



Government of the  
**Commonwealth of The Bahamas**

# Questions to Parliament

**February 2023**

**The Role of Opposition Day**

The functioning of parliamentary democracies requires a delicate balance between the government and the Opposition. One of the key mechanisms to maintain this balance is the use of Opposition Days, which allow Opposition parties to set the agenda and hold the government to account.

The Davis Administration's decision to uphold Opposition Day, despite the Opposition never observing it while in government, demonstrates the administration's commitment to democratic principles. By providing the Opposition with the chance to bring important issues to the forefront of parliamentary debate, the Davis Administration ensures that the Opposition's voice is heard, even when it may not have been heard in the past.

This decision is particularly noteworthy given the current climate of polarization and partisanship in many democracies around the world. By upholding Opposition Day, the Davis Administration demonstrates that it recognizes the importance of robust and healthy Opposition in a thriving democracy.

This decision will serve as an example to other governments and political leaders, demonstrating the value of upholding democratic principles and respecting the role of the Opposition in parliamentary democracies.

## QUESTIONS

**THE HON. CLAY SWEETING**

Hon. Michael Pintard

(Notice: 8th December 2021) No. 3

**1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House what is the rationale for discontinuing the Public-Private Partnership on the packing houses, feed mill and abattoir?**

**A: The rationale for discontinuing the Public-Private Partnership on the packing houses feed mill, and abattoir is based on several factors, including concerns about the project's viability, the level of private sector interest, and the potential costs to the Government.**

**With regard to the Feed Mill, it should be noted that under the previous administration, the Ministry received four responses to the Expression of Interest.**

**However, only three entities met the criteria after review and were invited to present a proposal. After this process was concluded, only one entity was under consideration. This entity proposed a minimum investment and wanted controlling interest, which was not deemed feasible by the Government and was not pursued. Therefore, the Government remains committed to exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships where they are viable and appropriate. It will continue to assess all potential projects on a case-by-case basis.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

Hon. Michael Pintard

(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 8

- 1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House whether the Public Procurement Board has been appointed as required by the Public Procurement Act?**

**A: Despite unprecedented levels of borrowing and expenditure, which left our national debt at more than 100%, the previous administration failed to properly and fully account for how billions of dollars of public money was spent, or who the recipients were of that spending.**

**The Public Procurement Act came into force on September 1, 2021, in the dying days of that administration.**

**We remain committed to making public procurement, transparent and accountable.**

**While the previous government had identified individuals to be appointed to the Public Procurement Board (PPB), these individuals were never formally appointed.**

**After reviewing the Act, the current administration had serious concerns about the structure of the PPB and decided that it was best not to proceed with the previous government's appointments.**

2. Who are its Members?

**A: Please see above. There are no members.**

3. Is the Board reviewing all bid contracts over \$250,000 as required by law?

**A: As per the law, all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) are required to have a Tender Board that reviews all procurement opportunities. If the value of the bid exceeds \$250,000, it is then submitted to the Procurement Department for a no-objection review.**

**This is in sharp contrast to the practices of the previous administration, under which many procurement arrangements remain obscure.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 9**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House, if the Procurement Review Tribunal has been established as required by the Public Procurement Act?

**A: No prospective vendor has brought forward any complaint to be considered by the Procurement Review Tribunal. As a result the Government, mindful of the new Procurement Act, has not appointed a Procurement Review Tribunal.**

2. Who are the members of the Procurement Review Tribunal?

**A: Please see above.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 10**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House if every government agency and state owned enterprise are publishing the summary details of contracts awarded consistent with the requirements of the Public Procurement Act?

**A: The Ministry of Finance in conjunction with Go Bonfire is finalizing the report listing contracts awarded by the Government. We aim to have the first edition published in due course..**

2. Which specific agencies are compliant?

**A: All Ministries, Departments, and Agencies will be fully compliant.**

3. Which agencies are not compliant?

**A: See above.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 11**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House of the scope of works for Rothschild and Company in their advisory capacity?

**A: Rothschild and Company has been engaged in an advisory capacity by the government, to provide guidance and support in the international debt market. As one of the leading, highly-specialised, international financial advisory firms with expertise in debt management, Rothschild provides strategic advice to the government on various aspects of its international debt portfolio.**

**Advice includes the analysis of market conditions, identification of potential risks and opportunities, and the provision of recommendations on the most effective ways to structure and manage the government's debt portfolio.**

**The scope of work for Rothschild involves a detailed review of the government's current debt profile and the provision of ongoing support in implementing any recommended strategies. They are also brokering relationships with bond-holders and other market actors**

2. What is the value and duration of the contract?

**A: The contract is for one year, in the first instance. The monetary value of the contract is subject to the usual provisions to protect commercial confidentiality, but consistent with the cost for this type of arrangement.**

**The broader value of the contract can be seen in the national debt being reduced to XX% of GDP, down from XXX% GDP which we inherited from the last administration.**

**Members will recall that the previous administration borrowed on average \$2 billion per year, each year, without a single school, hospital, road, clinic or airport to show for it. We are proud that our approach to debt management is based on the kind of competent leadership which the Bahamian people elected us to provide.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 12**

1. Will the Honourable Minister confirm that the provisions of the Debt Management Act were followed with the announced \$20 million loan to the Ministry of Housing?

**A: The Government can confirm that the provisions of the Debt Management Act were followed for the \$20 million loan to the Ministry of Housing.**

**The loan was acquired in accordance with the guidelines and regulations outlined in the Act.**

**The Ministry of Housing, being a Corporation Sole, is authorized to receive advances or loans from financial institutions, whether from the public or private sectors, to fulfill its mandate of developing homes. The Ministry, therefore, obtained the necessary approvals and followed due process in securing the loan.**

**The loan was made in order to support the highly-successful affordable housing programmes being undertaken by the Government.**

2. Were the proceeds of the loan deposited in the Consolidated Fund as required by the Act?

**A: The Debt Management Act does not apply in this case.**

**The Ministry of Housing is a Corporation Sole. As such, the loan proceeds were deposited into the account of the Corporation Sole in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidelines.**

3. Was the process to select the lender done through a competitive bidding process?

**A: The Government can confirm that a competitive bidding process was used to select the lender for the \$20 million loan to the Ministry of Housing. The process involved issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to a select group of potential lenders, followed by a rigorous evaluation process to determine the most suitable lender for the project.**

**The selection process was carried out in accordance with the standard procurement procedures, and all interested parties were given an equal opportunity to participate. The chosen lender met all the necessary criteria, including financial stability, experience, and capacity to provide the required financing.**

4. Who has ultimate responsibility for repayment of the loan?

**A: The ultimate responsibility for the loan repayment rests with the Corporate Sole Account of the Ministry of Housing, as it is the entity that received the loan proceeds. The Ministry of Housing is responsible for managing the loan and ensuring that all repayment obligations are met under the terms and conditions of the loan agreement.**

5. What are the fees, charges and interest rates associated with the facility?

**A: The fees, charges, and interest rates associated with the \$20 million loan to the Ministry of Housing are disclosed in the Government's quarterly debt report. In addition, the report provides a detailed breakdown of the terms and conditions of the loan, including any fees or charges incurred, as well as the interest rate applied to the facility.**

**The quarterly debt report is available on the website of the Ministry of Finance or can be obtained by making a request to the relevant government agency. If you require further information or assistance receiving the report, you may contact the Ministry of Finance or the appropriate government agency directly.**

6. Would the government lay the agreement in the House of Assembly?

**A: The government is not obligated to lay the agreement for the \$20 million loan to the Ministry of Housing in the House of Assembly as this is not a loan that the government guarantees, nor is it a government loan.**

**The loan is provided to the Ministry of Housing, a Corporation Sole, and is responsible for managing its finances and repayment obligations. As such, the government has no direct involvement or responsibility for the loan; therefore, there is no legal obligation to present the loan agreement in the House of Assembly.**

#### **THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 13**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House if the Government will ensure that the now past due reports from the Fiscal Responsibility Council be provided to Parliament and published as required by the Fiscal Responsibility Act?

**A: The Government acknowledges the importance of complying with the requirements of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, including the obligation to provide reports from the Fiscal Responsibility Council to Parliament and to publish them. However, the Minister of Finance does not have direct authority over the activities of the Fiscal Responsibility Council.**

**The Council is an independent body established by law, and its members are appointed by the Governor-General, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.**

**It is the responsibility of the Council to produce and submit its reports to Parliament, and the Government expects that the Council will fulfill its mandate and meet its obligations under the Act. The Government will take appropriate**



action to ensure that the Council is supported and has the necessary resources to carry out its functions effectively.

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 14**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House why the Government provided a budget with a target deficit that is outside the fiscal objectives the government set in its own Fiscal Strategy Report 2021, when the Fiscal Responsibility Act expressly requires the Government to produce a budget consistent with the deficit targets established in the annual Fiscal Strategy Report?

**A: There is no legal requirement that the annual budget be an exact replica of the Fiscal Strategy Report. However, the annual budget is consistent with the broader goals and objectives of the Fiscal Strategy Report, including the focus on deficit reduction.**

**The government remains committed to achieving its fiscal targets, and the budget was formulated with this objective in mind. While the target deficit for the budget may differ slightly from the targets established in the Fiscal Strategy Report, the overall strategy for reducing the deficit and achieving fiscal sustainability remains the same.**

**The Government will continue to work towards achieving its fiscal objectives and ensuring that the country's finances remain sustainable.**

**And as was made clear in the recent mid-term reports, the government is succeeding. Our strategic, competent management of public finances sits in stark contrast to what went before under the previous administration. Of the billions of dollars borrowed and spent, there was not a single new road, school, airport, hospital or clinic to show for it.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 15**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to why the Government implemented the elimination of duty on yachts purchased and operated by wealthy people outside of the required Parliamentary process?

**A: This category is not a significant revenue-earner for the government. The amounts raised are negligible. We therefore consider it more useful as a mechanism for building our yacht registry.**

*The elimination of duty on yachts purchased and operated by wealthy individuals is an issue that has been discussed extensively by the Government and various stakeholders, and there is recognition that this policy can provide significant benefits to the maritime industry in The Bahamas.*

However, to date, no importer has utilized this mechanism, and the Government will continue to examine ways to encourage greater investment and growth in the sector.

2. Does the Government recognize that its excuse claiming that this unauthorized tax cut is facilitated by the “remission” clause makes no sense as such provision is not applicable?

**A:** The Government has assessed the situation and determined that the 'remission' clause in the relevant legislation applies to the issue of duty elimination on yachts purchased and operated by wealthy individuals. However, to date, there have been no qualifying imports, and thus the issue has not arisen in practice.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that all laws and regulations are applied appropriately and will continue to monitor and assess the situation as it develops.

#### **THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 16**

1. Will the Honourable Prime Minister lay on the Table of this Honourable House the list of individuals and companies who have been awarded government contracts since the PLP came to office considering that his government is in violation of the Public Procurement Act?

**A:** The previous procurement system in use on September 1, 2021 did not capture all the required information as specified in the Public Procurement Act.

As a result, the Government is preparing a report that will provide more information on the individuals and companies awarded government contracts since the PLP came to office.

The report will outline the steps to ensure compliance with the Act, including creating a procurement career path in the public service and acquiring new procurement software.

The Government is committed to transparency and accountability in all its procurement processes. It will work to ensure that all future procurements are

conducted in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. Once the report is completed, it will be laid on the Table of the Honourable House.

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 17**

1. Will the Honourable Prime Minister advise this Honourable House as to why his government continues to break the law in relation to the Public Procurement Act?

**A: While the Government acknowledges the importance of compliance with the Act, it has been working diligently to address these issues since coming into office on September 22, 2021.**

**That said, the Act itself was passed in a cynical attempt by the previous Administration to appear to be fiscally responsible. However it did not come into force until several months after it had been passed, days before the General Election.**

**The provisions were hastily designed, and left the legislation unworkable in many respects. For example: the enabling resources and training to effect implementation were not in place.**

**The Government has taken several steps to address the gaps in the procurement system, including tabling a revised Act, creating a procurement career path in the public service, and acquiring new procurement software.**

**These measures are intended to ensure that all future procurement processes comply with the Public Procurement Act. However, the Government remains committed to transparency, accountability, and good governance in all its activities and will work to ensure that all laws and regulations are applied appropriately.**

**THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 18**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House whether the Government will provide the annualized additional incremental costs associated with the labour agreements it has completed since coming to office?

**A: The Government estimates that the annualized additional incremental costs associated with the labour agreements it has completed since coming to office is approximately \$18 million.**

**By honouring commitments to public sector employees and the various interests represented, we have brought much-overdue relief to hardworking teachers, nurses, doctors and other public sector employees.**

**These commitments were long overdue, and our administration is proud to have honoured the obligations to those who do so much for our country.**

2. Will the Government indicate if it aligns with relevant, related budgetary allocations for the current fiscal year?

**A: Yes, the Government confirms that the estimated annualized additional incremental costs associated with the completed labour agreements align with the relevant, related budgetary allocations for the current fiscal year.**

**\$20 million was allocated for labour agreements in the FY 2022/23 budget. The Government remains committed to ensuring that all budgetary allocations are carefully managed and monitored and that all expenditures are in line with the Government's broader fiscal goals and objectives.**

3. Will the Government explain how the projected costs related to these labour agreements aligns with the reduction in public sector staff related costs projected over the medium term in its Fiscal Strategy Report 2021?

**A: The Government forecast a growth in public sector wages over the medium term from \$863.9 million in FY2023/24 to \$941.7 million in FY 2026/27.**

#### **HON. ALFRED SEARS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 19**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to whether Bahamas Power and Light is using its operational revenue to cover the increased fuel cost to the company?

**A: The Company is not using operational revenue to cover the increased fuel cost. The Company has an accrual that has built up with the supplier due to the actual fuel costs outpacing the fuel charge collected.**

2. If so, will the Government indicate how this expenditure is to be covered and if the Government will be required to provide a taxpayer funded subsidy to BPL to cover any element of the fuel expenditure?

**A: The Fuel Charge under-recovery will be recovered via the recently implemented glide path recovery mechanism, which will be used to pay for current and overdue balances to the supplier. What the Government has done is**

**top up the existing facilities to BPL. I am referring specifically to the 2019 and the 2021 loans. These loan facilities provided BPL with additional cash to meet its obligations. The arrangements of these loans are the subject of ongoing negotiations between BPL and The Ministry of Finance.**

**THE HON. ALFRED SEARS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 20**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House whether the Government intends to subsidize Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) as the Prime Minister indicated via social media?

**A: The answer to this questions have been given at Question 19 No. 2 which I have just read. It should be noted that this was a policy that was entered into by the previous Administration.**

2. When this policy was formally communicated to the Bahamian people?

**A: This position was communicated to the Bahamian people on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2022, during the Prime Minister's address pertaining to the Fuel Charge increase.**

3. What is the value of the subsidy?

**A: As I have indicated previously, this is NOT a subsidy, but a Top-Up of the existing facility by way of a loan which was entered into in 2019 and 2021. The present value of the facility is pegged at \$100M.**

4. How much has been paid out?

**A: To date, approximately \$50M has been advanced to BPL.**

5. If the subsidies are to cover the increased cost of fuel, how does this align with the law that requires BPL to adjust the surcharge to meet its fuel obligations?

**A: The Government's interim funding aligns with the regulation that requires BPL to adjust the surcharge to recover all prudently incurred fuel costs. That is, the interim funding will be repaid from the funds recovered via the Fuel Charge.**

6. Is the government in breach of the related regulations?

**A: The Fuel Charge regulations provide for accrual within prescribed limits. In order to insulate consumers from the impact of rapidly-rising fuel costs brought on by the Ukraine crisis, we delayed the pass-through to coincide with the economy's emergence from the shocks brought on by Hurricane Dorian and the Covid-19 pandemic.**

## **HON. JOBETH COLEBY-DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 21**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House of the terms for the contract for the development of the Pinecrest Subdivision in southern New Providence?
2. What procurement method was used for these contracts and how many bids were received?
3. How many bids were received?
4. What is the value of the contract or contracts?
5. How much has been spent to date?

**A: Under the Housing Act, the Minister of Housing is a Corporate Sole and has the powers to carry out housing development, carry on any business or undertaking in or for the purposes of any housing development, promote and encourage the construction of dwellings and promote and encourage the establishment of such projects and facilities as would appear to the Minister to enhance the standard of living, general welfare, and well-being of a person.**

**The Opposition should be aware that the Minnis administration, of which the Leader of the Opposition and the member for East Grand Bahama served, published a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a private sector partner to construct homes on the island of New Providence. Upon coming to office, the review of proposals continued, and Arawak Homes Limited was selected as the private sector partner to build the homes at Pinecrest.**

## **THE HON. JOBETH COLEBY-DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 22**

1. Will the Honourable Minister confirm for this Honourable House the purpose why Bahamians were evicted from the domes in Abaco?

**A: The Opposition is directed to a press statement from the Office of the Prime Minister dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022. As outlined in the press statement, a major priority for the Government of The Bahamas is to rebuild communities devastated by Hurricane Dorian.**

**Under the previous administration, of which the Leader of the Opposition and the member for East Grand Bahama served, the domes in Spring City were designed for temporary shelter and not long-term use. Additionally, several concerns were raised in the public domain about the conditions at Spring City.**

**In so many ways, the Minnis Administration appeared unconcerned about the welfare of the people of Abaco after Hurricane Dorian. In the same way that our administration thinks it unconscionable to leave the unidentified remains of hurricane victims in a trailer for 8 months, so we think it unconscionable to allow people to live long-term in shelters which pose a major risk to personal and public health.**

**THE HON. JOBETH COLEBY-DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 23**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House why the Member of Parliament for South Abaco seemed blind sided with the decision to demolish the domes?
2. Did her Ministry advise the Member of Parliament for South Abaco of the date and time when the domes would be demolished?

**A: It would be improper and unwise for the Minister of Transport & Housing to speculate on the thought processes of another member of the Honourable House.**

**However, a multi-government agency committee had oversight of this project and there was extensive dialogue with occupants of the domes. The dialogue included clear timelines and the provision of special social assistance to verified dome occupants.**

**THE HON. JOBETH COLEBY-DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 24**

1. Will the Honourable Minister confirm for this Honourable House the Member of purpose of removing these domes is to make space for a new housing development?
2. If so, can the Minister confirm if the bid to construct these homes have gone out to tender?

**A: The Opposition should be aware that the Minnis administration, of which the Leader of the Opposition and the member for East Grand Bahama served; erected the domes on land that is within an existing housing development called Spring City.**

**THE HON. JOBETH COLEBY-DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 25**

1. Will the Honourable Minister confirm for this Honourable House the exact number of Taxi Plates given out or distributed since the PLP came to office?

**A: The Opposition is directed to a press statement from the Ministry of Transport & Housing dated 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. As outlined in the press statement, the Government of The Bahamas intends to modernize the transportation sector – a critical component of this goal is to bring long overdue changes to the distribution of taxi plates and to empower Bahamians. As the Minister of Transport, I wish to advise the Opposition that the process is not complete and remains in progress. Additionally, as the month of May is the period of renewal of franchises for taxi and livery plates, it would be improper for the Minister to**



confirm an exact number at this time. However, the Minister is minded to definitively state that efforts to improve the transportation sector is ongoing and that all decisions have been made and will be made in the best interests of the Bahamian people.

**THE HON. JOMO CAMPBELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 26**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House of the status of the pilot project for the roll-out of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) announced in November 2021?

**A: We're now at the stage where training has begun for information managers of the ten (10) pilot agencies for the roll-out of the FOI regime.**

2. What is the specific roll-out dates for each of the agencies within the pilot project?

**A: As for question two we're unable to give certain dates due to the fact that there are some dependent variables that are beyond our control these dates can move the goal post move from time to time.**

3. What is the timeline for the roll-out of the FOIA for all remaining public sector agencies and state own enterprises?

**A: As for question three (3) seek question two (2).**

**THE HON. JOMO CAMPBELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 28th September 2022) No. 27**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House of the terms of engagement for the consulting firm McKinsey and Company?

**A: Any and all questions relating to McKinsey & Co. we're unable to provide any information, that matter is currently in the purview of the Ministry of Finance.**

2. What procurement process was used to engage this firm?

**A: Any and all questions relating to McKinsey & Co. we're unable to provide any information, that matter is currently in the purview of the Ministry of Finance.**

3. How many bids were received?

**A: Any and all questions relating to McKinsey & Co. we're unable to provide any information, that matter is currently in the purview of the Ministry of Finance.**

4. What is the value of the contract and how much has been spent to date?

**A: Any and all questions relating to McKinsey & Co. we're unable to provide any information, that matter is currently in the purview of the Ministry of Finance.**

**THE HON. PHILIP DAVIS**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No.**

**28**

1. Will the Honourable Minister disclose to this Honourable House the amounts that were paid out to the Financial Secretary and others to settle cases or matters related to administrative leave and redeployment?

**A: The Government paid no amounts to the Financial Secretary or others to cease matters related to administrative leave and redeployment. Confidential settlements were arrived at with respect to previous administration's willful violation of the rights of certain individuals as set out in the Constitution and in various legislation.**

**THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No. 29**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to when the Government will pay the senior civil servants who they have sent on administrative leave and were found to have done nothing wrong, who were deployed out of their positions, and who were stripped from their legal posts and lawful secondments the same way they have settled matters for the Financial Secretary and others?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. The Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

**THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No. 30**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to when will senior civil servants will return to work?

**Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. The Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

**THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No.**

**31**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to when senior civil servants who were stripped of their duties will be given work in line with their positions?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. The Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

**THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No.**

**32**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to when the government will provide evidence that these officers were afforded the opportunity to defend against such charges as required under General Orders?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

2. When will the government provide evidence that these officers were given verbal and written warnings by their immediate supervisors as it is required under General Orders?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

3. Is the Minister saying that it is now illegal for civil servants to say that they do not and will not support the Government of the Day?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

#### **THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL**

**Hon. Michael Pintard**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No. 33**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to what measure did the government use to determine the amounts to be paid to those civil servants who have been placed on administrative leave or redeployed?

**A: Regarding the question, it appears to be a response to an accusation or question from the Leader of the Opposition. However, it is not clear what the accusation or question is, or what specific names are being referred to.**

**Therefore, the Ministry can only provide a clear response to this question with additional information. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition will need to provide more context or information to receive an appropriate response.**

#### **THE HON. ALFRED SEARS**

**Hon. Kwasi Thompson**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No. 34**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House if it is true that had

Government not delay, the cost paid by Bahamians would have been less than they are now as stated by the Chairman of Bahamas Power and Light (BPL)?

**A: The overall costs paid by Bahamians would remain the same regardless of the rate of recovery as the fuel costs are a direct pass-through; however, the monthly Fuel Charge (as in the case of the recently announced glide path schedule rates) is dependent on the period set for the recovery. It is noted that the Government sought to hold the Fuel Charge constant to provide price stability to the consumer over a fixed period, and is now facilitating the recovery of the accrued amount over an equitable comparable period to dampen the impact of the same, as announced in October by The Prime Minister.**

2. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House why has the government failed to ensure that the 11.5 cents continued to be locked in as stated by the former Chief Executive of BPL?

**A: The previous amount locked in was 10.5 cents NOT 11.5 cents. The locking in of Fuel Charge price is discretionary under the regulations and for the most part, is deemed most suitable under low and stable pricing conditions in the fuel market. At present, the management team considers it prudent to allow more frequent adjustments to facilitate greater efficiencies in the pass-through and/or recovery process.**

#### **THE HON. ALFRED SEARS**

**(Notice: 5th October 2022) No. 35**

1. Will the Honourable Minister advise this Honourable House as to why the Government has not removed Value Added Tax (VAT) off the fuel purchased by Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) and passed on to the consumer?

**A: The Government has not removed VAT on fuel purchases because BPL charges VAT on the electricity which it produces, and the removal of VAT would impose on the suppliers of the fuel a cost increase which would be greater than the VAT on fuel. This cost increase would be transferred to the consumers of electricity. It is to be remembered that VAT is charged on the importation of fuel and disallowing VAT on the sale of fuel would lead to an increase in the price of fuel. Most fuel used for generation is diesel so this decision would impact other consumers not just BPL.**

2. Would this not result in less cost to the consumers?

**A: Does not apply.**