



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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October 13th, 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

TTPS Launches Fraud Office in East Trinidad, Pledges to Tackle Delays in Property, Car Fraud Reports

Communities in East Trinidad are expected to receive improved service in investigations with the establishment of a new fraud office in the region, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) says.

This as the TTPS launched its Fraud Squad East Office today at the Sangre Grande Police Station.

The office will be operational Mondays to Saturdays from 8 am to 5 pm and can be contacted via telephone at 691-3615 or 612-0102 Ext 71074 or via email at fraud@ttps.gov.tt.

The establishment of the office will assist with alleviating the burden of having residents in the region traverse to Port-of-Spain or San Fernando to lodge reports and will focus heavily on fraudulent conversion and property fraud, which are more prevalent in the Eastern Division.

Inspector Tricia Smith explained that while reports of fraud are “wide-ranging and it affects all the Divisions almost equally,” the Fraud Squad has observed that there is higher amount of reports of fraudulent conversion in the foreign used car industry and property fraud in Eastern communities.

“The nature of financial crime is constantly changing and is growing increasingly complex. This difficulty in keeping track of this moving target has made us adjust the way we operate and operationalised our efforts to combat fraud,” Insp Smith added.

She continued, “Our strategic efforts include but are not limited to enhanced collaboration and training. To this end, we have opened up this East office and embarked on a series of training throughout the Divisions to deal with this problem and equip our peers to treat with it as well.”

Meanwhile, Head of the Fraud Squad, Senior Superintendent (Ag.), Arlet Groome, said the office in the Eastern Division is poised to create a symbiotic and learning relationship as fraud detectives will be able to grasp the culture of the various officers, stations and neighbourhoods in the region.

“This is a sigh of relief,” Snr Supt (Ag.) Groome stressed, adding, “In the inception of the Fraud Squad dated back to 1965 to present, we only have two offices existing, one in Port-of-Spain and San Fernando.”

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“Coming to Eastern is bringing the community we serve closer to the Fraud Squad and those persons who would normally shy away from journeying to make a report, we hope that we can reach them in some way or the other,” he said.

He also hinted that there are plans to establish a Tobago office in the future.

He said this was necessary as white collar crimes, particularly fraud, is prevalent throughout the country and measures are being introduced to counteract this trend and prosecute those who are involved.

“Fraud is all-inclusive, fraud is dynamic, fraud is spreading and we need to capture fraud in all corners of our community,” he highlighted.

The senior officer said the move is also in tandem with the Gang Reduction and Community Empowerment (GRACE) Project which was launched in May by Commissioner of Police (Ag.) Mc Donald Jacob. GRACE aims to prevent, tackle and dismantle criminal gang activities using a holistic crime-fighting approach.

“We are taking the task to bring that empowerment to the residents of the Eastern community to have the Fraud Squad at their footsteps. Gang is not only about violent crimes,” Snr Supt (Ag.) Groome said.

He clarified, “In white collar crime, gangs represent any collection of people, two or more, that come together to do a crime, and like that, I must say, the one who makes the card, the one who collects the items, the one who stores the item, the one who sells the item, the ones who collect the items for delivery, that constitute a gang in white collar crime.”

Senior Superintendent (Ag.), Eastern Division, Ryan Khan, said the presence of the fraud detectives will increase the quality of services to the community as police officers attached to the various stations will benefit from cross training. This, he said, will boost their ability to be aware of and understand the complexities of fraud reports when citizens initially make reports at the stations’ reception areas.

Snr Supt (Ag.) Khan revealed, “The Fraud Squad has offered us training for 25 officers within the next week.”

He explained, “What that will do for our staff, it will improve the professionalism as training always improve officers as it is something that we in Eastern Division always embrace. For the community, it means that they no longer have to go to Port-of-Spain to talk to an investigator. It is only a win-win situation.”

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