Legal Supplement Part C to the "Trinidad and Tobago Gazette", Vol. 65, No. 158, 22nd September, 2026

No. 15 of 2026

Second Session Thirteenth Parliament Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILL

AN ACT to provide for the establishment of policing districts, the conduct of special operations to combat criminality in those districts and related matters

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTER, CARONI
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO—2026

THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS BILL, 2026

Explanatory Note

(These notes form no part of the Bill but are intended only to indicate its general purport.)

The Special Operations Bill, 2026, ("the Bill") seeks to establish policing districts within Trinidad and Tobago and to provide for the conduct of special operations to combat criminality in those districts. The Bill provides for the conduct of special operations by police officers with or without military assistance from members of the Defence Force. It empowers the Commissioner of Police ("the Commissioner") to designate Heads of Special Operations in each district. The Chief of Defence Staff is also empowered to appoint Heads of Military Assistance in each district. All police officers conducting special operations, and all members of the Defence Force providing military assistance, are to be trained in human rights, the use of force, community engagement and conflict de-escalation. The Bill also requires the submission of monthly reports on special operations and the provision of military assistance to the Prime Minister, the Minister with responsibility for the Police Service ("the Minister") and the Minister with responsibility for defence. The Bill further requires that the Prime Minister lay an annual report on special operations and the provision of military assistance before Parliament. Additionally, the Bill mandates the creation of joint protocols and separate standard operating procedures to guide collaboration between police officers and members of the Defence Force in the conduct of special operations and the provision of military assistance.

The Bill provides for the declaration of closed areas within districts where the presence of violent crime, gang activity or illegal weapons threatens public safety and where ordinary law enforcement measures are insufficient to maintain or restore public safety and peace. The Bill also provides for the imposition of certain restrictions and controls within a closed area, including the imposition of cordons and curfews and the need to obtain permits to enter or leave the closed area. Additionally, the Bill seeks to equip police officers with enhanced powers of search, seizure, arrest and detention, subject to judicial oversight. The Bill contains several safeguards to protect the rights of citizens, including the requirement for police officers and members of the Defence Force to use body-worn cameras within closed areas, the registration of weapons, and the recording of complaints. Detainees are to be afforded medical care and visitation rights. The Bill also creates criminal offences for obstructing officers and breaching curfew or permit conditions.

The Bill contains twenty-six clauses and a Schedule.

PART I—PRELIMINARY

Clause 1 of the Bill provides the short title of the proposed Act ("the Act").

Clause 2 of the Bill provides for the Act to come into operation on such date as is fixed by the President by Proclamation.

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for the definition of key terms used in the Bill, including the definitions of "closed area", "cordon", "district", "gang", "gang-related activity", "police officer", "Police Service", "Minister" and "weapon".

PART II—POLICING DISTRICTS

Clause 4 of the Bill establishes policing districts in Trinidad and Tobago as set out in the Schedule to the Bill. The clause provides that the island of Trinidad is to be divided into districts comprising one or more municipalities under the Municipal Corporations Act and that the island of Tobago is to be a single district. The clause further empowers the Minister to amend the Schedule by Order subject to negative resolution of Parliament.

PART III—ADMINISTRATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Clause 5 of the Bill requires the Commissioner to designate a police officer not below the rank of Superintendent as the Head of Special Operations in each district, subject to any objection by the Prime Minister. Before signifying any objection, the Prime Minister must consult the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Chief of Defence Staff.

Clause 6 of the Bill authorises the Commissioner to assign to each Head of Special Operations such police officers as he deems fit and proper to participate in special operations under the proposed Act, subject to the abovementioned training requirements.

Clause 7 of the Bill requires the Chief of Defence Staff to designate a member of the Defence Force not below the rank of Major as the Head of Military Assistance in each district, subject to any objection by the Prime Minister. Before signifying any objection, the Prime Minister must consult the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Commissioner. Each Head of Military Assistance is to be responsible for, and in charge of, the provision of military assistance in support of the conduct of special operations. Military assistance is only to be provided when requested by the Commissioner. The clause requires the Chief of Defence Staff to assign to each Head of Military Assistance such members of the Defence Force as he considers fit and proper to provide military assistance in support of the conduct of special operations in each district.

Clause 8 of the Bill requires a Head of Special Operations and a Head of Military Assistance, within seven days after the end of each month, to submit a monthly report on the special operations conducted by him or the military assistance provided under his command, as the case may be, to the Commissioner or Chief of Defence Staff, respectively. Within three days of receiving the report, the Commissioner or the Chief of Defence Staff, as the case may be, is required to forward a copy of the report to the Prime Minister, the Minister and the Minister with responsibility for defence. The clause also provides that a report must address such matters and contain such information as may be determined by the Prime Minister after consultation with the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Commissioner or Chief of Defence Staff, as the case may be. The clause further provides that a person who fails to comply with the reporting requirements is liable to face disciplinary action. The Prime Minister is required to lay an annual report on special operations and military assistance before Parliament within three months after the end of each calendar year.

Clause 9 of the Bill requires the Commissioner and the Chief of Defence Staff to establish joint protocols for police and military collaboration in the conduct of special operations. It also requires the Commissioner to establish standard operating procedures for the conduct of special operations and the Chief of Defence Staff to establish standard operating procedures for the provision of military assistance by members of the Defence Force. Additionally, the clause provides that any police officer or member of the Defence Force who fails to comply with any protocol or standard operating procedure is liable to face disciplinary action.

Clause 10 of the Bill authorises the Head of Special Operations in a district to conduct special operations in that district with or without the assistance of the Defence Force, and grants participating police officers the full rights, powers, duties and responsibilities of constables under the Police Service Act.

PART IV—SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN CLOSED AREAS

Clause 11 of the Bill empowers the President to declare, by Order subject to negative resolution of the House of Representatives, any area within a district to be a closed area if public safety and peace are threatened by escalating violent crime or gang-related activity, the prevalence of illegal firearms, ammunition or other weapons or explosives, or the control or intimidation of a local community by a gang and if the President is satisfied that ordinary law enforcement measures are insufficient to restore public safety and peace in that area. It also requires the

President, within seven days from the date on which the Order was made, to deliver a statement to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives setting out the grounds upon which the Order was based. It further provides that the Order may be annulled by resolution of the House of Representatives or revoked by the President at any time. An Order under this clause may be enforced by the relevant Head of Special Operations through the use of barriers, roadblocks or other methods.

Clause 12 of the Bill prohibits persons from entering or leaving a closed area without a permit for entry or exit. However, the requirement for a permit does not apply to specified officials, the Head of Special Operations or the Head of Military Assistance responsible for the closed area and any police officer or member of the Defence Force on duty or proceeding to or from duty. The clause also authorises the Commissioner to issue, by notice published in the *Gazette*, a permit granting permission to enter or leave a closed area to any class or category of persons. It further provides for the Commissioner, Chief of Defence Staff or any Head of Special Operations or Head of Military Assistance to issue permits granting permission to any person to enter or leave a closed area, subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be specified. Additionally, the clause provides for the suspension and cancellation of such permits and creates an offence for the failure to comply with the requirement to obtain a permit or any condition or restriction attached to a permit.

Clause 13 of the Bill authorises a Head of Special Operations to establish a cordon in a closed area, using barriers or roadblocks or other methods, and requires a notice of the establishment of the cordon, its boundaries and requirements to be published by any means and displayed in several conspicuous locations in and around the cordon. The notice must be in the form approved by the Commissioner and must be published in the *Gazette* within three days after its issuance. The clause also requires persons, other than exempted persons, to obtain a permit to enter or exit an area within a cordon. Additionally, the clause empowers the Commissioner, Chief of Defence Staff, Heads of Special Operations and Heads of Military Assistance to issue, suspend or cancel such permits, and creates an offence for the failure to comply with the requirement to obtain a permit or any condition or restriction attached to a permit.

Clause 14 of the Bill empowers the President, to impose, by Order subject to negative resolution of the House of Representatives, a curfew in a closed area, thereby requiring persons within that area to remain in their premises during

specified hours unless authorised by a permit. It also provides for the issue, suspension and cancellation of such permits and for the exemption of specified officials and police officers and members of the Defence Force when on duty or proceeding to or from duty, from the requirement to obtain a permit. The clause further provides for an Order imposing a curfew in a closed area to be annulled by the House of Representatives or revoked by the President at any time. Additionally, the clause creates an offence for the contravention of an Order made under this clause and for the failure to comply with any condition or restriction attached to a permit issued under this clause.

Clause 15 of the Bill authorises a police officer conducting special operations in a closed area to search any place, vehicle or person without a warrant upon reasonable suspicion that an offence is being committed or has been committed or is about to be committed. It also requires the police officer in charge of a search to take reasonable steps to ensure the attendance during all stages of the search, of the owner or occupier of the place, the owner or person in possession of a vehicle, or the agent of any such person, and to ensure that such persons are afforded every opportunity to observe everything done in relation to the search and that female persons are searched only by female officers. It further provides that a police officer may seize any vehicle, article or document that may be useful for preventing disorder or may be of substantial value to the investigation of any offence. Additionally, the clause prohibits the seizure of any tool of lawful trade or items protected by legal privilege, and requires the police officer in charge of the search to compile a list of seized items and provide a receipt to the owner or person in possession of the seized vehicle, article or document or the agent of the owner or person in possession of the vehicle, article or document, as soon as possible.

Clause 16 of the Bill provides that any vehicle, article or document seized during a search must be secured in a place and in the custody of a person approved by the Commissioner, and must be returned when no longer needed for public order or evidential purposes. The clause also provides for applications to be made to a Magistrate for the return of a vehicle, document or article seized, and requires a Magistrate to order its release if satisfied that there are no reasonable grounds for its retention.

Clause 17 of the Bill provides for the arrest and detention of persons during a special operation in a closed area. The clause requires a Head of Special Operations to be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a person has committed or is in the course of committing or is about to commit an offence

before he can be arrested or detained. A person who is arrested or detained must be promptly informed of the reasons for his arrest or detention in a language he understands and he must be brought before a Magistrate to determine whether there are reasonable grounds for his detention. The clause also provides that a Magistrate may authorise that a person be remanded in custody for up to forty-eight hours after which he must be taken before a High Court Judge, who may order his continued arrest or detention if reasonably required in the interest of justice or his immediate release. Additionally, the clause provides that the same powers of arrest and detention under this clause apply to persons fleeing a closed area.

Clause 18 of the Bill creates an offence for threatening, assaulting, obstructing or hindering a police officer, member of the Defence Force or any other person performing duties under the proposed Act.

Clause 19 of the Bill provides that where a person remains in custody for thirty-six hours and no Order is made by a Magistrate for the person to be remanded in custody and to be taken before a High Court Judge after forty-eight hours, the officer in charge of the police station must notify an officer not below the rank of Assistant Superintendent ("the prescribed officer") and record in the station diary the fact that the prescribed officer has been so informed. It further provides that upon receipt of that information, the prescribed officer must investigate the circumstances of the case and cause the person to be brought immediately before a Magistrate.

Clause 20 of the Bill outlines the treatment of persons arrested or detained during special operations in closed areas, including requiring that all complaints made by or concerning such persons be recorded in the station diary and allowing visits during such times as may be determined by the prescribed officer subject to security and safety considerations. It also provides that a person detained or arrested may receive visits from his spouse, cohabitant, family member, Attorney-at-law or a medical practitioner and requires details of each visit to be recorded in the station diary. The clause further provides that a person arrested or detained is permitted to receive food, clothing and other items necessary for his health and welfare, but is prohibited from receiving anything that could endanger his health or safety or the safety of any officer or other person. Additionally, the clause provides that where any person who is arrested or detained appears ill or requires medical attention, a police officer in charge of the supervision of the person must promptly cause the person to receive medical attention, whether or not he complains of illness.

Clause 21 of the Bill requires police officers and members of the Defence Force, as far as possible having regard to available resources, to use body-worn cameras during special operations in closed areas. It also requires the Commissioner and Chief of Defence Staff to establish and review joint protocols and procedures governing the use of body-worn cameras in closed areas. Further, the clause restricts access to body-worn camera data to oversight and investigative agencies, including the Police Service Commission, the Police Complaints Authority, internal police investigative units, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Office of the Ombudsman. Additionally, the clause provides that any police officer or member of the Defence Force who fails to comply with any protocol or standard operating procedure is liable to face disciplinary action.

Clause 22 of the Bill requires that all weapons, including their ballistic signatures, and ammunition assigned to police officers and members of the Defence Force involved in special operations, be registered with the Trinidad and Tobago Forensic Science Centre before the conduct of special operations in a closed area, unless otherwise directed by the Commissioner or Chief of Defence Staff, as the case may be.

Clause 23 of the Bill empowers a police officer to require a person within a closed area to disclose his full and correct name, including any alias, and address, if the police officer suspects that the person has committed or is committing or is about to commit an offence or if that person may assist in the investigation of an offence. The clause also creates an offence for failing to comply by giving a name that is false in a material particular or giving an incorrect address without reasonable excuse.

PART V—MISCELLANEOUS

Clause 24 of the Bill requires the Commissioner and the Chief of Defence Staff to make arrangements for applications for permits under the proposed Act to be submitted both manually and electronically.

Clause 25 of the Bill empowers the Minister to make regulations for the administration of the proposed Act.

Clause 26 of the Bill provides that the proposed Act shall continue in force for a period of two years from the date of its commencement.

The Schedule to the Act sets out the policing districts in Trinidad and Tobago for the purposes of the proposed Act.

BILL

AN ACT to provide for the establishment of policing districts, the conduct of special operations to combat criminality in those districts and related matters

[, 2026]

ENACTED by the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago as follows: Enactment

PART I

PRELIMINARY

1. This Act may be cited as the Special Operations Act, 2026. Short title

Commencement

2. This Act comes into operation on such date as is fixed by the President by Proclamation.

Interpretation

3. In this Act—

"Chief of Defence Staff" means the person holding or acting in the office of Chief of Defence Staff of the Defence Force;

"Chief Secretary" means the Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly;

"closed area" means an area declared as a closed area under section 11 and includes an area within a cordon;

"Commissioner" means the person holding or acting in the office of Commissioner of Police;

"cordon" means a cordon established in a closed area under section 13;

Chap. 14:01

"Defence Force" means the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force established under the Defence Act;

"district" means a policing district specified in the Schedule;

Schedule

"gang" has the meaning assigned to it in the Anti-Gang Act, 2021;

Act No. 4 of 2021

"gang-related activity" has the meaning assigned to it in the Anti-Gang Act, 2021;

"Minister" means the Minister with responsibility for the Police Service;

"police officer" means a member of the Police Service or a person to whom a precept has been issued under the Supplemental Police Act;

Chap. 15:02

"Police Service" means the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service established under the Police Service Act, the Municipal Police Service

Chap. 15:01

within the meaning of Part III of the Municipal Corporations Act and the Special Reserve Police established under the Special Reserve Police Act; Chap. 25:04 Chap. 15:03

"weapon" has the meaning assigned to it in section 2 of the Anti-Terrorism Act. Chap. 12:07

PART II

POLICING DISTRICTS

Establishment of policing districts

4. (1) For the purposes of this Act, Trinidad and Tobago is divided into the policing districts specified in the Schedule. Schedule

(2) In the island of Trinidad, a district shall comprise one or more Municipalities under the Municipal Corporations Act.

(3) The island of Tobago shall be one district.

(4) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), the Minister may, by Order subject to negative resolution of Parliament, amend the Schedule.

PART III

ADMINISTRATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Heads of Special Operations

5. (1) Subject to subsections (2), (3) and (4), the Commissioner shall, in respect of each district, designate a police officer, not below the rank of Superintendent, to be the Head of Special Operations who shall be responsible for, and in charge of, the conduct of special operations within that district.

(2) Before the Commissioner designates a police officer under subsection (1), he shall consult with the Prime Minister.

(3) A police officer shall not be designated under subsection (1) if the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Chief of Defence Staff, signifies to the Commissioner his objection to the designation of that police officer.

(4) A Head of Special Operations and persons assigned under section 6 shall be police officers who are trained in—

(a) human rights;

(b) use of force;

(c) community engagement; and

(d) conflict de-escalation.

Assignment of police officers for special operations

6. Subject to section 5(4), the Commissioner shall assign to each Head of Special Operations such police officers as he considers fit and proper to participate in special operations under this Act.

Military assistance in support of special operations

7. (1) Subject to subsections (2), (3) and (5), the Chief of Defence Staff shall, in respect of each district, designate a member of the Defence Force, not below the rank of Major, to be the Head of Military Assistance who shall be responsible for, and in charge of, the provision of military assistance in support of the conduct of special operations within that district in any case in which such assistance is—

(a) in the opinion of the Commissioner, required for the purposes of conducting special operations in that district; and

(b) requested by the Commissioner.

(2) Before the Chief of Defence Staff designates a person under subsection (1), he shall consult with the Prime Minister.

(3) A person shall not be designated under subsection (1) if the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Commissioner, signifies to the Chief of Defence Staff his objection to the designation of that person.

(4) Subject to subsection (5), the Chief of Defence Staff shall assign to each Head of Military Assistance such members of the Defence Force as he considers fit

and proper to provide military assistance in support of the conduct of special operations under this Act.

(5) A Head of Military Assistance and persons assigned under subsection (4) shall be members of the Defence Force who are trained in—

(a) human rights;

(b) use of force;

(c) community engagement; and

(d) conflict de-escalation.

Accountability and reporting

8. (1) A Head of Special Operations shall, within seven days after the end of each month, submit to the Commissioner a report of the special operations conducted by him and the Commissioner shall forward a copy of the report to the Prime Minister, the Minister and the Minister with responsibility for defence, within three days after the receipt of the report.

(2) A report under subsection (1) shall address such matters and contain such information as may be determined by the Prime Minister in writing, after consultation with the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Commissioner.

(3) A Head of Military Assistance shall, within seven days after the end of each month, submit to the Chief of Defence Staff a report of any military assistance provided under his command and the Chief of Defence Staff shall forward a copy of the report to the Prime Minister, the Minister and the Minister with responsibility for defence, within three days after the receipt of the report.

(4) A report under subsection (1) shall address such matters and contain such information as may be determined by the Prime Minister in writing, after consultation with the Minister, the Minister with responsibility for defence and the Chief of Defence Staff.

(5) A person who fails to comply with subsection (1), (2), (3) or (4) is liable to disciplinary action.

(6) The Prime Minister shall, within three months after the end of each calendar year, cause an annual report on the conduct of special operations and the provision of military assistance under this Act during that calendar year to be laid in Parliament.

Protocols and procedures

9. (1) The Commissioner and the Chief of Defence Staff shall establish joint protocols with respect to collaboration and cooperation between police officers and members of the Defence Force in the conduct of special operations and the provision of military assistance under this Act, including the method by which the identity of a police officer or a member of the Defence Force may be ascertained.

(2) The Commissioner shall, after consultation with the Chief of Defence Staff, establish standard operating procedures for the conduct of special operations by police officers under the Act.

(3) The Chief of Defence Staff shall, after consultation with the Commissioner, establish standard operating procedures for the provision of military assistance by members of the Defence Force under this Act.

(4) A police officer or a member of the Defence Force who fails to comply with any protocol or standard operating procedure established under this section is liable to disciplinary action.

Special operations in policing districts

10. (1) Subject to the provisions of Part IV, the Head of Special Operations of a district may conduct special operations in that district with or without the assistance of the Defence Force.

(2) Where special operations are conducted under subsection (1), the police officers involved in the special operation shall have all such rights, powers, authority,

privileges and immunities, and shall be liable to all such duties and responsibilities, as any constable duly appointed has or is subject or liable to, or may have or be subject or liable to under the Police Service Act.

PART IV

SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN CLOSED AREAS

Declaration of closed areas

11. (1) The President may, by Order subject to negative resolution of the House of Representatives, declare any area within a district to be a closed area, where the President is satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that public safety and peace in that area is threatened—

(a) by—

(i) escalating rates of violent crime, homicide, shootings, kidnappings or gang-related activity in that area;

(ii) the prevalence of illegal firearms or ammunition, or the unlawful presence of other weapons or explosives, in that area; or

(iii) the control or intimidation, or the attempted control or intimidation, of a local community by a gang in that area; and

(b) by the inability of ordinary law enforcement measures to maintain or restore public safety and peace in that area.

(2) Within seven days of the making of an Order under subsection (1), the President shall deliver to the Speaker for presentation to the House of Representatives, a statement setting out the specific grounds on which the decision to make the Order was based.

(3) Notwithstanding section 75 of the Interpretation Act but subject to subsection (4), a resolution to annul an Order under subsection (1) may be passed by the House of Representatives at any time while the Order is in force.

(4) Motions for a resolution under subsection (3) shall not be brought within three months of each other.

(5) The President may revoke an Order under subsection (1) at any time.

(6) A Head of Special Operations may cause a closed area to be closed by means of barriers, roadblocks or otherwise.

Permits to enter and leave closed areas

12. (1) Subject to subsection (2), no person shall enter or leave a closed area without a permit issued under this section.

(2) Subsection (1) shall not apply to—

(a) the President, the Prime Minister, a Member of Cabinet, a Member of Parliament, a Member of the Tobago House of Assembly or a Member of a Municipal Council;

(b) the Chief Justice or a Judge of the Supreme Court;

(c) the Commissioner or the Chief of Defence Staff;

(d) the Head of Special Operations, or the Head of Military Assistance, responsible for the closed area; or

(e) a police officer, or a member of the Defence Force, when on duty or proceeding to or from duty.

(3) The Commissioner may, in relation to a closed area, issue a permit, by notice published in the *Gazette*, granting permission for persons of any class or category

specified in the notice to enter or leave the closed area during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the notice.

(4) The Commissioner, the Chief of Defence Staff, or a Head of Special Operations or a Head of Military Assistance in relation to a closed area for which he is responsible, may issue a permit granting permission for any person to enter or leave a closed area during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the permit.

(5) The Commissioner may, by notice published in the *Gazette*, suspend or cancel a permit issued under subsection (3) or (4).

(6) A person who issued a permit under sub-section (4) may, at any time, suspend or cancel the permit by notifying the permit-holder in writing, by electronic or other means, of the suspension or cancellation, as the case may be.

(7) A person who—

(a) contravenes subsection (1); or

(b) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a condition or restriction specified in a permit issued under this section,

commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and imprisonment for one year.

Power to establish cordons around or in closed areas

13. (1) A Head of Special Operations may, for the purposes of the conduct of a special operation in a closed area, establish a cordon around or in the closed area by means of barriers, roadblocks or otherwise.

(2) Where a cordon is established under sub-section (1), the Head of Special Operations shall immediately cause notice of the establishment of the cordon to be—

(a) published by any means; and

(b) displayed in several conspicuous locations in and around the cordon,

so as to ensure that the notice is brought to the attention of persons within the cordon and persons seeking to enter the area within the cordon.

(3) A notice under subsection (2) shall specify the boundaries of the area within the cordon and the requirements to be complied with by persons within the cordon, persons seeking to enter the area within the cordon, and other persons in relation to the cordon.

(4) A notice under subsection (2) shall—

(a) be in such form as the Commissioner may approve; and

(b) be published in the *Gazette* within three days after the date of its issuance.

(5) Subject to subsection (6), no person shall enter or leave an area within a cordon without a permit issued under this section.

(6) Subsection (5) shall not apply to the persons specified in section 12(2).

(7) The Commissioner may, in relation to an area within a cordon, issue a permit, by notice published in the *Gazette*, granting permission for persons of any class or category specified in the notice to enter or leave the area during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the notice.

(8) The Commissioner, the Chief of Defence Staff, or a Head of Special Operations or a Head of Military Assistance in relation to an area within a cordon for which he is responsible, may issue a permit granting permission for any person to enter or leave the area during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the permit.

(9) The Commissioner may, by notice published in the *Gazette*, suspend or cancel a permit issued under subsection (7) or (8).

(10) A person who issued a permit under sub-section (8) may, at any time, suspend or cancel the permit by notifying the permit-holder in writing, by electronic or other means, of the suspension or cancellation, as the case may be.

(11) A person who—

(a) contravenes subsection (5); or

(b) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a condition or restriction specified in a permit issued under this section,

commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and imprisonment for one year.

Power to impose curfews in closed areas

14. (1) For the purposes of the conduct of a special operation in a closed area, the President may, by Order subject to negative resolution of the House of Representatives, impose in the area, a curfew requiring persons within the area to remain in their premises during specified hours, unless otherwise authorised by the Order or a permit issued under this section.

(2) An Order under subsection (1) shall not apply to—

(a) the President, the Prime Minister, a Member of Cabinet, a Member of Parliament, a Member of the Tobago House of Assembly or a Member of a Municipal Council;

(b) the Chief Justice or a Judge of the Supreme Court;

(c) the Commissioner or the Chief of Defence Staff;

(d) the Head of Special Operations, or the Head of Military Assistance, responsible for the closed area; or

(e) a police officer, or a member of the Defence Force, when on duty or proceeding to or from duty.

(3) Notwithstanding section 75 of the Interpretation Act but subject to subsection (4), a resolution to annul an Order under subsection (1) may be passed by the House of Representatives at any time while the Order is in force.

(4) Motions for a resolution under subsection (3) shall not be brought within three months of each other.

(5) The President may revoke an Order under subsection (1) at any time.

(6) The Commissioner may, in relation to a curfew, issue a permit, by notice published in the *Gazette*, granting permission for persons of any class or category specified in the notice to be outside their premises during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the notice.

(7) The Commissioner, the Chief of Defence Staff, or a Head of Special Operations or a Head of Military Assistance in relation to an area for which he is responsible, may issue a permit granting permission for any person to be outside his premises during such times and subject to such conditions or restrictions as are specified in the permit.

(8) The Commissioner may, by notice published in the *Gazette*, suspend or cancel a permit issued under subsection (6) or (7).

(9) A person who issued a permit under subsection (7) may, at any time, suspend or cancel the permit by notifying the permit-holder in writing, by electronic or other means, of the suspension or cancellation, as the case may be.

(10) A person who—

(a) contravenes an Order under subsection (1); or

(b) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a condition or restriction specified in a permit issued under this section,

commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and imprisonment for one year.

Search and seizure

15. (1) For the purposes of the conduct of a special operation in a closed area, a police officer may search any place, vehicle or person within the closed area, without a warrant, upon reasonable suspicion that an offence is in the course of being committed, has been committed or is about to be committed.

(2) Where a search of any place, vehicle or person is being undertaken, it shall be the duty of the police officer in charge of the search to take such steps as are reasonably practicable in the circumstances to ensure—

(a) the attendance, at all stages of the search, of the owner, occupier or person in possession of the place or vehicle or, as the case may be, the agent of the owner, occupier or person in possession of the place or vehicle;

(b) that the owner, occupier or person in possession of the place or vehicle or, as the case may be, the agent of the owner, occupier or person in possession of the place or vehicle is afforded every opportunity to observe everything done in relation to the search; and

(c) that a female person is searched by a female police officer.

(3) A police officer, may in connection with a search, seize any vehicle, article or document that will assist in preventing or controlling a public disorder or that is likely to be of substantial value, whether or not by itself, to the investigation of any offence.

(4) A police officer shall not seize—

(a) any tool of a lawful trade or business; or

(b) any article or document that is subject to legal professional privilege.

(5) The police officer in charge of a search shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that—

(a) a list is compiled of all vehicles, articles or documents seized; and

(b) a receipt of any vehicle, article or document, as the case may be, which is included in the list, is given to the owner or person in possession of that vehicle, article or document or the agent of the owner or person in possession of the vehicle, article or document as soon as possible.

Custody or disposal of seized vehicles, articles or documents

16. (1) Any vehicle, article or document seized under section 15 shall be secured in such place and in the custody of such person as the Commissioner may approve pending determination of any examination, investigation, trial or enquiry.

(2) If anything seized is perishable, it shall be disposed of in such manner as may be approved by the Commissioner.

(3) Where the Commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe that any vehicle, article or document seized will no longer assist in preventing or controlling public disorder or is no longer of evidential value in any criminal proceedings arising from, or in connection with, a search, he shall immediately cause the vehicle, article or document to be returned to the owner or person in possession or the agent of the owner or person in possession, and shall cause the owner, person in possession or agent, as the case may be, to sign a receipt for that vehicle, article or document.

(4) A person who believes that a vehicle, article or document seized under subsection (1) ought to be returned to him pursuant to subsection (3) may apply to a Magistrate for the return of the item.

(5) A Magistrate to whom an application is made under subsection (4) shall order the return of the

vehicle, article or document, as the case may be, to the applicant, or to such other person whom the Magistrate is satisfied is entitled to its return, if the Magistrate is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds as referred to in subsection (3).

Arrest or detention

17. (1) Where a special operation is being conducted in a closed area, a person shall not be arrested or detained unless the Head of Special Operations is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the person has committed or is in the course of committing or is about to commit an offence.

(2) Where a person is arrested or detained in a closed area, that person shall—

(a) at the time of his arrest or detention, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, be told, in a language which he understands, of the reason for his arrest or detention; and

(b) immediately, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, be taken before a Magistrate who shall determine whether or not there are reasonable grounds for the arrest or detention.

(3) Where a Magistrate is satisfied that the arrest or detention of a person in a closed area is reasonably required in the interest of justice, he may, having regard to such further investigations as may be necessary, order that—

(a) the person shall be remanded in custody for a period not exceeding forty-eight hours; and

(b) at the expiration of the period of forty-eight hours, the person shall be taken before a Judge of the High Court.

(4) Where a Magistrate makes an order under subsection (3) in respect of a person, the person shall be taken to a prison or a police station without delay, and

an entry shall be made in the appropriate occurrence book or the station diary, as the case may be.

(5) Where the Magistrate is not satisfied that the arrest or detention of a person is reasonably required in the interest of justice, he shall order that the person be released immediately.

(6) Where a person is taken before a Judge of the High Court pursuant to subsection (3) and the Judge is satisfied that the continued arrest or detention of the person without criminal charges being laid against him is reasonably required in the interest of justice, he may, having regard to such further investigations as may be necessary, order that the person shall be further detained for a specified period of time.

(7) Where a person is taken before a Judge of the High Court pursuant to subsection (3) and the Judge is not satisfied that the arrest or detention of that person is reasonably required in the interest of justice, he shall order that the person be released immediately.

(8) The powers exercisable under this section in respect of a person who could have been arrested or detained in a closed area, but who is in the process of fleeing the closed area, shall be exercisable in respect of that person outside of the boundaries of the closed area, as if the person were located in the closed area at the time of the arrest or detention.

Obstruction, etc.

18. (1) A person commits an offence if he—

(a) threatens or assaults a police officer or a member of the Defence Force, or any other person, who is performing a function or exercising powers under this Act; or

(b) without lawful justification or excuse, obstructs or hinders a police officer or a member of the Defence Force, or any other person, who is performing a function or exercising powers under this Act.

(2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and imprisonment for one year.

Persons held in custody

19. (1) Where a person is in custody for thirty-six hours and no order has been made by a Magistrate under section 17(3), the officer in charge of the police station shall inform an officer not below the rank of Assistant Superintendent (hereinafter referred to as "the prescribed officer") of the circumstances of the case and shall record in the station diary the fact that the prescribed officer has been so informed.

(2) The prescribed officer shall, upon receipt of the information referred to in subsection (1), cause such investigations as he thinks necessary to be made into the circumstances of the case and shall cause the person to be brought immediately before a Magistrate.

Treatment of persons arrested or detained

20. (1) Every complaint made by, or concerning, a person arrested or detained under this Part, shall be recorded in the station diary.

(2) A person who is arrested or detained under this Part shall, during such times as may be determined by the prescribed officer, be allowed such visits as may be permitted having regard to matters of—

(a) security; or

(b) safety of persons.

(3) Subject to subsections (2) and (4), a person who is arrested or detained under this Part shall be permitted visits from his spouse, cohabitant or family member or from an Attorney-at-law or a registered medical practitioner of his choice.

(4) Where a person requests the visit of a registered medical practitioner of his choice, other than one provided by the State, the person shall be responsible for any expenses incurred.

(5) Particulars of each visit under this section shall be recorded in a station diary.

(6) A person who is arrested or detained—

(a) shall be allowed to receive articles of food and clothing or such other article as is necessary in the interest of his health or welfare; and

(b) shall not be allowed to receive any article which may endanger his health or the safety of his person, any officer or any other person.

(7) Where it appears to any police officer in charge of the supervision of a person who is arrested or detained under this Part that the person is ill or requires medical attention, whether or not the person complains of illness, that police officer shall, without delay, take such steps as are necessary to cause the person to be given medical attention.

Use of body-worn camera

21. (1) A police officer or a member of the Defence Force shall, as far as is possible having regard to available resources, use a body-worn camera during the conduct of a special operation in a closed area.

(2) The Commissioner and the Chief of Defence Staff shall establish and review joint protocols and standard operating procedures for the use of body-worn cameras in closed areas and, notwithstanding the generality of the foregoing, the joint protocols and standard operating procedures may provide for—

(a) the categories of persons who, subject to subsection (3), may access the data collected and in what circumstances;

(b) the use of data collected;

(c) the circumstances in which a body-worn camera may be activated or deactivated;

(d) the manner in which a police officer or a member of the Defence Force is required to record the time and reason for deactivating a body-worn camera; and

(e) the circumstances in which a police officer or a member of the Defence Force is required to inform a member of the public that persons are being recorded.

(3) The following agencies shall have access to data recorded by a body-worn camera for the performance of their respective functions:

(a) the Police Service Commission;

(b) the Police Complaints Authority;

(c) the Police Complaints Division, the Professional Standards Bureau and other agencies within the Police Service which investigate police officers;

(d) the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; and

(e) the Office of the Ombudsman.

(4) A police officer or a member of the Defence Force who fails to comply with any protocol or standard operating procedure established under this section is liable to disciplinary action.

Registration of weapons

22. Weapons, including the ballistic signature and ammunition assigned to police officers and members of the Defence Force involved in special operations, shall be registered with the Trinidad and Tobago Forensic Science Centre prior to the conduct of special operations within a closed area, unless the Commissioner or the Chief of Defence Staff determine otherwise.

Duty to disclose identity on request

23. (1) A police officer may require a person within a closed area to disclose his full and correct name, including any alias, and his full and correct address, where the police officer has reasonable cause to suspect that the person is in the course of committing, has committed or is about to commit an offence or can assist in the investigation of an offence.

(2) A person within a closed area who is requested to disclose his identity under subsection (1) shall not, without reasonable excuse, fail or refuse to comply with the request.

(3) A person shall not, without reasonable excuse, in response to a request made under subsection (1)—

(a) give a name that is false in a material particular; or

(b) give an address other than his full and correct address.

(4) A person who contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of twenty thousand dollars.

PART V

MISCELLANEOUS

Applications for permits

24. The Commissioner of Police and the Chief of Defence Staff shall make arrangements for applications for permits under this Act to be made manually and by electronic means.

Regulations

25. The Minister may make regulations for the administration of this Act.

Duration

26. This Act shall continue in force for a period of two years from the date of its commencement.

SCHEDULE

(Sections 3 and 4)

POLICING DISTRICTS

1. District 1 shall comprise the City of Port-of-Spain, the Borough of Diego Martin and the Regional Municipality of San Juan/Laventille.

2. District 2 shall comprise the Borough of Arima and the Regional Municipality of Tunapuna-Piarco.

3. District 3 shall comprise the Regional Municipality of Sangre Grande and the Regional Municipality of Mayaro-Rio Claro.

4. District 4 shall comprise the Borough of Chaguanas and the Regional Municipality of Couva-Tabaquite-Talparo.

5. District 5 shall comprise the City of San Fernando and the Regional Municipality of Princes Town.

6. District 6 shall comprise the Borough of Point Fortin, the Borough of Siparia and the Regional Municipality of Penal-Debe.

7. District 7 shall comprise the island of Tobago.

Passed in the House of Representatives this day of , 2026.

Clerk of the House

I confirm the above.

Speaker

Passed in the Senate this day of , 2026.

Clerk of the Senate

I confirm the above.

President of the Senate

No. 15 of 2026

SECOND SESSION

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT

REPUBLIC OF

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

BILL

AN ACT to provide for the establishment of policing districts, the conduct of special operations to combat criminality in those districts and related matters

Received and read the

First time .....

Second time .....

Third time .....