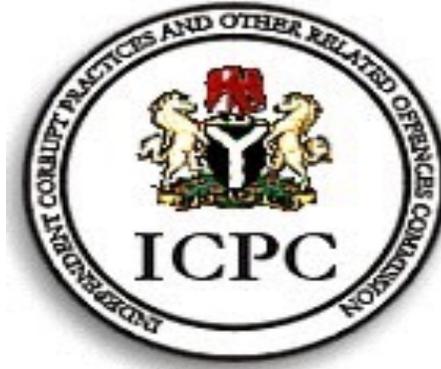


**Independent  
Practices and  
Offences  
(ICPC)**



**Corrupt  
Other Related  
Commission**

**SYSTEM STUDY REPORT**

**OF**

**ABUJA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD  
(AEPB) ABUJA**

**BY**

**INDEPENDENT CORRUPT PRACTICES AND  
OTHER RELATED OFFENCES COMMISSION  
(ICPC)**

**AUGUST, 2015**

**REPORT OF SYSTEM STUDY OF ABUJA ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION BOARD (AEPB)**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Abuja Environmental Protection Board is a government agency that was established by the **AEPB Act, 1997** with the main objective of achieving the task of providing a clean, hygienic and sustainable environment for the wellbeing of present and future generations within the capital city, Abuja in line with the government vision to build a city comparable to other first class cities of the world.

The AEPB is headed by an Executive Director who is responsible for the day-to-day administration and operations of the agency. The agency has total staff strength of 453.

The Board is charged with the following responsibilities:

- a) Removal of liquid and solid wastes in the Federal Capital Territory.
- b) Control of:
  - Industrial waste, burrow pits and quarry sites and particularly to direct construction companies/individuals to refill burrow pits excavated and ensure that places are replanted to avoid soil erosion.
  - Rodents and reptiles.
  - Quality of portable water, waste water, effluent and other discharges.
  - Bush burning, poaching and indiscriminate felling of trees.
  - Septic tank and sewage maintenance.
  - Stray and wandering animals.

- Public convenience and cemeteries.
- c) To generally do any other thing that would enhance a healthy environment in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Due to the increased pressures of population growth and new technological advancement, within the capital city, Abuja the physical environment and the biological life forms are being degraded (i.e. the physical infrastructure and the natural environment), sometimes permanently.

One of the main issues causing public concern is littering the streets. Then, there are other issues such as garbage disposal. If the garbage is not cleared or disposed properly, then it could lead to an unsanitary habitat, potentially causing a variety of diseases such as typhoid, cholera and diarrhea, etc.

Thus, there is an ever pressing need to examine agencies saddled with keeping the environment safe and clean because as long as our environment is harder to live in, then it is logical to deduce that the scheme has been beset by a myriad of problems.

In line with the above, it was therefore imperative on the ICPC to ensure that corruption is not impeding the work of the AEPB in achieving its objective of taking care of the environment, managing it and making the city beautiful and clean by invoking the system study and review mandate in **Section 6 (b-d) of ICPC Act, 2000** to examine the operations of the AEPB.

The exercise lasted four weeks. Three weeks were spent at the Headquarters and a week at the Enforcement (Taskforce) office.

Using the time frame of 2012-2013, the study team examined documents in the following key areas:

- Establishment Act of the AEPB
- Human Resources: Recruitment, Promotion, Human Resource Policy, Organizational structure
- Finance and Audit: Tax Remission, Unspent balance remission, budget expenditure, revenue generation records, and audited financial records.
- Procurement: BPP requirements for contract awards, Tender Board/ Procurement Planning Committee minutes, monitoring and evaluation reports.

## **2.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- The present mode of operation of the AEPB is limiting (It operates as a department in the FCTA rather than a relatively independent parastatal)
- The oversight /supervisory roles of the executive board of the AEPB were not evidenced in the form of minutes or other records.
- Absence of operational manual/condition of service to guide day to day operations of the agency and its staff.
- Records on contracts (contract files), contractor register, minutes of proceedings of the procurement planning committee, certificate of no objection from the BPP (where they apply) were not appropriately kept.
- There were incidences of altered contractor bid documents more than what the BPP Act allowed for.

- There is the habit amongst staff of delaying and often not retiring cash advances given to them.
- Irregular and over delayed payments to cleaning contractors and the SCC respectively.
- Over delay/negligence in processing new contract approvals from BPP and FEC leading to prolonged extensions on city cleaning contracts.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is the opinion of the system study team that if the following recommendations are implemented, the APEB would be repositioned to realize her vision of making Abuja one of the top ten best kept cities in the world by the year, 2020.

- The establishment act of the AEPB should as a matter of urgency be implemented strictly in areas that concern the following:
- The autonomy of the AEPB which is legitimized in Part 1(1) of the AEPB Act, which stipulates corporate autonomy (can sue and be sued) and Part III (12(1-16)) which stipulates financial autonomy should be adhered to.
- Part II(11(1)) of the AEPB Act which empowers the board of the AEPB to appoint, promote, terminate and dismiss as the need arises, should be strictly adhered to and the current process of having the FCTA carry out these activities on behalf of the AEPB should be stopped.
- The Board of the AEPB need to be reconstituted with members drawn from sectors of the FCT and other parts of the country that boarder on environmental preservation.
- A condition of service or manual which clearly explains the structure functions and roles, of various departments and officers should as a matter of urgency be produced.

- An anomaly where some casual staff have their records appearing only in the payment unit of finance department and not at all in the admin department should be corrected.
- All staff should be paid directly through the e-payment government approved process.
- The procurement unit should keep appropriately, records of contracts (contract files), minutes of PPC proceedings and copies of certificates of no objection from the Bureau of Public Procurement as stipulated in the Public Procurement Act 2007 Part V section 18(a-g).
- A constantly updated website, which should be able to receive queries, complaint, questions, and provide responses should be introduced and maintained including toll free lines.
- Subventions to the AEPB should be regular (monthly, quarterly) from the FCTA pending the achievement of autonomy of the AEPB, as the important role of the AEPB cannot be overemphasized.
- Contract renewal/extension between the AEPB and relevant contractors should be prompt and well documented.
- The AEPB task force should be humane, but still firm in their dealings with street hawkers and other miscreants, acknowledging their human rights.
- AEPB staff should be exposed to trainings and retraining on Public Service Rules, Financial Regulations and other Anti-Corruption Legislations for proper guidance in their official duties.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The AEBP has a partial compliance of 54.4% on the ICPC System study scale. The Board is enjoined to focus on best practices in its systems and procedures to reduce corruption vulnerabilities in the organization.



## **STATUS REPORT ON THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FINDINGS OF SYSTEM STUDY BY ABUJA ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD**

- The restructuring of AEPB by FCTA is currently on-going. Committees have been set up and are almost concluding their report and recommendations for the Minister's approval.
- The absence of the office of the Secretary as provided by the AEPB Act is noted as action is on- going to establish the office
- The Board has complied with the provision of the Financial Regulations by not advancing cash above N200, 000 to staff to procure goods and services for the organization.
- All necessary documents are now attached to payment vouchers before payments are effected to contractors.