IN THE THIRD SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA

THE REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS ON THE 2016 ANNUAL BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Draft Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Communications for 2016 was referred to the Select Committee on Communications for consideration and report pursuant to Orders 140 (4) and 182 of the Standing Orders of the House. This followed the presentation to Parliament of the 2016 Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government by the Minister of Finance (MoF), Mr. Seth Terkper, in accordance with Article 179 of the 1992 Constitution and Order 140 (2) of the Standing Orders of the House. The Deputy Minister of Communications, Hon. Edward Ato Sarpong, with a technical team from the Ministry, its Departments and Agencies, as well as officers from the MoF, assisted the Committee during its deliberations.

2.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Committee had recourse to the following documents
- The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- The Standing Orders of the House;
- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2016 Financial Year;
- The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2015 Financial Year;
- Report of the Ministry of Communications on the actual releases and expenditure of the Ministry of Communications for 2015 (January – October).
- Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Communications on the 2015 Annual Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Communications.

3.0 VISION AND MISSION OF THE MINISTRY

The Ministry of Communications (MoC) has the core responsibility of initiating and developing national policies aimed at achieving cost effective information and communications infrastructure and services, for the enhancement and promotion of economic competitiveness in line with the policy guidelines of the Medium Term National Development Policy Framework (MTNDPF) 2014-2017. It also has additional responsibility for the empowerment of the people of Ghana through Information dissemination, training and strengthening of the capacity of the media for ownership of policies, programmes, projects and activities necessary for social and economic transformation.

In the light of this, ICT, as a tool, is significantly complementing the promotion and attainment of the aspirations and objectives of Government in the four thematic areas namely: **Putting People First, A Strong and Resilient Economy, Expanding Infrastructure and Transparent and Accountable Governance.** Harnessing the ICT potentials of the country is therefore important in the bid to make Ghana remain competitive in the dynamic global ICT environment.

3.0.1 Vision

The vision of the Ministry of Communications (MoC) is to manage the convergence of communications technologies to facilitate the promotion of a viable integrated national development process within a global setting.

3.0.2 Mission

In consequence, the mission of the Ministry is to facilitate the development of a reliable and cost-effective world-class Communications infrastructure and services, driven by appropriate technological innovations and facilitate a two (2)-way free flow of timely information and gathering of feedback for all citizens to enhance national unity and the promotion of economic competitiveness in a knowledge-based environment.

4.0   OBJECTIVES,CORE FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMMES

4.0.1   The following are the policy objectives of the Ministry.

i.   To promote rapid development and deployment of national ICT infrastructure
ii.   To strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for managing the ICT subsector
iii.   To increase the use of ICT in all sectors of the economy
iv.   To improve transparency and access to public Information
v.   To enhance development communication across the public sector and policy cycle

4.0.2   The Core Functions of the Ministry are: To

i.   Initiate and formulate ICT policies taking into account the needs and aspirations of the people.
ii.   Collaborate with MDAs to effectively disseminate information about Government policies, programmes and activities.
iii.   Coordinate, monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of the Communications Sector.
iv.   Development of appropriate regulation to protect consumers and stimulate competition;
v.   Building capacity for the ICT sector;
vi.   Gather and assess feedback on Government policies, programmes and activities
vii.   Provide professional training in film and television production, broadcast journalism and creative arts
viii. Create and enhance awareness of government policies and programmes to the public in English and Ghanaian languages
ix.   Provide public relations support to the Presidency, MDAs and MMDAs
x.   Process and disseminate local and foreign news
xi.   Promoting Ghana's international marketing agenda

5.0 MINISTERIAL SETUP

The Ministry of Communications is made up of the following agencies and statutory bodies that assist with the implementation of policies related to operational and regulatory framework:

i. Postal and Courier Services Regulatory Commission(PCSRC);
ii. Ghana Meteorological Agency (GMet);
iii. Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT (AITI-KACE);
iv. National Information Technology Agency (NITA).
v. Data Protection Commission(DPC)
vi. National Communications Authority(NCA)
vii. Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC)
viii. National Identification Authority (NIA)
ix. Ghana Post Company Limited(GPCL)
x. Information Services Department(ISD)
xi. Ghana News Agency(GNA)
xii. National Film and Television Institute(NAFTI)
xiii. Ghana Broadcasting Corporation(GBC)
xiv. Graphic Communications Group Company Limited(GCGCL)
xv. New Times Corporation(NTC)
xvi. Ghana Publishing Company Limited(GPCL)

In pursuance of the Ministry's mandate, these Agencies have the responsibility of handling specific operational functions of the sector, which have substantial impact on the private sector industry players and the nation as a whole.

TABLE 1. Policy Outcome Indicators and Targets

Outcome Indicator Description	Unit of Measurement	Baseline		Latest Status		Target	
		Year	Value	Year	Value	Year	Value
Teledensity/Penetration Rate: Fixed and Mobile Lines (source: NCA)	The total number of telephone Mobile lines to the total population	2013	107.19%	2015	121.6 %	2017	128%
	The total number of telephone Fixed lines to the total population	2013	1.03%	2015	0.97%	2017	1.04%
Penetration of Mobile Data (source: NCA)	The total mobile data subscribers to the total population	2013	39.5%	2015	63.3%	2017	85%
Bandwidth capacity available for ICT development (International connectivity)	Percentage change in the bandwidth capacity available for ICT development)	2013	12.3 Terabits per second (Tbps)	2015	15	2017	15
Promotion of social accountability in the public policy cycle	Number of Policy Fairs	2013	1	2015	0	2017	4
	No. of Government for the People Forum held	2014	10	2015	10	2017	10
Improved Transparency and public access to information	No. of Meet-the-Press series held	2013	20	2015	10	2017	25
	No. of local stories processed daily by GNA	2013	20,075	2015	14,880	2017	23,360
	Number of foreign stories processed daily by GNA	2013	8,320	2015	8,160	2017	16,425
	Number of National Events covered by GBC	2013	80	2015	72	2017	100
	No. of Public Education Campaigns held	2013	3	2015	1	2017	4
Enhanced Media capacity	Number of Student trained in Film and Television Production by NAFTI	2013	45	2015	123	2017	210
Registration of Data Controllers and Data Processors across the country	Number of Data Controllers and Data Processors registered	2013	-	2015	194	2017	300
Public education and sensitization campaign on data protection.	Number of individuals reached	2013	-	2015	7,055	2017	20,000
	Number of corporate institutions reached	2013	-	2015	500	2017	1,000

6.0   2015 IN RETROSPECT – ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

6.0.1 Key Achievements for Ministry of Communications & erstwhile Ministry of Information and Media Relations as of date

The various activities and programmes undertaken by the Ministry during the year in retrospect resulted in the following achievements:

A. Non-Financial

The following are the key achievements recorded by the Ministry so far in 2015

i.   Telecom Sector

The telecommunications sector continued to register impressive growth rates in subscription as a result of favourable enabling environment and investment in infrastructure development. The total telephone subscription for both cellular and fixed lines as at August 2015 stood at 33,099,514 representing 8.09% growth over the December 2014 figure of 30,621,178. Mobile data subscription as of August 2015 stood at 17,089,034, representing about 62.8% increase. This rapid growth in telephone and mobile data subscriptions has improved communication and increased revenue to the State.

ii.   Quality of Service

The Ministry through the National Communications Authority (NCA) continues to monitor and enforce quality of service (QoS) requirements by way of measuring Operators performance in the delivery of services. The NCA undertook regular monitoring exercises to ensure that service providers comply with the license conditions related to the assigned frequencies. These exercises have led to greater customer responsiveness and satisfaction. The NCA has also developed and adopted the use of Monthly Verification of Operators' Marketing Activities, which has reduced consumer complaints and enforced compliance.

iii. Digital Terrestrial Television

The Ministry is managing the analogue to digital broadcasting migration process to ensure that every Ghanaian can continue to watch TV during the migration period. The Ministry on 7th July 2015 signed a supply and installation contract for the implementation of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) network project. The first phase of the project which covers the Headend and digital broadcast service in Greater Accra Region and Ashanti Region is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The service Provider has commenced work at all sites for the first phase.The Ministry as part of the transition arrangement has advertised for the procurement of Set-Top-Boxes (STBs) to enable analogue TVs receive the digital signals and has commenced the process to auction the first Digital Dividend in 800MHz frequency band. This will generate the revenue to be utilized in funding the DTT network infrastructure. The educational and awareness campaign has also commenced with Bill Boards mounted at strategic locations on the digital migration process.

iv.   e-Government Infrastructure project

The Ministry is pursuing the implementation of the e-Government Infrastructure platform project to provide effective connectivity to MDAs and MMDAs. In 2015, The Ministry targeted to construct 90 LTE sites. So far, 45 LTE sites have been completed and will be commissioned soon. The remaining 45 LTE sites will be completed by the end of December 2015.
This will improve internet connectivity for all MDAs/MMDAs, enhance information flow, service delivery and increase revenue generation.

v. Eastern Corridor Fibre optic project

The 808.35km Eastern Corridor fibre optic project linking Ho to Bawku and from Yendi to Tamale has been completed and commissioned by H. E President John Dramani Mahama.The project will improve coverage of telecom services, boost businesses and create employment.

vi. National Data Centre

The Ministry has completed the construction of the Secondary Data Centre in Kumasi to serve as a redundancy to the Primary Data Centre in Accra. The physical infrastructure of the Primary Data Centre has been completed. The wiring, networking and installation of all relevant electronic equipment however are expected to be completed by 30th December 2015.

The 600 racks capacity Primary Data Centre when fully completed will be the largest in West Africa and will serve as data repository for both public and private entities in Ghana. It will provide safe and reliable space for data storage for both public and private sector organizations as well as disaster recovery services. The Primary Data Centre will generate revenues from hosting services when completed.

vii. e-Government Applications:

➢ **One Stop Service Centre (OSSC)**

In 2014, the Ministry established a One Stop Service Centre to offer MDAs and citizens the opportunity to acquire government/ public service at a central location.

Two additional institutions namely National Communications Authority (NCA) and Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) were added to the One Stop Service Centre in Greater Accra Region. The total list of institutions to date is as follows:

- Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS)
- Ghana Water Company Ltd (GWC)
- Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA)
- Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA)
- Minerals Commission (MC)
- Ghana Free Zones Board (GFZB)
- National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA)
- National Communications Authority

The Centre will fast track service delivery and enhance customer satisfaction.

viii. e-Immigration

The Ministry is deploying an Integrated e-Immigration system, which will regulate entry into and exit from Ghana in a more efficient manner. The system is being deployed at Tema, Takoradi, (Sea Ports) Aflao, Paga, Elubo (Land Borders), Kotoka International Airport and Ghana Immigration Service Headquarters. The Overall system deployment is to be completed by the end of the year.
The project when completed will facilitate movement of travellers/clients as well as increase revenue generation for government.

ix. e-Justice

The implementation of the e-Justice System, which is an integrated solution for Ghana's Judicial Service, which will link the Judiciary to the Attorney-General's Department, Police and Prisons Services to speed up the administration of justice, is in progress.

x. Integrated e-Health System

The Ministry is facilitating the roll out of the pilot e-Health system at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital to link up with the Wa Regional Hospital and the Zebilla District Hospital.

As at June, 2015, 7 out of 23 Departments earmarked for the intervention at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital have gone live on the system. At the Wa Regional Hospital, 8 Departments out of the 16 earmarked have also gone live. Additionally, all 11 Departments at Zebilla District Hospital have gone live. This will ensure that Health expertise is easily shared to improve health care delivery.

xi. e-Cabinet

The Ministry of Communications has lunched the e-Cabinet System and has accordingly supplied Fifty (50) convertible laptops to Cabinet. This is expected to save time and cost as well as improve productivity.

xii. Business Process Outsourcing (BPO)

In 2014, the Ministry successfully secured an amount of US$8.84 million for the refurbishment of the PWD warehouse to serve as BPO centre. About 80% of the work has been done, when completed by the end of 2015, the Centre will create 10,000 direct and indirect jobs for the youth.

xiii. Cyber Security Policy

The Ministry organized a validation workshop for cyber security experts, academia, policy makers, regulators and general users of ICT to finalize the cyber security policy for implementation to guide Government and industry in protecting critical national Information Infrastructure for cyber threats and attacks.
The Ministry is also collaborating with the ITU International Multi Party Against Cyber Security Threat (IMPACT) as part of measures to fight the menace of cybercrime within the country.

The National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-GH) continues to monitor threats and attacks in the Ghanaian cyberspace in real time.

xiv. Universal Access

In furtherance of its resolve to bridge the digital gap between the served and unserved/underserved areas of the country, the Ministry has completed the construction of 21 Enhanced Community Information Centres (e-CICs) throughout the 10 regions of Ghana to bring internet access to closer to the people. The selected areas were: Keta, Battor, Techiman-Krobo, Twifo Atti-Morkwa, Bodi, Effiduase, Glefe, Pantang, Amanfrom, Drobonso, Anum, Bekwai, Nandom, Welembelle, Sagnarigu, Pusiga, Gambaga, Kpetoe, Talensi, Ofoase, and Lassia-Tuolu. Sixteen (16) out of the 21 have been commissioned and handed over to the beneficiary communities. The remaining 5 e-CICs will be commissioned before the end of the year.

xv. ICT Skills and Human Resource Development:

➢ Capacity Building

During the year under review, the Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT (KACE) trained 327 students in areas of software, security and networking courses, and organized sandwich programmes for tertiary students, executive and corporate entities.

National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI) trained 385 students in film and television production, media and creative arts.

➢ Girls in ICT Skills Training

The Ministry continued to promote the celebration of "Girls-in-ICT" programme to provide the platform for as many as possible girls and young maidens to interact with mentors within the ICT sector and also extend it to other regions to generate the interest of Girls in technology, computer science, new communication media and engineering, as well as offer them the opportunities to choose careers in the area of ICT.

For 2015 celebration, nine hundred and seven (907) girls from public schools in Volta Region were brought together and trained in the use of ICT tools and equipment. The programme created the opportunity for the girls to interact with the mentors and to work together with other girls from other Districts in the Volta Region. There was also an awareness creation on Child Online Protection (COP).

xvi. Transparent and Accountable Governance

To further promote transparent and accountable governance, the Ministry organized Meet-the-Press Series for 10 MDAs and 5 Press Briefings to inform the citizens on government policies, programmes and projects.

In addition to its annual live coverage of National Events, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation covered the 47th Session of Heads of ECOWAS meeting and National Forum on Single Spine Salary Structure in all the regions to inform the general public and ensure their active participation in decision making.

The Ghana News Agency (GNA) also processed 16,360 local and 8,320 foreign stories.

xvii. Challenges

As a whole, the Ministry as well as its departments and agencies, encountered the following challenges:

- ➢ Inadequate budgetary allocation
- ➢ Delay in the release of funds
- ➢ Inadequate skilled professionals
- ➢ Lack of office accommodation
- ➢ Difficulty in getting financial clearance to recruit and replace staff
- ➢ Lack of meteorological equipment
- ➢ Obsolete equipment
- ➢ Lack of funds for running and maintenance of network operating system
- ➢ Non payment for internet service by MDA/MMDAs
- ➢ Non payment for services rendered to Ghana Civil Aviation and Ghana Airport Company

6.0.2 AGENCY SPECIFIC ISSUES

i.   NAFTI

As with every year, NAFTI lamented the lack of funding for its programmed activities. NAFTI once again pleaded that it must be moved to the Ministry of Education because it is a tertiary institution and its inability to access the GETFUND is tantamount to being shortchanged.

ii.   DATA PROTECTION COMMISSION (DPC)

A. Recruitment/Staffing

The Commission is still the process of recruiting seven personnel to help run its operations even though it secured approval, at the beginning of the year, to recruit the initial staff of 15 to facilitate its operations. This was not realized in spite of efforts made due to challenges associated with the finalization of conditions of service, financial clearance as well as non-release of the 2015 allocated budget. The Commission therefore continues to run its operations with 2 permanent staff (one seconded from controller), 5 temporary retained and trained national service persons and an intern. As a result of accommodation challenges also, the Commission was also unable to take on new national service persons.

B. Awareness Creation

As part of the Commission's mandate to sensitize Ghanaians on data protection and personal privacy, management provided technical support and training to a number of institutions including the Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Defence, Scancom Ghana Limited, Ghana Bar Association and some media organizations among others.

Management also undertook a number of media engagements (print, radio, T.V and social media) on data protection. The Commission circulated three (3) simplified informative leaflets on the Commission, data protection rights and obligations of data controllers and processors. Several advertisements were placed in the Daily Graphic which is expected to have reached a total of about 3000 readers countrywide.The Commission was featured on the Data Protection Law and Policy Journal of Data Guidance - A UK based Data Protection Services Company in May 2015 (volume 12, issue 05) which reached a total of about 500 readership worldwide.

The Commission's docu-drama is also being circulated via T.V and social media (YouTube & Facebook) to continue to educate the general public on data protection. Below is more information on awareness creation.

C.   Registration

- The Commission sent out about 400 letters requesting data controllers and processors to register in compliance with the Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843).
- The Commission commenced charging the fees below in accordance with LI 2216 which was passed by parliament in December 2014.
  - Large Data Controllers – GH₵1,500.00
  - Medium Data Controllers – GH₵750.00
  - Small Data Controllers – GH₵100.00

- The registration of data controllers/processors commenced on the 1st May, 2015. During the period under review the Commission has recorded a total of 388 application registrations. Out of this, management has approved and certified 272 registrations, 71 are pending authorization, and 45 have been rejected.

D.   Strategic plan for the Commission

The e-Transform under the Ministry of Communications is facilitating the process of procuring a consultant to develop a strategic and institutional plan for the Commission.

E.   Financial Status

Even though the DPC requested for GHS9,402,308.55 to facilitate the delivery of its mandate, only the amount of GHS216,969.00 was approved but of that amount, there was no release whatsoever and all activities were funded from IGF. The Commission at the beginning of the year projected generation of about GHS650,000.00 from the registration of data controllers and processors but this amount was not realized due to the funding challenges faced with the building of an IT System as well as delays in finalizing the legal documentation which were to facilitate the implementation.

Through the support of GCNET however, the DPC was able to commence the registration of Data Controllers and Processors in Ghana on 1st May 2015 which, as at 15th December 2015 has generated an amount of about GHS415,000.00. The DPC had no fund releases whatsoever from GoG and had to rely fully on its IGF to run its operations. An amount of GHC415,000 was realized which was 63.8% of its projections.

iii.   NITA

A. Non-Financial Performance

The Danish Development Agency (DANIDA) and the World Bank sponsored a number of projects which are at various stages of completion. These include:

➤ **E-Services/Ghana E- Payment Platform (GEPP)**
The Government of Ghana (GoG) e-Services Portal is a one-stop services and information portal being offered by various MDAs and MMDAs to the public. This is also linked with the Ghana Government E-Payment/e-Commerce Portal (GEPP), apilot project which has been implemented to support payment of government services delivered online and provide postal and delivery services for thirteen (13) selected MDAs including Ghana Revenue Authority, Ghana Police Service-CID, Ghana Tourism Authority, Accra Metropolitan Assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Passport Office, Food and Drugs Authority, National Identification Authority, National Communications Authority, Driver and Vehicle License Authority, Minerals Commission, Department of Births and Deaths, Registrar General's Department and Ghana Immigration Service. The GEPP is currently integrated with the Government e-Services Portal, the GRA Portal and the RGD Portal.

➤ **One Stop Service Centre (OSSC)**
The One Stop Service Centre provides a one stop place for MDAs to provide government/ public service to citizens. The pilot service centre is located at the Ghana Postal Company offices at the Kwame Nkrumah Circle. A number of public service organizations such as the National Health Insurance Authority, Fire Service, Ghana Water Company Ltd. Minerals Commission, Free Zones Board, Ghana Tourism Authority, National Communications Authority, etc have been allocated booths at the Centre.

➤ **E-Cabinet**
The e-Cabinet system has been implemented to automate the operations of the Cabinet Secretariat and Cabinet.
Completed Activities
•   The e-Cabinet Project was successfully launched on 19th March 2015 and all Cabinet Ministers have so far been trained to use the system.

- Training was organized for the Cabinet Secretariat on the e-Cabinet System at the Secretariat.
- Training was organized for Ministers' and Deputy Ministers' Secretaries from 16th to 18th March 2015 at NITA Conference room, 6th floor, Ghana House, High Street, Accra.
- Digitization of cabinet records from 1993 to 2013 is completed, digitization of 2014 records is ongoing

➤ Rural Fiber Optic Project and Managed Services (Eastern Corridor Fiber Optic Project)

The project is designed to build a fiber optic cable as a backbone for the Eastern Corridor of Ghana from Ho to Bawku spanning a distance of 775 km. The network will be extended from Yendi to Tamale. The Yendi – Tamale section has been completed and handed over. So far the project has been completed. The Secondary Data Centre component located at the campus of the KNUST has also been completed.

B. Financial Performance

The approved budget estimates for the 2015 fiscal year was Four Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand, Six Hundred and Seven Ghana cedis (GH¢492,607.00). This amount was to distributed to cover the three (3) items; compensation, goods and services, and assets as follows:

Compensation	388,958,00
Good and Services	49,629.00
Assets	54,020.00
Total	**492,607.00**

C. Key Challenges / Constraints

➤ Non- Release of funds.

Since the beginning of the year, 2015, the Agency has not received any releases from the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Communications for activities under assets. This is a major constraint affecting the operations of the government network.

➤ Poor staffing

Another major challenge which is confronting the Agency and negatively impacting on the carrying out of its mandate, is lack of the requisite technical staff (IT Engineers and Information Technology Officers).

➤ Inadequate Logistics

The lack of logistics, including reliable means of transport and the lack of up-to-date software continues to pose serious challenges to the Agency. The acquisitions of vehicles is indispensable for the monitoring of the base stations located in the regional and district capitals throughout the country.

➤ Failure of MDAs and MMDAs to pay for the provision of internet services etc

MDAs and MMDAs continue failing to pay for internet services provided them. The explanation always given is that no releases have been made by the MoFEP under the goods and services item in their budget. The failure of the MDAs and MMDAs continue to negatively affect the efficient monitoring and maintenance of the national network.

iv. KACE

The Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence reiterated its plea to the Ministry for a speedy laying and passing of the Bill which is to transform it into a tertiary institution and remove it from government subvention. This is because once passed, the Act will allow the KACE independence and the ability to enter into highly profitable

partnerships with other institutions as well as organizations thereby optimizing productivity. For the year in retrospect, the only support KACE received from the GoG was for compensation. A pending payment for goods and services from 2011, of GHC12,824.00, was the only release the KACE received for that line. The institution therefore kept expenditure to the barest minimum as everything had to be catered for from its IGF of GHC1,585,488.65, with utilities alone swallowing up GHC351,106.74 of the total amount.

v.   GMet

The GMet as usual had its releases for compensation in full but had shortfalls in all other areas. The amount of GHC129,311.00, was allocated for Goods and Services but only an amount ofGHC61,237.00 was released and utilized. In addition to this, Ghana Airport Company as well as Ghana Civil Aviation are yet to pay some arrears for services rendered them by the GMet therefore only GHC867,523.00 of its expected IGF of GHC3,350,300.00 was realized.

The main challenges facing GMet include the acquisition and maintenance of equipment, training and retention of staff as well as the provision of a conducive working environment. The lack of an appropriate guiding policy, has led to the inability to generate the necessary funds to run its operations. The Gmet hereby pleads with the House to mount the necessary pressure on the Ministry and government to ensure that, as soon as possible, the necessary laws are passed to enable the GMet become an economically viable entity as it has the potential of being weaned from government subvention.

vi.   PCSRC

Of the amount of GHC269,198.00 allocated from GoG for compensation, only GHC97,734.00 has been released as the intended recruitment was not carried out. This is because there was no financial clearance. The amount of GHC78,265.00 was approved for Goods and Services for the Commission in 2015 but only GHC23,000.00 has been released while nothing was allocated for Capex. The Commission now has only one vehicles and no offices. The Ministry and the officials of the PCSRC are negotiating with the NCA for some office space in the old NCA buildings.

Despite these challenges, the Commission was able to arrest about 13 illegal courier and postal operators, registered of 6 new operators, paid all outstanding utility bills of their makeshift office accommodation and paid all outstanding withholding taxes. The Commission also realized IGF of GHC409,305.00, a 49.7% increase in projected GHC273,410.00.

vii.   GBC

As at September, neitherthe GHC131,810.41 allocated for Goods and Services nor the GHC156,039.00 allocated for CapEx has been released. And, only GHC15,621,108.38 IGF had been realized. The GBC was therefore gagged in carrying out most of its programmes and expressed hope that the Broadcasting Bill would soon be laid in the House to enable it become more independent in its activities so as to be removed from government subvention.

viii.   GNA

Apart from the allocation for compensation, there has been no release for capex since January 2015 and only GHC92,708.00 of the GHC155,455.00 allocated for goods and services was actually released and utilized.

7.0 EXPECTATIONS FOR 2016

The Ministry, through its departments and agencies, will continue to pursue policies, programmes and projects to enhance the rapid growth of the ICT sector. In this regard the following will be pursued:

i. ICT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

➢ e-Transform Ghana Project

The Ministry will continue the implementation of the e-Transform Ghana Project in 2016. It will focus on employing ICT-based interventions, create job opportunities and promote entrepreneurship. Among the programmes that will be implemented under the e-Transform Ghana Project are:

- National Electronic ID System
- E-Immigration System
- E-Procurement System
- E-Parliament System
- E-Justice System
- Digitization of Paper Records
- Integrated e-Health Systems
- Teachers network, Educational Portal and Capacity Building
- E-Services
- Tertiary Institutions Access Program (TIAP)

➢ Development of the Western Corridor Fibre Project

The Ministry seeks to pursue the expansion of the national broadband infrastructure to cover the western corridor and offshore oil and gas exploration areas. The project is expected to build some terrestrial fibre at the south western part of the country which is rich in agriculture and mining activities. There will be a link to connect to the Eastern Corridor fibre to enhance its robustness and reliability. The Ministry in the coming year will publish the request for proposals for the project.

➢ ICT Park Development

The Government of Ghana through the Ministry has entered into a partnership agreement with the Republic of Mauritius to invest over USD 200m in the ICT Park at the Tema Free Zone Enclave which when commenced and completed will create several thousands of jobs for the youth.

➢ Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT)

The Ministry will pursue the phased rollout plan of the DTT project and complete phases two (Volta, Northern, Upper East & Upper West Regions) and three (Central, Western, Eastern, Brong Ahafo Regions) by March 2016. The Ministry will also continue its sensitization campaign and public education nationwide on the digital migration process.

➢ Meteorological Services

In line with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) standards for quality management systems, the Ghana Meteorological Agency will improve upon its service delivery in the country by undertaking the following:

- Recruit and Train Fifty (50) Meteorologists in Aeronautics, Agromet, Hydromet, weather Forecasting and Climate services

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- Procure and Install three (3) Weather Surveillance Radars (WSR) and One Hundred & Forty-Four (144) Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) in the Country
- Procure and install Three (3) Vertical Wind Profilers and Weather Communication Systems and Data Processing

ii. SCALING UP OF E-GOVERNMENT APPLICATIONS:

➤ E-Services

The Ministry of Communications has deployed a Portal Infrastructure to provide a platform for Content Management, e-Forms, Document Workflow and online Payments for various Government Agencies. This portal will serve as a one-stop shop for the public to access government services, and also provide one-stop source of information to the public. In addition to this, the e-Service module will merge with government services and help to eliminate the difficulty involved in handling complex and bureaucratic processes at interdependent Ministries and Agencies that provide government services.

➤ Integrated e-Health System

Having successfully carried out trial runs in most of the Departments of the Piloted Hospitals, the Ministry intends to advance the project by ensuring the completion of the following:
- Conduct trial run of the 16 remaining Departments at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital by the end of 2016
- Monitor the Go live and rollout to the 11 Departments at Zebilla District Hospital
- Conduct Trail-run of the system to the remaining 8 Departments by first quarter of 2016 at the Wa Regional Hospital

➤ E-Parliament System

This involves providing support to Parliament of Ghana in electronically conducting parliamentary processes that will allow a paperless flow of information within Parliament. Additional requirements/scope including software request are being assessed.

➤ E-Justice System

The development of a Case Management System to improve on the effectiveness and efficiency of justice delivery in Ghana is being pursued. It will include the upgrade of LAN infrastructure for 30 target courts and provision of related hardware and peripherals.

➤ Establishment of mLabs/mhubs

The Ministry will establish and grow one mLab in Accra and two mHubs (in Kumasi and one other location to be agreed upon in the northern region), as a self-sustaining initiative. This will support the growth of innovation, entrepreneurship and job creation in Ghana through promotion of an environment where entrepreneurs can participate in launching new products and services, scaling up e-applications and services, and increasing uptake of e-applications.

➤ Establishment of 3 Medical Call Centres

The Ministry will set-up three medical call centers in the Greater Accra Region, the middle belt and the northern belt, in collaboration with the private sector to provide first response to citizen inquiries about medical and healthcare issues in remote and rural areas.

These medical call centres will provide essential linkages with physicians and urban healthcare centers, and provide urgent and emergency healthcare advice to patients seeking medical care. These centers will be well-versed in healthcare services, and staffed with nurses, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, or community health workers. The centers will provide immediate medical advice to patients, and necessary referrals to medical experts or healthcare centers.

> ## Connectivity to selected district hospitals and Senior High Schools

The Ministry will provide internet connectivity to 100 priority district and regional health centers in the less developed parts of Ghana in the year 2016. The objective is to address a critical need of connectivity for selected district and regional health centers from the least developed parts of Ghana.

Similarly, internet connectivity to the bottom 200 secondary schools will be provided in order to improve quality of teaching and learning. The selected schools will be eligible for a high-speed internet, equipment, devices as well as LAN and computers for schools labs.

> ## Tertiary Institutions Connectivity Programme

The Ministry will pursue a tertiary institutions network programme in eight (8) selected tertiary institutions to strengthen ICT capacity at the nation's tertiary institutions. The programme consists of the provision of (a) infrastructure, (b) connectivity and (c) applications to the following public institutions:

- University of Ghana
- University of Cape Coast
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
- St. Theresa Training College, Hohoe
- OLA Training College, Cape Coast
- University College of Education, Winneba
- University of Development Studies
- Sunyani Polytechnic

iii. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

> ## Support ICT Skills Training with focus on Girls in ICT

The Ministry will further promote the agenda of putting people first. In this regard, the Ministry will in 2016 train 900 girls in ICT programmes as part of Girls in ICT Celebration to be held in Tamale. The essence is to generate the needed interest as well as encourage girls take up ICT related courses. As part of the programme, the sensitization of Child-On-Line Protection will also be undertaken.

Again, in recognition of the important role the Internet is playing in the provision of quality education for children, the Ministry continued to collaborate with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization (CTO); the Ghana Police Service, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and the National Communications Authority (NCA) to pursue the COP initiative as a platform to raise awareness about child online safety issues.

In furtherance of its core mandate, KACE has projected to train 3000 participants in areas of software, security and networking courses, and sandwich programmes for tertiary students, executive and corporate entities.

NAFTI has projected to train 178 students in film and television production and other media and creative arts through its Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree, Certificate in film and video production, Top-up for Diploma Graduates.

> ## Transparent and Accountable Governance

- ### Meet-the-Press

To further promote transparent, responsive and accountable governance, the Ministry in 2016 will organize 25 Meet-The-Press Series to inform the citizens on the operations of the various MDAs and MMDAs as well as government policies, programmes and projects.

- ### Government for the People (G4P)

The Ministry will also organize 10 Regional Government for the People (G4P) fora to disseminate government information to the public and provide the platform for citizens to engage public officials on their concerns.

- ### Policy Fair

The national policy fair which is meant to improve the engagement of government with the people and make information on development policy available to the citizens will be pursued to continue to bring governance closer to the people.

> ## Broadcasting Bill

Following the validation workshop to solicit input of stakeholders and also address some lingering concerns, the Ministry will in 2016 ensure the finalilization of the Bill for submission to Cabinet for consideration and approval.

> ## Electronic Media Services

In 2016, the Ministry through the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) will ensure the completion of the changeover of the mode of transmission from analogue to digital through digitalization of the Radio and TV Studios and acquisition of Outside Broadcasting (OB) vans.

Furthermore GBC will establish 20 District community radio stations, in collaboration with District Assemblies in the various Regions, and will also revive Radio 1 and 2 stations.

Additionally, GBC will ensure the preservation and exploitation of broadcasting heritage so that creative cultural endeavours in the form of programming can continue to give value to the community.

> ## Telecommunication Regulatory Environment

The telecommunication sector continues to be a vibrant industry. The Ministry in 2016 will monitor the implementation of the Interconnect Clearing House, the Mobile Virtual Network Operating License, International Wholesale Carrier License and the Unified Telecom License. The effective implementation of these policies will tremendously benefit the country. The Ministry will develop a Legislative Instrument for the analogue to digital broadcasting migration process as well as bring before the House the CST Amendment Bill.

7.0 ALLOCATIONS FOR THE 2016 FINANCIAL YEAR

The allocations below have been approved for the MoC for the 2016 financial year.

TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF 2016 ALLOCATIONS

ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	2016 ALLOCATION
Compensation for Employees (GoG)	73,637,769
Goods & Services(GoG)	1,383,057
Capital Expenditure(GoG)	-
Sub Total	**75,020,826**
Internally Generated Funds (IGF)	71,404,334
Sub Total	**71,404,334**
Development Partners	146,436,267
Sub Total	**146,436,267**
Grand Total	**292,861,427**

8.0 OBSERVATIONS

8.0.1 Inadequate budgetary allocation

The Committee observed that though the Ministry of Communications is a vital sector as far as national cohesion and development is concerned and therefore the allocated amount of GHC292,861,427, for the 2016 financial year, woefully inadequate. Also, except in the case of Compensation, the release of funds for the Ministry's activities is hardly forthcoming and so the committee wondered how one can claim that funds released for compensation had been justified because staff get paid but have no logistics to work and be productive. Indeed, from the table below, it is clear that for the 2016 fiscal year there is no allocation for capex and that for goods and services is about 50% of the 2015 allocation.

(APPENDICES ATTACHED)

Economic Classification	2015 & 2016 Budget Allocation Compared		
	2015 Allocation	2016 Allocation	Variance
Conpensation for Employees (GoG)	64,683,582	73,637,769	8,954,187
Goods & Services(GoG)	2,766,114	1,383,057	- 1,383,087
Capital Expenditure(GoG)	750,000	-	- 750,000
Sub Total	**68,199,696**	**75,020,826**	**6,821,100**
Internally Generated Funds (IGF)	52,348,480	71,404,334	19,055,854
Sub Total	**52,348,480**	**71,404,334**	**19,055,854**
Development Partners	178,087,815	146,436,267	- 31,651,548
Sub Total	**178,087,815**	**146,436,267**	**- 31,651,548**
Grand Total	**298,635,991**	**292,861,427**	**-5,774,564**

8.0.2   Removal from government subvention

The committee also observed that a number of the agencies under the MoC are fully capable of being independent and off government subvention. Indeed the KACE, NITA, GMet, GNA, GBC and NAFTI have for years yearned for the necessary policies, L.Is and Acts which would enable them metamorphose into highly productive and state-of-the art entities. With hardly any releases from GoG, these bodies are practically subsisting on their IGF but are unable to carry out more profitable ventures and partnerships as that would be against their mandate permitted by the laws currently governing them.

8.03   Commendation of the DPC Management

The Committee observed that though a fledgling Commission with only two staff members working with 7 national service personnel, the DPC was able to realise enough IGF for all its operations including, salaries, allowances to the Governing Board as well as to cover all its goods and services for the 2015 financial year. The Committee therefore wishes to commend the management of the Commission for being very efficient and effective even in the face of all its challenges.

9.0   RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The Committee acknowledges that the operations of the MoC are a vital part of national growth and development and therefore the Ministry must be adequately resourced to carry out its mandate. The Committee also recommends that, as a matter of urgency, the MoC takes the necessary steps to wean a number of its agencies off government subvention. Indeed, it is expected that these bodies, should they become independent, would also contribute to boosting GoG revenue.

In conclusion, the Committee recommends that the House approve the total sum of **GHC292,861,427.00 made** up of **GHC75,020,826.00 from** GoG, **GHC71,402,334.00** from Internally Generated Funds, and **GHC146,436,267.00**from Development Partners, for the implementation of the Strategies and Policies of the Ministry of Communications for the 2016 Financial Year.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

....
HON. ALBERT ABONGO
   CHAIRMAN

....
SHEBA NANA AFRIYIE OSEI
   CLERK

A. Financials

2015 FINANCIALS PERFORMANCE BY PROGRAMMES AND ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION (Jan-Sep))

Budget Programme	Compensation for Employees			Goods and Services			Capital Expenditure		
	Approved Annual Budget	Actual Release	Actual Exp.	Approved Annual Budget	Actual Release	Actual Exp.	Approved Annual Budget	Actual Release	Actual Exp.
	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC
Government of Ghana (GoG)									
Management and Administration	2,891,963	1,367,787	1,325,985	1,027,323	482,880	192,913	192,059	-	-
ICT Capacity Development	1,361,351	884,143	884,143	37,854	17,911	12,840	79,762	-	-
ICT Infrastructure Development	388,957	129,526	129,526	49,629	23,491	-	54,020	-	-
Meteorological Service	5,721,212	3,776,724	3,776,724	129,311	61,237	33,426	44,779	-	-
Postal and Courier Service	265,198	97,734	97,734	78,265	40,086	24,333	-	-	-
Data Management and Regulations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Information Management	51,151,125	37,223,159	37,223,159	1,099,790	526,072	229,338	281,636	-	-
Film and Television Production Training	2,903,776	2,234,563	2,234,563	343,942	158,322	100,716	97,744	-	-
Sub Total	64,683,582	45,713,636	45,671,834	2,766,114	1,310,000	593,566	750,000	-	-
Internally Generated Funds (IGF)									
Meteorological Service	-	-	-	1,340,120	867,523	632,113	2,010,185	23,696	23,696
Postal and Courier Services	-	-	-	273,410	409,305	392,825	-	-	-
Information Management	-	-	-	31,366,287	15,479,406	11,133,293	13,455,169	-	-
Film and Television Production Training	-	-	-	2,504,247	607,437	693,061	1,399,062	113,106	113,106
Sub Total	-	-	-	35,484,064	17,363,671	12,851,292	16,864,416	136,802	136,802

	Development Partners (DP)							
Management and Administration	-	-	35,617,563	6,172,395	3,557,013	142,470,252	64,489,592	37,163,905
Sub Total	-	-	35,617,563	6,172,395	3,557,013	142,470,252	64,489,592	37,163,905
Grand Total	64,683,582	45,713,636	45,671,834	73,867,741	24,846,066	17,001,871	160,084,668	64,626,394	37,300,707

B. Summary of Expenditure Estimates by Budget Programme, Economic Classification and Source of Funding

2016 Expenditure Estimates by Budget Programme, Economic Classification and Source of Funding

Expenditure by Budget Programme	GoG			IGF			DP			Total
	COE	G&S	CAPEX	COE	G&S	CAPEX	COE	G&S	CAPEX	
	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC	GHC
Management and Administration	2,175,277	543,659	-	-	-	-	-	29,287,253	117,149,014	149,155,203
ICT Capacity Development	1,351,258	18,927	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,370,185
ICT Infrastructure Development	386,074	24,815	-	-	2,017,946	-	-	-	-	2,428,835
Meteorological Service	7,742,724	64,656	-	-	1,711,234.73	2,566,398.25	-	-	-	12,085,012.98
Postal and Courier Services	363,232	39,133	-	-	493,000	-	-	-	-	895,365
Data Management and Regulations	-	-	-	478,380	546,720	375,870	-	-	-	1,400,970
Information Management	58,742,866	519,896	-	-	39,473,034.01	11,469,175	-	-	-	110,204,971.01
Film and Television Production Training	2,876,338	171,971	-	-	2,264,000.01	1,698,400	-	-	-	7,010,709.01
National Identification Authority	-	-	-	282,416.62	4,766,747	3,261,012.38	-	-	-	8,310,176
Total Expenditure	73,637,769	1,383,057	-	760,796.62	51,272,681.75	19,370,855.63	-	29,287,253	117,149,014	292,861,427