

**IN THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA**

**REPORT OF THE  
SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**ON THE**

**2019 ANNUAL BUDGET ESTIMATES OF THE  
NATIONAL MEDIA COMMISSION**

PARLIAMENT OF GHANA LIBRARY

**DECEMBER 2018**



**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE ON THE 2019**  
**ANNUAL BUDGET ESTIMATES OF THE NATIONAL MEDIA**  
**COMMISSION (NMC)**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Minister for Finance, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 presented the Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 to Parliament in accordance with Article 179 of the 1992 Constitution.

Pursuant to Order 140 (4) of the Standing Orders of the House, the Rt. Hon. Speaker referred the Annual Budget Estimates of the National Media Commission to the Special Budgets Committee for consideration and report.

**2.0 DELIBERATIONS**

The Committee was assisted during its deliberations by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Alexander Bannerman, officials of the Commission, and technical officers from the Ministry of Finance and reports as follows

**3.0 REFERENCE**

The Committee referred to the following documents during its deliberations:

- a. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.
- b. The Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana.
- c. National Media Commission Act 1993, Act 449
- d. The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2019 Financial Year and;
- e. The 2019 MTEF Estimates for the National Media Commission
- f. The Coordinating Program of Economic and Social Development Policy
- g. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2019 to 2022.

#### **4.0 VISION AND MISSION**

*The National Media Commission exist to promote free, independent and responsible media to sustain democracy and national development. As part of its core functions NMC is mandated to take measures to ensure that persons responsible for state owned media afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.*

#### **5.0 CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION**

- i. The Commission exist to promote and ensure the freedom and independence of the Media and Mass communication in information*
- ii. Take all appropriate measures to ensure the establishment and maintenance of the highest journalistic standards in the mass media, including the investigation, mediation and settlement of complaints made against or by the press, by the mass media or other mass media.*
- iii. To insulate the state own media from Governmental control and;*
- iv. Make regulations by Constitutional; Instruments for the registration of newspapers and other Publications.*

#### **6.0 ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018**

*During the 2018 financial year, the National Media Commission undertook the following activities among others;*

##### ***Guidelines on religious Broadcasting***

*The Commission developed Guidelines on Religious Broadcasting to help sanitize the airwaves and improve the way religious bodies and faith based organizations broadcast their activities and dissemination of information on their faith.*

##### ***International Engagements:***

*During the year, some executive members of the National Media Commission attended a two- day Summit organized by High Authority for the Communications and Audiovisual (HACA) of Morocco and UNESCO on Child Protection in Rabat, Morocco in November and discussed Childhood Protection and Media Literacy.*

### **Orientation for Board Members of the state-owned Media at Elmina Beach Resort**

The NMC also organised orientation programmes for members of the governing board to equip them with the requisite skills to enable them perform their duties efficiently. These include the Ghana News Agency, New Times Corporation, The Ghana Broad Casting Corporation and the Graphic Communication Group Ltd.

### **ACRAN Steering Committee Delegation in Cameroun**

In the year under review a delegation from the Commission visited Cameroun from January 15<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> 2018 and held a sensitization programme in Cameroon for the Cameroonian Public, political authorities, promoters and media professionals as well as civil society representation on the interest and usefulness of the National Communication Council (NCC). The visit enabled the groups to appreciate the institution as a necessary tool for democracy and the development of the two countries in respect of laws in the context of media plurality.

### **The Third African Communication Regulatory Authorities Network (ACRAN) Steering Committee Meeting**

The NMC organized and hosted the Third ACRAN Steering Committee meeting for the 2017-2018 biennium in Ghana from 19-21 June 2018 at the Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra and discussed the moral, financial and adoption of reports on the ACRAN Executive Secretariat as well as concluding on strategies towards the Theme and the twentieth Anniversary of the Network in Cameroun in preparedness for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### **Complaints Settlement:**

The Commission in accordance with Article 167[b] of the 1992 Constitution and Sections 12 to 15 of Act 449 of the National Media Commission Act 1993, and the NMC (Complaint Settlement Procedure) Regulations, 1994, L.I.1587, received 17 complaints as of August 2018. Out of this number, seven (7) have been resolved amicably. Eight (8) complaints remained outstanding and one struck out. One (1) has been redirected to the Ghana Police Service since it bothers on assault.

## Registration of Newspapers

The Media Commission during the year under review registered forty- five (45) newspapers. Out of these only thirty-three (33) are registered and accredited newspapers.

## The Electronic Media

The Commission undertook a registration of the electronic media, a report on authorized FM Radio broadcasting stations in Ghana as at the end of December 2017 totaled Four Hundred and Eighty- One (481). Out of the number, Three Hundred and Fifty- Four (354) stations are currently operational

## 7.0 BUDGET PERFORMANCE IN 2018

In the year under review the National Media Commission was allocated a total budget of **Five Million, One Hundred and Forty-nine Thousand, Three Hundred and Eighty-one Ghana Cedis (GH¢5,149,381)**. The allocation was expended among the following three cost centres.

<u>Cost Centre</u>		<u>2018 Allocation (GH¢)</u>
Employee Compensation	-	2,847,901
Goods and Services	-	1,301,480
Capital Expenditure	-	1,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,149,381</b>

### 7.1 2018 expenditure returns of the NMC (GoG)

As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 the Commission had spent an amount of **GH¢2,922,766.22** which represents **56.75%** of its approved budget of **GH¢5,149,381** for the 2018 financial year. The breakdown of expenditure is presented in table 1 below.

**Table 1: NMC budget performance as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

SN	ITEM	2018 APPROVED BUDGET (GH¢)	2018 ACTUAL RELEASED 30/10/2018 (GH¢)	VARIANCE (GH¢)	% RELEASED
1	Compensation	2,847,901	1,474,116	1,373,785	51.76%
2	Goods and Services	1,301,480	680,296	621,184	52.27%
3	Capital Expenditure	1,000,000	768,354.22	231,645.78	76.83%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,149,381</b>	<b>2,922,766.22</b>	<b>226,614.78</b>	<b>56.75%</b>

## 8.0 OUTLOOK FOR 2019

For the 2019 financial year, the National Media Commission intends to undertake the following activities;

- i. To review the various Guidelines which have been in existence for the past ten years to conform to modern trends in the digital age.
- ii. To develop content policy on Digital Migration and continue stakeholder consultation on Digital Migration
- iii. Carry out a Pre-election Media Monitoring and build the capacity of Media Monitors, data analysts and data entering officers
- iv. The Commission will deploy Commissioners to the regions to help the Regional Media Advisory Committees
- v. The Commission will also undertake Stakeholder consultation on pre and post-elections and organized an orientation of new members of the Commission.

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## 8.1 2019 BUDGET ALLOCATION TO THE NMC

To implement the above programmes an amount of **Five Million, Thirty-Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Twelve Ghana Cedis (GH¢5,032,212)** has been allocated to the National Media Commission (NMC) for the 2019 financial year. This is made up of **Three Million, Nine Hundred and Seventeen Thousand, Two Hundred and Fifty-Four Ghana Cedis (GH¢3,917,254)** from GoG source and **One Million, One Hundred and**

Fourteen Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty- Eight Ghana Cedis (GH¢1,114,958) from Development Partners Fund. The allocations is to be disbursed among the following cost centers of the Commission.

<u>Cost Centre</u>		<u>2019 Allocation (GH¢)</u>
Employee Compensation	-	3,175,410
Goods and Services	-	741,844
Capital Expenditure	-	Nill
Development Partners Fund	-	1,114,958
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>5,032,212</b>

The summary of the 2019 allocation compared to 2018 allocation is presented in table 2.

**Table 2: 2018 Allocation as Against 2019 Allocation**

SN	Cost Centre	2018 Allocation (GH¢)	2019 Allocation (GH¢)	Variance (GH¢)
1	Compensation of Employee	2,847,901	3,175,410	327,509
2	Goods and Services	1,301,480	741,844	559,636
3	Capital Expenditure	1,000,000	Nill	1,000,000
4	Develop Partner Fund		1,114,958	1,114,9587
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,149,381</b>	<b>5,032,212</b>	<b>117,169</b>



## **9.0 OBSERVATIONS**

The Committee made the following observations:

### **9.1 Inadequate Budgetary Allocation**

The Committee noted that as at 30th September 2018 an amount of **GH¢768,354.22** was released out of an approved allocation of **GH¢1,000,000** to the National Media Commission for capital expenditure. The Committee was informed that this amount was used to purchase a Media monitoring Van, Toyota Land Cruiser for use in content monitoring. The balance of **GH¢231,645.75** is required to finance the renovation and roofing of the monitoring center which is currently in a very deplorable state.

The committee further noted that budgetary provisions for capital expenditure (CAPEX) has not been allocated to the Commission for the 2019 financial year.

The Acting Executive Secretary lamented on the deplorable state of the facility housing the monitoring equipment stating that during raining season, the leakages are unbearable resulting in damages to most electronic gadgets such as air conditioners among others.

He informed the Committee that for the 2019 fiscal year, NMC requires a total amount of **GH¢700,000** to effectively carry out its planned capital investment programmes and projects. According to the NMC, the Ministry of Finance had earlier made a provision of **GH¢500,000** to the Commission in the budget ceiling for CAPEX but when the budget was approved the amount was not captured in the budget.

The Acting Executive Secretary explained to the committee that for the financial year 2019, the Commission plans among others, to furnish offices in two regions, Ho and Tamale, acquire Media monitoring equipment's such as Computers, radio sets, televisions, headphones for real time monitoring activities, purchase an additional mobile monitoring Vans for effective media monitoring and renovate the Media Monitoring and Research Centre among others.

The Committee noted that considering the strategic importance and the critical role of the National Media Commission in maintaining a stable united and safe society, the need for adequate funding to enable the Commission carry out its constitutional mandate effectively cannot be overemphasized.

The Committee therefore recommends the following to the Ministry of Finance:

- i. That the Ministry of Finance should ensure that the Commission is adequately resourced by reinstating the **GH¢500,000** initially captured in the budget ceilings during Mid-year review to enable it carry out its mandate for the 2019 financial year effectively
- ii. That the outstanding amount of **GH¢231,645.75** for capex for the 2018 approved budget should be released to the National Media Commission to enable them complete renovation works to protect the content media monitoring equipment.

## **9.2 Increase in Compensation of Employees**

The Committee noted that an amount of **GH¢ 3,175,410** was allocated to the National Media Commission for Compensation of Employees for the 2019 financial year as against an amount of **GH¢2,847,901** approved budget for Compensation of Employee in 2018.

The Acting Executive Secretary informed the Committee that the Commission does not have the full complement of technical staff to fill the research and monitoring Centre and as a result, the Commission made a request to the Ministry of Finance for clearance during the Technical Hearings in September, 2018. The clearance has been given to cater for promotions and recruitment of ten (10) additional staff, this therefore accounts for the increase in budgetary allocation for Employee Compensation in excess of GH¢207,000.00 for the 2019 financial year. He indicated that the Commission requires additional fifteen Employees to meet the staff requirements but the Ministry of Finance recommended that the NMC could employ staff from the Nation Builders Corps.

In this regard, the Committee recommends to the Minister for Finance to provide adequate funds and grant the Commission special dispensation to recruit the requisite staff needed for its operations.

## **9.3 Guidelines for Media Reporting**

The Committee was informed that the Commission(NMC) has developed Guidelines on Religious Broadcasting to help sanitize the airwaves and improve the way religious bodies and faith based organizations broadcast their activities and dissemination of information on their faith.

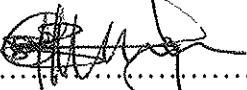
To this end, the Committee recommends to the NMC to expand its guidelines to include political and tribal reporting as well as live panelist discussions on

television, radio or political platform to help sanitize the political discourse in the airwaves during general elections.

## 10.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee, after careful examination of the Budget Estimates of the National Media Commission recommends to the House to adopt its report and approve the sum of **Five Million, Thirty- Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Twelve Ghana Cedis (GH¢5,032,212)** to enable the National Media Commission implement its programmes for the financial year 2019 .

Respectfully submitted

  
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**HON. OSEI KYEI-MENSAH-BONSU**  
**MAJORITY LEADER AND CHAIRMAN,**  
**(SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE).**

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.....  
**INUSAH MOHAMED (ALHAJI)**  
**CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

*December 2018*

