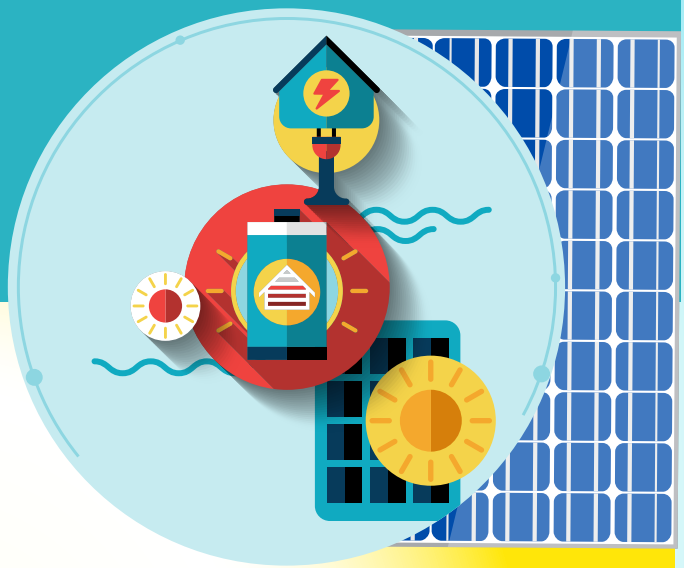
AATT SOLAR PROJECT

The building evidence of the negative effects of greenhouse gases (GHG) on the earth's atmosphere and its contribution to the advent of global warming, has become one of the foremost concerns for the survival of the world as we know it. Greenhouse gases are gases that keep heat in the earth's atmosphere by making it easier for sunlight to enter the atmosphere and include carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH), nitrous oxide (N2O), hydrofluoro-carbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF6). CO2 is the most prevalent greenhouse gas.



In July 2014 the Ministry of Planning and Development (MPD), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), began coordinating the Law Emission Capacity Building (LECB) Project in order to address greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with the country's National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), development priorities and international commitments to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). To ensure Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago ("the Authority") contributes significantly to the effort to reduce the 2% of global CO2 emissions attributed to aviation, the Operations Department, via Duty Manager Sherwin Seyjagat, embarked upon the AATT Solar Project.

The Solar Project was conceptualised after several ICAO Mission Visits and stakeholder meetings and will be approached on a phased basis. Trinidad and Tobago is only one of 2 Caribbean nations that have been given funding for such a project out of a total of 14. The other country is the Dominican Republic who has won the leading airport in the Caribbean title in previous years according to the World Travel Awards. In this regard, the Authority has been a key member in the national aviation working group (Action Plan on Emissions Reduction for Trinidad and Tobago - APERTT) to form inventory of baselines of aviation carbon emission contributors and to develop mitigation measures to reduce effectively such emissions by 2020 in the short term and total carbon neutrality by 2050.

The benefits of taking on such an important endeavor are 360. Clean Operations- the use of renewable energy will mean the installation of charging stations for electrically charged equipment. Airports operations and the equipment used for airside processes will have to be streamlined to accommodate the new requirements of the programme. This will mean reduced carbon monoxide and nitrate oxides in the atmosphere. Reduced Overheads - based on 2015 data on electricity consumption, Piarco International Airport consumed about 19,200,000 kWh of electricity and ANR Robinson International Airport consumed about 3,300,650 kWh of energy to effectively operate both airports. While the adoption of a renewable energy source will reduce such overheads and other related costs that depend on fuel or fuel generated energy. Improved Safety Operations - apart from obvious results such as reduced carbon emissions and its contribution to a safer occupational environment, renewable generated energy minimises the need for fossil fuels which are flammable and volatile when used for aviation operations. Also, the risk of chemical exposure and loss time due to spills are lessened in the absence of such hazards. Increased Operational Efficiency - renewable generated energy means low maintenance costs on Ground Handlers Equipment, improved passenger processing due to dependable, energy efficient terminal facilities, cleaner air quality on airport surrounding and fuel spills and stains are mitigated and minimised. Corporate Social Responsibility - the Authority seeks to develop its corporate social responsibility (CSR) by shaping all of our activities and operations. By protecting the environment, caring about the community and reaching out to those in need, we seek to contribute to the National Plan for sustainable development and help make our country a better place.