



## MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

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### “MOWT RESPONDS TO THE TRINIDAD BUSINESS GUARDIAN “FIX POTHOLES YOURSELF”

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MEDIA RELEASE

The Ministry of Works and Transport wishes to address an article published on July 21 2022, in the Trinidad Business Guardian titled “Fix Potholes Yourself”. Incendiary in nature, the headline of this article is misleading, and once again, represents a growing trend in irresponsible journalism.

While the author may be seeking to captivate readers, this headline is problematic as it greatly mischaracterizes the message of the Minister of Works and Transport, who in the article emphasized that, “**more harm than good may be done if people took matters into their own hands to fix roads** .” This is quite the opposite sentiment of the sensationalist title.

As it relates to the portion of the article that discusses the issue of private entities desirous of fixing an area, the Ministry would like to take this opportunity to clarify some facts on the matter. Arrangements of this nature are in alignment with established Public-Private Partnership guidelines. What the Minister described to the journalist was the possibility of public-private arrangements in which the Ministry will review and provide technical advice to an **established body or group**. This is often carried out by companies or organizations in

the vein of Corporate Social Responsibility. The Minister's statement also clearly warns that if addressed the wrong way, overzealous but unskilled individuals can damage the roadway.

"Fix Potholes Yourself" conjures an approach that is irresponsible and invites everyone to take personal action to "fix" road issues in their community. While the Ministry understands and acknowledges the concerns of the general public, in most situations, such actions can further damage the county's \$40 billion dollar road network.

The track record of publishing misleading information on the part of the Trinidad Business Guardian is extensive. This is not the Ministry's first public statement on the newspaper's reporting that distorts the facts. While the Ministry believes in freedom of the press, as demonstrated by the Minister's ease of accessibility, it is important to keep in mind that in a democratic system like Trinidad and Tobago's, the media should remain professional and responsible, exploring all facets of an issue, reporting the findings accurately from the headline to the final punctuation mark.

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