

**IN THE FIRST MEETING OF THE
SECOND SESSION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF
GHANA**

REPORT

OF

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS

ON THE

2002 ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF THE

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

AND

PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS

13TH MARCH 2002

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

The 2002 draft Annual Estimates of the Ministry of Information and Presidential Affairs (MIPA) were referred to the Committee for examination and report in accordance with Order 181 of the Standing Orders of the House after the Minister of Finance, on the authority of H.E. the President, presented this year's Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government to the House.

- 1.1 The Committee met with officers of the Ministry and Departments and Agencies under it to discuss the subject. The Committee is thankful to the Sector Minister, Hon Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey and all the Departmental Heads who attended its meeting to assist in the Committee's deliberations.

2.0 **REFERENCES**

- a. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- b. The Standing Orders of the House;
- c. The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2002 Financial Year;
- d. State of the Nation Address, 2002 by H.E. Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor (President of the Republic of Ghana).

3.0 **MISSION STATEMENT AND MEDIUM TERM OBJECTIVES**

The Ministry of Information and Presidential Affairs was established on 12th October 2001. It was created from the erstwhile Ministry of Media Relations together with GBC, GIJ and NAFTI, which were hitherto under the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Its mission statement is to facilitate the free flow of timely and reliable information and feedback between the Government and its various publics and to assist in the development, co-ordination and implementations of policies. It also exists to create the right environment and generate the necessary understanding and support of the publics for the realization of policies and programmes of the Government. In pursuit of this mission, the Ministry has the following objectives:

- a. To strengthen institutional capacity and develop policies that will promote ready access to news and information on government.
- b. To ensure free flow of relevant public information in pursuance of the open government policy.
- c. To effectively monitor, evaluate and provide government with feedback on the reaction of the public to government policies, programmes and Activities.
- d. To provide human resource development programme to facilitate increased efficiency in the media.
- e. To project the image of the country, in collaboration with other government agencies, to attract foreign investment in consonance with government policy of promoting the Golden Age of Business.
- f. To co-ordinate activities of the Presidency towards ensuring uniformity and focus in the execution of national policies, programmes and activities.

In pursuit of its mission statement and for the purpose of budgeting the Ministry has responsibility for the following departments and agencies.

- i) Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)
- ii) Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ)
- iii) National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI)

- iv) Information Service Department (ISD)
- v) Ghana News Agency (GNA)

4.0 **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2001**

Last year, the Ministry then Ministry of Media Relations had a budget of **¢42,052.32 million**. Out of this, the Ministry was able to execute the following:

- i) Organisation of the People's Assembly at the national, regional, and district levels where members of the general public had the opportunity to review the performance of the executive arm of government.
- ii) Compilation and publication of a book containing some selected speeches of H.E. the President, Mr. J. A. Kufuor in 2001 entitled "Towards a Golden Age of Business".
- iii) Publication of some works of the NPP Administration under the title "Positive Change".
- iv) Re-launching of the "Ghana News Bulletin" a publication of the ISD.
- v) Updated the Government's website on the world wide web (Internet).

2.0 **ALLOCATIONS FOR 2002 AS AGAINST PROJECTIONS SUBMITTED TO MINISTRY OF FINANCE**

To pursue its mission statement and execute its objectives for the 2002 financial year, the Ministry submitted to the Ministry of Finance (MOF) an expenditure projection of **¢46,992 million** to cover both the administrative expenses and development expenditure of the Ministry and its agencies. The table attached shows the breakdown of this amount by programmes and agencies.

The breakdown shows as much as **¢40,216 million** or 82% of the total budget for Personal Emoluments. Thus, only **¢8,776 million** or 18% of the budget will be left for Administration, Service and Investment activities. With this pattern of funding, it is quite obvious that the Ministry and its agencies would be severely constrained in the execution of some of their core activities.

6.0 **OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Ministry's Headquarters

The Committee observed that out of the projected investment expenditure of **¢646,100,021.00** requested for projects in the Ministry's Headquarters only ¢31million has been allocated by the Ministry of Finance. The Committee is very concerned over this paltry allocation and wonders the criteria used for the allocation by the Ministry of Finance. It is even more worrying that the indicative ceilings for investment in 2003 and 2004 are neither encouraging.

The Committee found that, given the current allocation, the Ministry would not be able to carry out such crucial projects as re-roofing and re-wiring of the Headquarters building in Accra. The Committee learnt that re-wiring of the electrical fittings in the Headquarters building was long over due as budgetary requests in successive years for the project had been turned down. Worse still, there has been leakages in the roof of offices located on the last floor including that of the Hon. Minister which has had to directly endure considerable inconvenience whenever it rains.

The Committee is appalled by this state of funding and believes that as the key propaganda machinery of the state that is charged with the packaging and marketing of the country at home and abroad it deserves a reasonable level of funding. This is important to avert potential image

crisis that may afflict the state in the event of their inability to perform as a result of the uncomfortable working environment.

The Ministry of Finance is therefore to re-consider the allocation and duly attend to the request for a supplementary vote, which the Ministry had already submitted to it.

6.2 Ghana News Agency (GNA)

The Committee found that the GNA has over the years suffered from inadequate and irregular funding which now threatens its existence. Last year, it was unable to achieve its operational targets due to the non-release of funds approved for it by this Honourable House.

Given this background, the agency submitted estimates of **¢9,886,916,367** to cover its administrative and development expenses for 2002. However, an allocation of **¢6,159,999,999** has been made leaving a shortfall of **¢3,726,916,368**. Out of the allocation, only **¢31,000,000** is meant for investment expenses which was projected at **¢2,166,758,000**.

The Committee deems this allocation very disturbing as it again raises the question of the criteria for the allocation of resources. The projected amount was intended to pay for the replacement of plant and equipment, which are critically needed to enable the GNA keep up the transmission of news bulletin to subscribers locally and abroad.

Provision had also been made for the acquisition of vehicles and the rehabilitation of its office buildings in Accra, Bolgatanga, Ho, and Tamale. In the circumstance, all these projects have to be stalled this year unless some additional funding is provided to the agency during the year. The

amount of **¢31,000,000** allocated for investment would be used to procure two computers for the administration.

The Committee urges the Minister of Information and Presidential Affairs to review the existence of the GNA to determine its relevance to the state's propaganda agenda so as to adopt a more realistic approach to its funding. In the view of the Committee, GNA needs to be resuscitated by the injection of reasonable resources.

6.3 Information Services Department (ISD)

The ISD requested for an amount of **¢9,601 million** for its operations and development in 2002. It has however been allocated **¢6,746 million** out of which only ¢58 million has been provided for investment expenses. As the table shows, it had requested for ¢650 million to enable it complete rehabilitation works on its regional offices at Koforidua, Ho, and Kumasi and an instrument workshop at the Cinema Section in Accra.

More importantly, the Committee found that the Department did not have anything out of its approved investment account of **¢104.2 million** in 2001 released to it. Thus, although work on the construction of an Art Studio at the Exhibition and Audio Visual Aids Section in Accra was partly executed, the contractor was not paid. Even the amount allocated this year cannot pay up the cost of that job.

The Committee therefore recommends that the amount allocated last year be released to the Department to pay the contractor for the job done. This would enable the Department to spend the allocation for this year to complete the Art Studio as well as other rehabilitation works.

Furthermore, the Department's fleet of Cinema Vans, the last of which were purchased in early 1997 are wearing out and have become more expensive to maintain. Out of 34, only 20 are currently in serviceable condition. It is necessary therefore to plan towards augmenting this fleet.

6.4 Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)

The GBC has been allocated **¢29,828 million** as its subvention for 2002. The amount is meant for Personal Emoluments. Unlike other agencies under the Ministry, its Administration, Service and Investment expenses are met from its internally generated funds (IGF). This year it projects to raise **¢27,317,970** making up **¢57,147,520** when added to the subvention.

However, the corporation's total budget estimates are **¢81,815,483** hence it will have a deficit of **¢24,669,963** for which additional funding needs to be sought. It therefore made a case for an increment in television license charges to the public to enable it recover the full cost of its operations.

The Committee could not reach any decision on this request but agreed with the sector Minister to schedule a meeting with management of the Corporation later in the year to thoroughly examine the matter and make appropriate recommendations to this House.

6.5 Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ)

The GIJ commenced degree programmes in journalism this year following accreditation given it by the University of Ghana. As a result, it has to speed up expansion of its physical structures to provide classrooms for lectures. The Committee found that a contract was awarded in 1999 for the construction of a 12-classroom block at the Institute's new site at

Okponglo but work is still at the foundation stage due to funding difficulties.

Furthermore, the Committee found that ₦50 million approved by this House for the acquisition of computers last year was not released for the purpose by the Ministry of Finance.

The Committee took a serious view of this phenomenon as it undermines the current MTEF budgeting approach. It recommends to the GIJ and indeed the Ministry and its agencies to actively engage the Committee early in the budgeting stages and thereafter, and not only during the short period of parliamentary consideration and approval.

6.6 National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI)

The Committee again found that the main challenge to NAFTI is the non-release of approved funds to enable it carry out planned activities. The Institute cited a case in which one development partner withdrew its support to the institution out of frustration over the institute's inability to pay up commitment fees for a given project. The Institute described its state of funding as not too different from its sister agencies under the Ministry but prayed that at least, approved funds would be released to enable it meet its administrative and development expenses.

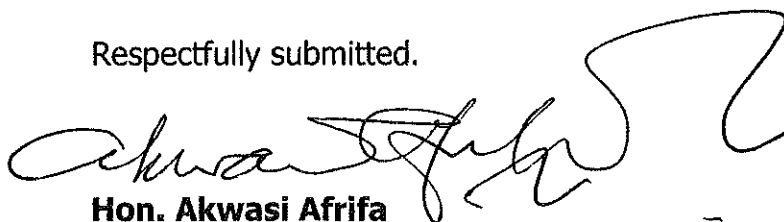
7.0 **CONCLUSION**

The Committee observed that apart from under funding of the Ministry, its agencies have had to contend with non- release of funds approved by this august House to them by the Ministry of Finance. Obviously, this severely constrains their ability to perform and achieve set targets. The Committee intends to collaborate with the sector Minister during the year to have detailed discussions on levels of funding of agencies under the Ministry

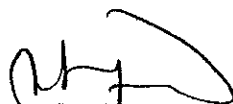
with the Ministry of Finance. The Committee also endorses the Ministry's requests for supplementary funds for planned investment activities during the year.

Having said this, the Committee recommends that the sum of **¢48,992 million** be approved by this Honourable House for the administrative and development expenses of the Ministry of Information and Presidential Affairs for the 2002 financial year.

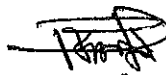
Respectfully submitted.



Hon. Akwasi Afrifa
Chairman



Frederick K. Nutsugah
Clerk to the Committee



Peace Fiawoyife (Ms)
Supervising Clerk

13th March, 2002

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS (MIPA)

2002 BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AS AGAINST ESTIMATES SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

	P.E. (ITEM 1)		ADMIN (ITEM 2)		SERVICE (ITEM 3)		INVESTMENT	
	ALLOCATION (Million)	ESTIMATES	ALLOCATION	ESTIMATES	ALLOCATION	ESTIMATES	ALLOCATION (Million)	ESTIMATES
MIPA (TOTAL)	40,216	40,872,477,167	4,611m	6,063,814,480	1,764M	16,298,283,390	2,401	5,707,858,021
GEN ADMIN	286	486,700,713.00	531,550,000	778,440,000	154,674,390	13,229,657,390	31	646,100,021
GBC	29,828	29,827,550,486.62	-	-	-	-	-	-
GIJ	635	653,336,823.00	195,787,700	329,760,480	45,000,000	45,000,000	581	545,000,000
NAFTI	895	895,417,642.00	631,454,000	631,454,000	545,000,000	581,000,000	1,700	1,700,000,000
ISD	4,244	545,418,697.00	1,939,000,000	2,500,000,000	408,000,000	1,000,000,000	58	650,000,000
GNA	4,301	4,453,470,367.00	1,313,820,000	1,824,160,000	515,513,794	1,442,528,000	31	2,166,758,000

TOTAL ALLOCATED BUDGET = 48,992M
 TOTAL ESTIMATES = 68,942M