualifications to teach legally on Sint Maarten.

When it comes to Special Education I have a few questions:

Is there a hard timeline or deadline the Minister can give for the finalization of the Special Needs Education Policy?

Once it is finalized, are the provisions already in place to execute this policy?

What is the expected timeline for execution of the policy once it goes into effect?

Currently there is no hard timeline in place as the detailed plan for 2022 has not yet been finalized. Once the Policy is finalized, the training of teachers in the field of Special Needs / Inclusive Education can be covered through the Professional Development Plan. Additionally, the Calculation Model for the Landsbesluit Bekostiging Onderwijs makes provisions for Special Needs / Inclusive Education. In addition, as mentioned earlier, 200,000 is budgeted under budget post 43489.60073 (Education Reforms) for Special Needs related implementation.

An assessment of the current system for funding education is ongoing with the goal of amending the Lbham Bekostiging Onderwijs in 2021 (G1 Country Package). An assessment of the current usage of funding was conducted by SOAB in the regards.

What were the findings of SOAB? Can we receive a copy of this report?

SOAB is in the process of finalizing its reports and therefore they are not currently available to share with Parliament.

To continue to develop policy and plans related to disaster risk education to reduce the vulnerability of the sector and to increase its resilience in facing various hazards.

As we learned during the course of the pandemic, sustaining ongoing curriculums through online learning presents its own set of challenges, such as unstable internet connections or lack of devices. How does the Minister intend to remedy these and other obstacles that presented themselves in 2022 and how much was budgeted to do?

Minister FIN mentions that there are some reservations made in the case pandemic continues, is there one for you, for online schooling?

With the pandemic not providing any certainty as to when it will be over, also considering we do live in a hurricane zone, and simply keeping up with the times.

In the event schools are made to revert to distance learning there are provisions made in the form of a Calamity budget to the amount of 1,5M.

Is a fully online or homeschool learning option to become available to our students? We need to look into a plan.

The Policy Guidelines for Distance Learning offer guidance and support to school boards who choose to utilize distance learning by outlining how the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport (MECYS) defines distance learning, how it could be delivered, and how it will be regulated during the delivery of online and blended modes of education. As such, fully online options for education could become available for our students.

One of the main plans and policies that the Ministry is focused on finalizing is the secondary education plan that integrates culture, sports and education programs, labor market needs, and innovative developments; What are the labor market needs that the Ministry has determined? Do u know what we need.

The Ministry recently launched an updated labor market survey which is currently being executed and the results will be available in the First Quarter of 2022.

You don't know who our students are and who is coming back. Most children are studying under DUO and not study financing from Sint Maarten.

Based on the privacy legislation in the Netherlands DUO is unable to share any data with the Government of St. Maarten. A 'doorstroom' research study using data from the Civil Registry, Division Exams and Inspection will have to be conducted to determine how many students from St. Maarten emigrated to the Netherlands without study financing from Sint Maarten.

While our economy greatly depends on tourism and hospitality, this is also a sector that provides predominantly lower income labor opportunities. Is the ministry, keeping consideration with the innovations that Sint Maarten's economy requires and also focusing on preparing our students to be able to contribute and thrive in a multi-economic pillar Sint Maarten?

The vision for the Secondary Education Reform is to create a generation of confident world class citizens who are critical, innovative, ethical and compassionate members of society who are able to positively contribute to the communities in which they live and serve at the highest possible level, and to provide secondary education graduates with the required skills and talents to compete in the local and global economy.

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

What is the government's intention to deal with the OZR costs? Is there a plan for the problem-solving issue OZR and SZV issue? Is there a law coming, when and how will it affect the budget?

Government continues to take strides, for OZR payments, the monthly amount has been increased from 3.8 to 5.3 million. However, to further curb the debt, there is an initiative law that we await from Parliament for health levy that will benefit SZV. In addition, the Ministry of VSA in conjunction with SZV have taken measures to curb the administrative costs and reduce waste through the pharmaceutical cost containment project, the e-health systems for pharmacies and general practitioners, the increase of the wage limit for ZV/OV to 120,000 Naf, the merging of all funds at SZV, and conduct national health reforms which will significantly reduce the administrative costs of SZV.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

We keep talking about positive effects projects have on the budget 2022: airport and hospital. How these projects will have a positive spin-off. Hospital not built yet, airport still in process. Maybe upon completion, it will have a positive economic spin-off. It needs to be clear.

For 2022 the positive spinoff of the reconstruction will be predominantly driven by employment of local workers, cooperation with several local construction companies, and with it, supporting the livelihoods of many st. Maarten families. As part of the reconstruction, we also worked on several business improvements and optimizations which will have a substantial impact on our bottom line.

Gaming Industry Board is being pushed to 2023, why. The income-generating measures will not be supplemented with anything. We lose millions of years from the casinos, collect those monies; we only need 3 million for the senior citizens. Don't see that reflected.

The Sint Maarten Gaming Authority, as it is now known, is a priority for the Ministry of TEATT and the Government. It is one of the reform measures in the Country Package, under H2. A Plan of Approach has been drafted and approved in August 2021 by the Government of Sint Maarten. Work on the action items in the Plan of Approach is ongoing by civil servants. An official workgroup is pending approval in order to execute the Plan of Approach.

PJIAE needs a loan to finalize a project, how big is this loan, who is going to guarantee this loan? and what effect does it have on the GDP if the Government has to stand guarantee for this loan.

Sint Maarten will receive an additional Grant of USD 20 million which will be transferred to the airport as a loan from the Government to the Airport. This additional money is to cover the increasing prices in the world-market for all kind of materials and deliveries and for some contingencies. For country Sint Maarten this does not create any additional debt.

For the reconstruction project, PJIAE has expanded the loan with USD 20 million to bridge cost overruns and also built in a standard 15% variation.

PJIAE is also refinancing the current 2012 indenture of \$143M. Today the open amount is \$70M.

No Government guarantee is needed as PJIAE is not part of the public sector as defined in the Kingdom Law of Financial Supervision, this loan will not impact the interest norm.

Diversification of the economy and the tourism product: 50 sth page report on the diversification of the economy, what happened to this report and where is it elucidated in this budget or is it not included. Can it be explained how the economy will be diversified and where is the monies coming from to do that?

All existing reports were used to determine a list of economic diversification areas, which have been laid down in the Draft Investment Policy and Diversification Strategy, which is presently under review.

A few key outlines for further diversification include:

- Culinary and Agri-tourism developments
- Marine industry, getting a full understanding of the economic impact of the yachting industry in particular and the possibility of getting our locals involved in the marine auxiliary services.
- Film Industry, we have received interest in the field and will be further exploring options in 2022.

The available funding that can be used towards economic diversification efforts is roughly NAf 260,000, from the subsidy budget posts for Investment promotion and MSME (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprise) development.

This also involves getting our creatives involved and helping to bolster the overall economy by truly integrating them to the overall product experience. This includes certain collaboration between sectors such as yachting and agri-tourism for example so that foreign exchange earnings can occur.

How much money for each stimulus will be given? Break it down in tranches; tourism, homeporting, banking. What will it cost us?

Tourism budget allocated for diversification is in the amount of NAf. 2.500.000 in:

- product development - a) Eco-tourism, b) Cultural tourism , c) Film tourism, Art tourism
- Marketing and sales a) MICE, b) Culinary, c) Wellness, d) Honeymoon and Weddings
- Homeporting - a) Cruise conversion, b) regional marketing (to direct business to SINT MAARTEN)

Budget post 8010

This budget post is increased by some 1506.1 % within the ministers cabinet budget on "other wage cost" and by some 101.56% on the total material cost by the cabinet of the Minister. The reason given was to hire external consultants to execute works within the cabinet and in return does not fill one of those personnel slots.

Which tasks are being outsourced and why is it necessary to outsource if ministries are designed to allow each minister to place competent persons in their cabinet in order to carry out the tasks designated to their ministry?

Looking back on all the pending initiatives within the Ministry, we identified the lack of legislative manpower as an improvement area and in our opinion, this additional budget will give room to draft and finalize legislation on important topics such as civil aviation and the tourism authority.

Due to the timelines within the measures of the country packages, there is constant need for additional support to swiftly execute matters in the country packages. The implementation agendas will only be released in a quarterly basis so room needs to be made for unforeseen support that may be needed to execute the reforms.

Budget post 8260

When the government answered the Council of Advice regarding the serious rise of the material cost by the department by the department of Civil and Maritime department that this was based on the motion of MP Rolando Brison to hire experts to assist with the shortcomings that were found during the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) audits. What were the shortcomings that were detected during the FAA- and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) -audit? And how they intend to clear them up. It requires specialized persons in that department.

The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) audit in 2011 and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) audit in 2019 were carried out on Curacao. The deficiencies were directly related to Curacao. St. Maarten was not directly audited, however because in 2011 St. Maarten did not have any staff other than the director and had a signed agreement with Curacao, Sint Maarten was also placed in CAT 2.

St. Maarten Conducted a "nulmeting " (zero measurement) in November 22-26, 2021 by the Netherlands and the Civil Aviation and a report will be presented in January 2022. An action plan will be presented at that time.

The "Nulmeting" identified some areas that need to be worked on. These areas include:

- Legislation
- Organization
- Personnel Licensing
- Flight Operations (OPS)
- Air worthiness (AIR)
- Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA)

Some of the Specialized areas will be done by the Netherlands directly in conjunction with the current Civil Aviation inspectors, Policy and Legal Advisor and some areas may have to be outsourced which will be identified in January 2022. This amount was allocated towards Airline development, OTA (**online travel agency**) coop marketing, special events and increase in marketing initiatives in the various regions especially USA, Canada Caribbean, and Europe.

How much additional funding has been made available to enhance the openness of the country and that tourists are welcome seeing the government talks about trying to increase it? Are we putting in extra money to try to tell people that we are open, and

you can come? We need to be cautious with the message we send. How much money have we invested to bring people to our shores?

Yes, the marketing budget has been increased by approx. Naf. 3 million with the goal of increasing tourism arrivals and tourism-based income.

We are not post-covid therefore we need to continue to emphasize the safety aspects of things, so that we can continue to remain open and invite people to our shores.

What tourism plan are we working with seeing we are planning to develop a new one for 2022-2027? Are we using the old plan, are we revamping the old one?

We are speaking about a new 10 years tourism master plan with a review in 5 years. The prior master plan will also be reviewed when creating the new plan.

The pre-clearance will cost the country how much exactly and how will this be paid for budgetary wise seeing our constant deficits? In Aruba it is a separate building that is run by Americans. What are we giving up and what is the added (financial) value. Will we get more tourists, is there a study that shows this?

The capital expenditure estimates vary between USD 60 and USD 90 million, depending on factors such as the size of the US preclearance terminal and USD 6 – 9 million in operational expenses, also depending on the size of the facility.

A study carried out by the Central Bank of Curacao and St. Maarten shows that increased tourism is one of the benefits of US Preclearance, I quote: " Improved service levels, reliability and/or lower prices and reduced wait times will increase passenger demand to Sint Maarten. Similarly, lower costs may make new services viable, increasing tourism." unquote.

In that same study, the Central Bank of Curacao and St. Maarten estimated a 10% increase in US tourist passengers due to the US preclearance facility. This 10% increase is translated into 57 million guilders (USD 32 million) additional foreign exchange revenues.

To conclude on this point, the US preclearance discussion should be held from a holistic standpoint, the next steps include finalizing the workgroup, having an independent review over all studies carried out prior, and having an objective conclusion where USPC is concerned.

Are we willing to increase the travel tax to the island not tied to the airport departure tax or the head tax at the harbor so income can be generated accordingly for the country? Is the Minister willing to entertain some kind of travel tax?

It is government intention to always look for rational ways to increase revenues as it relates to the tourism/travel sector and at the same time maintain our competitive advantage within the region.

Wasn't the St. Maarten Tourism Authority already set up and running, but came to a halt? If yes, what exactly are we now setting up once again? There was a board, what happened to that organization or are we creating a complete new organization.

The past structure that was developed into a foundation did not materialize in the most effective and efficient way. It became dormant and was abandoned by one of the former ministers.

We are currently studying best practices such as Aruba with their Aruba Tourism Authority which is a so-called autonomous agency (ZBO). We are engaging external legal consultants to draft the legislation, in line with the best practices of Aruba.

The diversification of the economy with regards to agriculture, Sports Tourism and the Orange economy are all listed but budgetary wise I don't see funds available to realistically execute such. What are the plans regarding these diversifications, and can I

receive a breakdown per sector to be diversified? A price tag should be added to each component.

The Ministry is making plans to enter into a partnership with an agency desirous of acting as an interim investment promotion agency to execute the key policy objectives of the investment policy and diversification strategy. A proposal was received recently and is currently under review. The Ministry has allocated a budget of NAf 180,000, which will be used to promote all diversification areas.

Presently the government has absolutely no real plans on how agriculture can be exploited in such a way that it becomes self-sufficient;

Will the government reading its food security and pricing policy have the willingness to work with the University of Wageningen to assist the country in getting a plausible plan made to execute the agriculture exploitation like is presently being done in Curacao, Aruba, Bonaire, Statia and Saba?

Yes, in fact, on chapter 9, of the Ministry's draft Agriculture Policy, we also identify a partnership with the University of Wageningen and the Caricom Agro-organizations as one of the key recommendations towards sustainable agriculture development on the island.

It states:

There are various agricultural organizations within the region as well as the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands and the University of the West Indies, who can assist with capacity building. Together with the departments of Kingdom & Interior Affairs and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of TEATT can arrange for the necessary educational opportunities in the field of agriculture, agri business and related trainings for industry workers.

Is any money budgeted for this possibility and if not, will we see if the Trust fund can accommodate this study?

We are not yet sure what the cost would be, but the Ministry has a budgeted subsidy amount of NAf. 250,000 for agricultural related projects, which this could fall under. If additional funding is required, then we can explore external/ additional funding sources.

Why didn't the ministry ask that the enhancing of agriculture exploitation and legislation was made part of the country packages reform to ensure we do this instead of talking about more once again?

From my review It appears it was not a focal point during the establishment of the country package however, it is a priority of the ministry.

How many jobs does the Ministry believe will be created once we move into agriculture in the form of food security for the country?

In order to answer this question, we first need to ascertain how many people are currently employed in agri-businesses. We are looking into the possibility of using the census to get this data, where it asks persons to describe their profession.

How much funds have been made available for the fisherman to enhance the fishing technologies and make proper usage of the Saba banks (which we own for about 18-20%) to catch our fair share of needed fish and drop the cost factor? This area has the most fertile ground for fishing. Can we come to an agreement with the Netherlands to increase the methodology of fishing and work with Saba and Statia. Can Minister look into this to see what can this mean for us.

We can most certainly look into this. As mentioned prior, the Ministry has a subsidy amount of NAf. 250,000 for agricultural related projects, which also includes projects related to fisheries and livestock.

Has the Ministry thought of organizing the local farmers and fishermen in a CO-OP to ensure they can sell their product while also protecting our market for them? Similar is done on the French side.

We also agree with this proposal. This is identified as a medium to long-term strategy in the draft policy. We first need to understand how many agri-businesses/ agriculturists are on the island, what they are growing/ producing and then we can create coop programs with the goal of gradually reducing the level of imports.

Why are we not creating a mandatory training for customer service for all employees in the tourism industry which includes all sectors in the economic sector instead of a training for those interested? These persons are the ambassadors of the island.

The Ministry of TEATT/ The St. Maarten Tourism, Bureau will be collaborating with the St. Maarten Service Training Academy, SSTA, who presented a proposal for improving the users' experience, by providing a History, Culture and Tourism course, to increase the knowledge of St. Maarten. This will ensure that everyone "Speak in One Voice," while simultaneously enhancing service delivery.

The objective of the course is to:

(A) Provide credible information

(B) Whilst enhancing communication skills on a technological platform with artificial intelligence.

(C) The graduates of the course will become Officially Authorized St. Maarten Ambassadors and Specialists. Enhancing historical and cultural knowledge and economic skills about St. Maarten, coupled with communication skills, will all allow participants to tell the St. Maarten Story with pride and confidence in a standardized manner.

Therefore, better equipping them to engage visitors effectively and with one voice as St. Maarten and the St. Maarten National Brand rebounds.

This is scheduled to commence by Q2 2022.

In order for this to be sustainable, there has been initial discussions to have this included as a requirement for taxi associations that work with our ports of entry.

How exactly are we going to strengthen and promote the yachting industry here in St. Maarten as its not clear to me?

International organizations like the IMF and World Bank have identified the Yachting Industry of St. Maarten as a potential second pillar in the economy. Much focus is placed on the Blue Economy.

An Economic Impact Study is required and being discussed with the relevant stakeholders and the Marine Trade Association to better understand the needs and growth potential of this industry to assist with Strategic planning.

Plan for 2022 is to continue to develop and promote the industry in partnership with the marine and yachting industry.

When it comes to the getting of Dutch travelers to the island I notice that it's not yielding much results when I notice 1 KLM lands here every few days but 2 Air France flights land here daily, while KLM and TUI land in Curacao daily? Maybe it has to do with our image that we get less Dutch travelers, Sint Maarten House needs to look into fixing the image of the country.

It is only in Q4 of 2020 we started with the representation in Europe that comprises the Benelux, Germany and Scandinavia, so we are monitoring the impact and success of

those initiatives. Continuous dialogues are also going on with KLM/Air France, and TUI. Dutch travelers also make use of Air France when travelling to St. Maarten. Last week, St. Maarten Tourism Bureau organized an introductory call between the PR firm in the Netherlands and St. Maarten huis to establish an effective communication policy with the PR firm and collaborate on projects for the Destination and the St. Maarten Huis. It was established that regular calls will be held and a plan moving forward will be developed.

- A National Awareness Campaign was carried out which had an off and online component (outdoor signage and social media marketing activation). This also included a prize giveaway where 1 person won a trip to St. Maarten.
- TUI cooperative marketing campaign, whereby focus was placed on stimulating bookings
- Attended events to meet trade partners and promote St. Maarten.
- OTA (Online Travel Agency) campaigns were carried out with TIX.N and Holiday Guru
- Advertorials were also done by publications which were a direct result of our Group Press Trip
- Every month the team distributes a trade newsletter, highlighting things to do and the latest news from St. Maarten
- The Dutch social page is also updated on a weekly basis to inspire and inform consumers

How and what is the government going to do to create ecotourism on the island as this is just written but no real explanation at all? How much funding for the development of this sector is being made available in 2022? Which areas are you looking at?

The St. Maarten Tourism Bureau recognizes the importance of Ecotourism / Community Based Tourism, as a form of tourism that seeks to empower communities to manage tourism growth and achieve community aspirations relating to their well-being, leading to positive, social and environmental impacts.

- 1) With that said, in 2019 invitations were extended to entities that work in Eco-Tourism field to participate in the FCCA Trade Show to further raise awareness on eco-tourism and diversification of the tourism product on the island. These such initiatives will continue with close collaboration with the Tourism Bureau and Port St. Maarten.
- 2) Other aspects on bringing awareness on eco-tourism program, the St. Maarten Tourism Bureau in collaboration with the Culture Department will be supporting an awareness eco-tourism video series produced by Spaceless Gardens that will focus on keeping our locals and overseas visitors culturally informed on Agri-Cultural development trends. This project is currently ongoing. This is to be completed in Q1 2022.
- 3) As part of the community based & ecotourism program, the St. Maarten Tourism Bureau in collaboration with Culture Department will be creating a patch community garden at Pasture Piece Bed & Breakfast. The NIPA and the St. Maarten Vocational School students' will be participating in this project. This project is currently ongoing and will be completed in Q2 of 2022.

Has the strengthening of the investment climate and the creating of the investment opportunity as stated in E6 yielded any possible results based on the amount of funds made available? Is there a positive growth, or not much growth is seen, what do u expect in terms of growth?

This project is still in the research phase. We are presently discussing the proposed recommendations, so it is too early to indicate what the results of the E.6 measure are. Implementation is scheduled for first quarter 2022 and we will be happy to provide an update once we are further along in the process.

When it comes to the compliance of the civil aviation of the country to ensure that we can regain our Category 1 status it needs to be clear how much funds are needed and how many persons need to be hired with which qualifications exactly to ensure we can meet the ICAO shortcomings? Civil aviation does not have the independency that is needed for that entity. Will more be done than just hiring people.

- Shortcomings within civil aviation are identified as part of the measures in the country package, number B3. Support by means of manpower and budget is part of the country package.

- There will be a capacity study done that will determine the number of staff that the department needs. In January 2022, the Ministry of TEATT will be focusing on the Structure to determine the number of the FTE's and remuneration of the staff for the department.

As it relates to the statement that the Civil aviation does not have the independency that is needed for that entity, the study will also indicate if a structural change or new framework, to ensure independency is needed.

When does the government expect to actualize the National Aviation Ordinance and what cost are allocated to such?

The Aviation Ordinance must be updated and will be done during the ICAO update as per January 2022.

How many more business licenses does the government believe they can handle once the procedures to get a business license have been simplified? And how much does it stand to make as additional income?

Currently it takes approximately 2 months to process a business license. It is the government's aim to have a license completed in 2 weeks, looking at best practices within the region.

Which will equate to streamlining the process and other possible revenue generating scenario. referencing what is possible for example in Curacao.

Therefore the main intention is to improve the overall service of processing the licenses and to realize the benefits that will come with this.

Who or which department will be put in charge to make the necessary amendments to certain food prices, oil prices and bread? What do you plan to get out of this?

The department of Economy Transportation and Telecommunications (ETT) is responsible for the aforementioned. They are currently working on research and having discussions with major food importers to provide their findings and recommendations accordingly.

There are plans to enhance arrivals to the island by marketing in various parts of the world. Destinations such as the USA, Canada, Europe, South America and the Caribbean are mentioned. When we compare the cost to travel within the Caribbean to traveling to the USA we see that it is less expensive to travel from the Caribbean to the USA.

Are there any plans to make WINAIR the number one Caribbean airline, by offering (connecting) flights from Caribbean islands to St. Maarten?

Preparation for a substantial cooperative marketing campaign with WINAIR in the amount of NAf. 250,000 is being finalized to commence in Q2 2022 to promote the Caribbean region as WINAIR.

Can we enhance our marketing strategies in the Caribbean? Yes, STB will be putting out an RFP for a local/regional marketing entity to enhance the WINAIR cooperative campaign in order to increase tourism arrivals from the region. This includes also promoting St. Maarten as a homeport for cruise vacation.

Can make St. Maarten the shopping mecca of Caribbean again.
Yes, it will be part of the marketing initiative to attract the region to consider the destination for shopping.

Where in the budget are the cost allocated to have the law amended to ensure that cruise ships can open their casino's once in port after 5.00 pm and their stores after 6.00 pm once the ship is still in port?

The laws of Sint Maarten are applicable to the cruise ships, while berthed at the harbor. Since the Gaming ordinance does not provide detailed information on the granting of the permit to operate games of chance, the 2011 casino policy: Rules of the Games was established. In principle it is possible under our laws to allow cruise ships to open their casino's and stores, however, if we want to clearly regulate the different possibilities for specific situations, we would have to change the law or policy. Under the TEATT cabinet additional budget for external legislative support was created.

Does the Minister believe that keeping ships longer in port will enhance our night life in Philipsburg and what projected income does that mean for the country? A change in the Gaming Law is needed to 'ontheft' the cruise ship and allow them to open the casinos. I agree with this statements and believe it will be beneficial for the greater Philipsburg area. Changing the law involves some tedious technicalities as multiple ordinances have to be amended at the same time, but as mentioned, we have budgeted for external legislative support and will make sure these laws are amended as soon as possible.

Fuel clause pricing by GEBE is determined by the Ministry of TEATT. GEBE also indicated this.

This responsibility does fall under the Ministry of TEATT and in 2022, we will have this fuel clause calculation investigated.

How is it that the fuel pricing changes so often compared to other islands around us or is that just our imagination? Can we see the calculation? The French side does not have this issue.

Since the start of the pandemic, the price of fuel has been extremely volatile, like most other commodity goods globally. Taking note of this, the Ministry changed its position to make more frequent, small, real-time adjustments, rather than waiting a period of 4-6 weeks to adjust, which in our opinion would be disadvantageous to the community.

Lately, we have noticed a downward trend of global fuel prices and we expect this trend to be felt on Sint Maarten for the foreseeable future, as you would have seen in the last two price changes.

What agreements are there being made regarding the sale of fuel at the harbor and what is the share for the government in this business compared to the other stakeholders? (think on port, seller share etc.)

Only the Port is allowed to sell fuel out of the Port premises.

The Port is fully owned by Country Sint Maarten, any profits from the fueling will therefore be for the benefit the Country.

The Port focuses on fuel sales to smaller cruise vessels and other very large transit giga yachts that otherwise cannot be serviced in St. Maarten
TOT exemptions exist in the law with regards to fuel sales out of the Port area for certain categories of vessels. The Port is also actively discussing this with the Tax Inspectorate to ensure compliance with the law (and remedy if this is necessary)

Who is the fuel operator at the port and are any TOT taxes collected from that company? Why were they exempted. Why are we allowing certain exemptions in this period of time.

Bunkering of larger cruise vessels is done by fuel barges out of St. Eustatius . The Port receives a commission on this based on the volumes bunkered (in accordance with its tariff structures as deposited at the Court of First Instance on St. Maarten).

Exemptions like on ToT are part of our tax legislation. I understand that the legislation is under review, so I will ask my colleague minister of Finance to take this into account.

How much funds have been dispersed thus far to the local contractors and how much of the total contract does this reflect?

The airport does not have direct contracts with local contractors for the reconstruction project. Financial information as requested is not (yet) available.

The Mold Remediation and Waste Disposal contractor AAR used 3 local subcontractors: Tidal Wave, All Caribbean A&C NV and Caribbean General Contractors. Approximately 80 local workers were involved with AAR, this number tapered downwards for the duration of the works.

Two local subcontractors are used by Supervising Engineer RoyalHaskoningDHV: Independent Consultant Engineers (ICE) and Caribbean Engineering & Consultancy Company NV (CECC). Ballast Nedam International Projects BV has several local subcontractors. On Saturday 18 December 2021 a job fair will be held on island by BNIP to find local expert staffing, qualified skilled and semi-skilled persons for the reconstruction works.

When it comes to the operations at the airport what's being done to ensure we don't create a serious image damage? I witnessed the serious deficit with having only one luggage belt functioning in a very hot area. This is the first impression.

The airport is busy with a combination of provisional upgrades, such as:

1. An arrival canopy,
2. making use of the ticketing area for the departure queues,
3. training of staff,
4. crowd control and
5. other initiatives to ensure our queues do not exceed the 50-minute mark.

Can we receive in writing that the airport loans or refinancing of existing loans are not part of the interest-bearing norm according to the RFT as stated by you on their behalf? We can confirm through the Collective Sector Report 2019 (Attachment 3), (Establishing the Collective Sector and interest expense norm of Sint Maarten), that the Airport is not part of the collective sector and is therefore not taken into account when determining the interest-bearing norm.

The only loan that is related to the airport and impacts the interest-bearing norm is the one between the European Investment Bank and Government in the amount of USD 50 million.

The details as well will be forwarded to Members of Parliament.

Was the recent loan taken by the airport at EIB not a responsibility of the St. Maarten government or did the Minister of Finance just sign along for the fun of it?

The EIB loan is with the Government of Sint Maarten with a back-to-back on lending agreement with PJIAE.

Who is handling the new loan and the refinancing of the airport loan and are the local investment groups on the island allowed to partake in these loans or is it reserved for a special group off island as is being spoken about?

The process of refinancing the airport loan is currently at in a non-disclosure stage and we therefore cannot disclose this information. We do know that local investors and pension funds are allowed to partake, nobody is excluded.

When will the official workgroup be established for the gaming board and how long before they become operational formally?

The official workgroup has been approved earlier this month. They will commence work in Qtr 1 2022.

When it comes to advertising are there any laws on what's allowed and how much is collected yearly? And if the law doesn't cover it can it be considered legal? I ask as I noticed that on our hills in Philipsburg, a casino is running an advertisement every evening and I'm sure they aren't paying the owners nor the government. Do they need a permit for such – for beaming on the hills and other building? Why is it allowed?

Based on article 8A of the General Signage Policy, it is prohibited to place or have placed advertising paintings or advertising posters visible from the public road without prior permission from the minister of Justice.

Are we looking into convention tourism and if yes which convention center are we promoting? It needs to be further explained and how u will do it?

Yes, this is referred to as Meetings Incentives Convention and Exhibition referred to as (MICE). The MICE industry was valued at \$215.1 billion in 2020, and is estimated to reach \$1,337.4 billion by 2028, imagine St. Maarten just have a 1% stake in this. St. Maarten's planning in the MICE sector is to attract more incentive groups (companies that compensate their employees with award programs and reward with trips for leisure to a destination), and medium to large groups of 500 max per week for conventions. Since the reopening St. Maarten has been receiving groups of 75-100 persons per week per group staying on the island in various accommodations at Sonesta Maho and Simpson Bay resort.

For 2022 in collaboration with French tourist Office and the private sector on both sides of the island, we will promote this industry and St. Maarten St. Martin by hosting a convention in June named "Caribbean Destination". This convention qualified incentive brokers will be coming together to experience St. Maarten St. Martin to sell the destination for group business.

Gaming Board, when will the Working Group be official and when will the Gaming Board begin? Can we not use the format of the former Netherlands Antilles islands (Cur & AUA) It is the intention for existing and where relevant draft legislation with respect to the regulation of games of chance within the Dutch Kingdom be reviewed and where possible incorporated where appropriate. However, it is paramount that Sint Maarten draft legislation for Sint Maarten that considers the uniqueness of our island and the opportunities that we can exploit within our jurisdiction.

Ministry of General Affairs

Post NV debts to Aruba and Curacao. What are the outstanding financial commitments and is there any indication how this can be solved? Ref. page 66 of the budget, there are some plans to address the situation, but it is not clear which plans.

The debts to Post Aruba and C-Post that have accumulated over a period of several years are approximately NAf 3 million. PSS NV has made arrangements with Post Aruba and C-Post to clear the debt over a period of 3 years. In return, the Government and Post NV have come to an agreement whereby government will provide financial support to PSS NV to assist in clearing the debt to its creditors.

Rampenfond: the fund has not started yet according to MP, where will the 2.7 million go and how much is projected for next year?

Our experiences in the past have shown us that a budget should be available to aid when an unexpected disaster occurs. The fund has been created as a financial buffer for emergency response, in the event a disaster strikes. The Ministry of General Affairs and Finance are working on two initiatives to establish a disaster fund by national ordinance. An update will be provided in Q2 of 2022. Nevertheless, there is NAf 2.4 million projected for the year 2022.

B8: Enhancing of critical vacancies. Did the cft advise that it is top heavy, does the amount of c.s. need to be lowered. Do we need to send home c.s. We are above the limit according to the Cft. We are hiring 68 persons.

We have to fill vacancies that have developed over the years for which we had already budgeted for and also projected new functions that need to be filled because Government's administration is currently understaffed, and as a result we suffer from capacity issues.

Regional cooperation. Drop Parlatino and look at Caricom and make monies available. Where can this be found in the budget. Parliament plea of the past

The budget for membership to CARICOM was allocated to the Directorate of Foreign Relations. As negotiations with CARICOM are ongoing, the budget for membership is not necessary at this point. In terms of general regional cooperation, the budget for the department will need to be amended as the financial position improves, which can then facilitate the increased ambitions of Government.

COHO project: any indication how much is coming to Sint Maarten. How much is Sint Maarten standing to gain for investment in the country packages, stimulus, retraining of people?

We cannot say at this time. No one knows how much we should gain. It is dependent on many factors. Also, it should be noted that the Netherlands has never undertaken such an exercise like this with any successful result that we know of. However, we have agreed and as such, we aim to make it work for Sint Maarten.

Is there any indication on the survival possibilities of Winair for 2022 and what the risk effects are for the government including the repayment in the worst case scenario of the USD 3 million or will be land collateral be given to the lender?

WINAIR presented to the Honorable Members of Parliament their financial position and their vision for the Company going forward on October 7, 2021. Mr. Greaux explained that the 2021 financials demonstrated the resilience of the company and the team. Q4 is showing improvements and their prognosis for the winter season remain optimistic, although the regional aviation is highly dependent on the pandemic development and protocol uncertainties which continue to challenge the aviation industry to date.

In response to the second half of the question, the Council of Ministers has asked WINAIR to provide an updated response to the Honorable Member of Parliament, this will be provided in writing.

How much of a loan will PJIA have to take because of possible inflation regarding the airport project and what consequences can this have for the government's debt ratio seeing they must guarantee the loan?

According to the Grant Agreements signed by Government and PJIA, the Airport will repay the \$92 million (previously \$72 million, July 14, 2021 we allocated 20 million additional financing) to the Government of Sint Maarten. The Airport Terminal Reconstruction Project also regulates the Operational Expenditures and has to date provided \$10.9M to PJIA. This has allowed the airport to cover eligible operating costs and enable the Airport to continue to pay its debt service to the Bondholders and continue to operate. As such, no loans would be necessary.

Clarification: When it comes to filling critical vacancies in connection with the country packages that is in contrast to Cft telling us what we are not allowed to do. We are too high as it pertains to the Caribbean public wage bill and that we must be below that before going into anything else. If the Dutch government is cognizant of these problems why not adjust the country packages accordingly? Can this be looked into from a different angle?

I understand the MPs concern, and that we need to be cautious not to be bound to certain agreement. However, as mentioned previously, a lot of the reform measures mentioned are assumptions. Most of the time it is mentioned that "based on the result of a study," and the action will follow. Therefore, the study needs to show that we are indeed, too high. In my previous answers provided, I also make mention of the fact that on technical level not everything is accepted, and if needed it will be escalated to the political level.

Based on the remarks of the Cft, Cft said in their opinion with regards to liquidity support, Sint Maarten should be up and running in 2023. Sint Maarten should be back to normal. If that is the case, will the three laws have an end date? It should not be that the loans will be the reason to maintain the cut of 12.5%. Can an elucidation be provided on how the Prime Minister thinks the country will be looking based on this? Nothing will give me more pleasure than if the Cft is right. I want parliament to remember that the mentioned laws are temporary which means that they are not forever, and can be cancelled by Government. Whether it is in 2023 before or after. At this moment I cannot give details on how it would look like in 2023 or any other year for that matter, or what actions would be taken. All depends of course on the situation. However, this I can promise, as soon as we can balance our budget, we are good to go! We would see no need to further incur any more debts.

What measuring tool is being used at Government Owned Entities as it pertains to the dismissal of persons under investigation, in appeal and in court for whatever accusation? The LMA is clear on how to deal with civil servants in such cases. How is this being done for Government Owned Companies?

I have expressed in many appearance here in parliament that the Corporate Governance rules need apply for all Government Own Entities.

What is the country intention for not only the lady representing us in the Miss World but on the usage of the flag?

As I have stated we will pursue this matter further an all avenues will be discussed to determine which action will be the most appropriate.

Cost of living report being prepared by SER. An article was published by Mr. Jandroep on the comparison throughout the kingdom. Sint Maarten scored the highest on with inflation and carries the lowest minimum wage. Where did Mr. Jandroep get the data

from? This report is being accepted by others. How do we move forward? The SER has to start from scratch. Maybe the SER can get in contact with Mr. Jandroep and use his report as a guideline.

Thank you for that MP I will indeed inquire if this information can be considered by the SER when concluding there study.

Our image in the kingdom seems to be that we are bad people. We are always reactive and not proactive. It is requested to make a budget amendment to show that there is money by the Sint Maarten house in the Netherlands to hire a PR firm to deal with the negative press in the Netherlands about Sint Maarten.

I can agree with the MP on this one in fact I have had talks with the Sint Maarten house about this approach. There are some changes in the make to become more visible and get our narrative out in the Netherlands. So, I am definitely open to allowing for more financing for such if we decide that is a priority for Sint Maarten.

Do we have any working relations with sister cities in the Netherlands? We used to with Amsterdam back in 2012? What about VNG-I?

This is still ongoing. VNG-I via the RESEMBID programme will continue to support disaster management.

21 civil servants resigned from government and while I am not too concerned about the hiring I am concerned about the resignation. Were these critical positions? Why are they resigning? When I speak to former civil servants, they speak about unworkable conditions, career growth, money paid not comparable to the private market especially within the justice ministry and JZW

As mentioned in my answers, this study/research still need to be done and we suspect that these might be some of the findings and we will follow up with the recommendations. But as I have said the reasons can be multi-faceted.

One of the things hurting this country are these 'onderlinge regelingen', where ministers make agreements on behalf of the country. In ministry justice, there are 39 'onderlinge regelingen' between Holland and Sint Maarten and sometimes with Curaçao. One of these was also the integrity chamber. Parliament is circumvented with these type of agreements that have an effect on the budget. I would like to know if the government can find themselves with an agreement that Parliament must provide the approval and not only government for these 'onderlinge regelingen'?

I would say an interesting proposal, however, it's not really in line with article 38 of the Statuut of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as article 81 of the Constitution of Sint Maarten. I think a discussion should be had on the matter.

What's the government's position on enhancing the air traffic with Saba and St. Eustatius in collaboration with the Netherlands to enhance the movement of Dutch citizens in the Kingdom? Right now the Netherlands bought a ferry. Did the minister consider on buying the shares of Winair back that the NL is selling?

The Government of Sint Maarten as co-shareholder has been informed of the sale of shares, however, given the response provided to Parliament on October 6, 2021, there has been no change as the financial liquidity position of Government to be able to do so at this point. Once there has been a development, the Honorable Members of Parliament will be informed accordingly.

The **Independent Member Arrindell** has taken note of the draft and has the following questions and remarks.

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Public Housing, Spatial Planning, Environment, and Infrastructure

With regards to the road pavement and patching, Wellington Road in Cole Bay. Is there a drainage problem in that area? Does this have the attention of Ministry VROMI? What is causing the constant repairs in this area? Is Ministry VROMI looking into alternative solutions to road repairs or new technologies such as recycled glass and plastic?

The Wellington Road in Cole Bay connects the Welfare Road to Well Road. This part of Cole Bay is the lowest point and close to the lagoon. The rainfall from a large part of Cole Bay flows in this direction, then into the lagoon. This area also has saturated groundwater from the many septic tanks of homes, apartments and businesses. The problem is that the existing drainage capacity must be upgraded to allow larger and faster runoff into the lagoon and sewage plant connections must be made.

An area with constant repairs is the Welfare Road in Cole Bay in front of Daily Extra, the problem in this area is caused by the groundwater below and on the road surface. The constant wet surface damages the asphalt layer. The Department is busy with research to solve this problem shortly. (Think of the recent solution for the Middle Region intersection).

MP Arrindell asked about the funds that were allocated for the ring road.

NAf 5 mln has been allocated for the construction of the Ring Road as a feeder road to and from Philipsburg.

The creation of this first phase of the Ring Road project will eliminate traffic congestion to and from Philipsburg. Presently, the main road around the Great Salt Pond, Walter Nisbeth road and the A.T. Illidge road are congested due to various businesses in the area, numerous intersections and ad-hoc parking alongside the roads. Due to these constraints, the roads have become local streets and cannot function anymore as main roads for thru-traffic to and from Philipsburg.

The best and most practical way to drastically improve the situation is to create new main roads for through traffic only, parallel to the roads as mentioned, with a minimum number of intersections.

Additional advantage of this solution is the creation of a natural boundary of the Great Salt Pond, halting the illegal filling of the Pond and securing the Pond's function as water storage during and after heavy rainfall. Furthermore, space is created for extra needed parking as parking space in the Philipsburg area is urgently needed.

The existing roads around the Pond can function as service roads with ample parking enhancing further business development between the Walter Nisbeth road and the projected Ring road, phase 1.

In addition, the road repair / maintenance program will continue as we develop the necessary new roads.

Ministry of Justice

There is a cost for 20 million guilders allocated for the detainees in the Netherlands, How many detainees are still being detained in Holland? Why is the cost so high? Have you think about asking the Dutch to take over the payment for prisoners?

As per December 8, 2021, the number of Sint Maarten detainees being housed in the Netherlands is 12. The Netherlands calculates its cost per detainee at 296 EUROS per day. We know that the cost of living as the cost of incarceration in countries differ from country to country. The cost of incarceration in the Netherlands is something that we cannot influence.

In addition, when the agreement was entered into with the Netherlands to house our inmates in its prison, this was done under certain financial obligations. As these payments are indeed costly and the country's financial situation remains worrisome, I welcome MP Arrindell's suggestion and will explore what possibilities there are to defer future payments or have these cancelled.

Is good to see an amount of 2.2 million allocated for back pay for the justice workers but is this thing realistic for the justice department? I would like to know a timeline for these payments for the justice departments?

The 2.2. Million reserved on budget line 5202-43498 is considered the remaining 50% that was identified for Justice Workers in January 2020.

Though the process is underway to confirm what the actual figure will be, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance anticipates that the 2.2 million guilders will cover the balance of the outstanding payments.

Minister, what u think about the ankle bracelet don't u think it would be cheaper for people to pay for the ankle bracelets?

The Ministry is exploring different options for inmates to contribute back to society when they are conditionally released.

The proposal for paying to serve the remainder of ones sentence on an ankle bracelet is definitely an option I am particularly interested in exploring because at this time, the financial weight that the country is carrying to facilitate the penalties for persons who have broken the laws, continues to sink the country into further debt.

Various assessments has to be considered however.... For example, would the implementation of paying for conditional release via an ankle bracelet create class justice to some degree? Whereby it might also create an undesirable division into inmates that have the financial means to afford an ankle bracelet and will therefore be released verse inmates who do not have these funds and will remain imprisoned.

Another aspect to consider is implementing a fee for the use of an ankle bracelet will also mean that inmates will be subjected to a financial obligation directly after they are released and not all persons will be able to pay this.

Would this then have an adverse effect that would drive them into committing new crimes to maintain their freedom.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport

Ministry of Public Health, Social Development, and Labor

How many people have been helped by the shelter and how has that been working?

The highly successful program reintegrated more than 160 persons into the community. The shelter continues to play an important role in facilitating assistance to the social crisis situations affecting many persons of our country.

Are you looking into how many people are living in poverty on the island and how are you planning to deal with that?

The ministry is planning together with the department of statistics to conduct a study to determine a livable wage.

To increase sustainable living the Ministry will be focusing on ensuring an adequate social safety net by amending the Financial Assistance legislation and further developing the Social Care Policy.

This is directly linked to measure E4 in the Country's Package. The plan of approach for said measure has already been finalized. In 2022 the Ministry will focus on the execution of said plan.

Ministry of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport and Telecommunication

General question for the Council of Ministers: How are you planning to alleviate poverty on Sint Maarten?

To alleviate poverty the ministry is looking into 4 key areas:

1. Tourism – reposition St. Maarten as a leading destination again in all facets in the air and maritime, even hotelier industry.
2. Create an attractive business environment, both for investors and local entrepreneurs. An attractive business climate creates a very stable and active private sector, with job growth and opportunities for all.
3. Build upon our Product Diversification.
4. Inclusive approach – we are our greatest assets.

With regards to promoting Sint Maarten on popular shows such as Wheel of Fortune, will such promotion be done in 2022?

St. Maarten Tourism Bureau (STB) has planned and budgeted for tv shows in 2022. The Price is right show is one the areas that is currently being worked on. This is for St. Maarten hotel partners to be featured on the U.S. television gameshow **The Price is Right**, which has an incredible **5.9 million viewers daily**. The show is beginning its 50th season in 2022, and they are looking to partner with a hotel for an on-air promotion in one of their episodes.

Was the organizing of Carnival put on bid? What is the status of the SOAB audit? Was this done?

No. We are in discussion with the SCDF to organize 2022 Carnival. The 2017 audit is completed and 2018 is ongoing.

For the 2018, SCDF did receive the list of requirements from SOAB and they are busy putting together the information.

Given the impact of hurricane Irma on the administration and documentation, SOAB had to issue a disclaimer of opinion.

Ministry of General Affairs

What is the status of the flags on the island and the budget the upkeep/maintain them?

The Department Facility Services is charged with the maintenance of the flags on the borders, at the Cole Bay Lookout point, and the Government Administration Buildings. The department is also making provision to hoist flags at the Oyster Pond and Lowlands borders.

The Causeway roundabout flag is being maintained by the Harbour group of Companies.

The department made an investment of NAF 44.952 to purchase Dutch & SXM flags that measures 3'x 5' and 5' x 8' in size. Based on this investment made to purchase flags, the department has sufficient flags for the upkeep of the borders in the year 2022.

Why are so many civil servants leaving the government? How many departments are experiencing this?

Indeed, we are concerned with the noticeable increase in the rate of persons leaving the organization. We have not yet been able to concretely ascertain the cause of persons relieving themselves from the organization. We have some ideas, but the fact is that this is a multi-faceted issue. At present, we are having internal discussions to see how we can address this. We also suspect that the measures taken in B5, B8, and B9 may help identify the problem areas thereby allowing us to come with solutions to improve the attractiveness of working and staying in government along with possibilities to grow in the organization. In the interim, we are looking to review the various HR policies for which we have reported complaints.

Which departments experience high turnover of civil servants and what causes this?

This answer was partially answered in the previous response. The information on which departments have a high turnover will be provided in writing.