



MLGCD

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

NEWS, VIEWS & HIGHLIGHTS ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AT WORK

JFB gets Fire Boats, Four New Trucks
-Boats for Corporate Area and Montego Bay



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Honourable Desmond McKenzie, handed over more than J\$300 million worth of equipment to enhance the capabilities of the Jamaica Fire Brigade (JFB).

"Today is a landmark day...the equipment that we are going to commission into use represents an investment collectively of over three hundred and eighty five million dollars to the Jamaica Fire Brigade," commented Minister McKenzie.

"Finally after many stops and starts, we have two boats. One will be stationed here in the Corporate

Area and the other one in Montego Bay that cover the western part of the island."

He was speaking during a special ceremony at the Fire Boat Station, Newport East in Kingston on Monday, April 16, 2018. The event was supported by Mayor of Kingston, Senator Delroy Williams and the JFB Board of Directors led by Russell Hadeed.

"Today is a landmark day...the equipment"

The JFB has been operating without a fire boat within Kingston and its environs for the past 11 years. The other pieces of newly-acquired equipment include four trucks – two pumpers and two water tenders.

"We also require stations to facilitate not just the boats themselves but for those persons who are going to be operating the boats, and so the Government is going to be spending some J\$22 million to erect facilities to house the staff of the fire boats," the Minister added.

The earmarked amount for this fiscal year has a breakdown of J\$14m for Montego Bay and J\$8m to upgrade the Fire Boat Station at Newport East. Head of the JFB, Commissioner Raymond Spencer described the hand-over as a momentous occasion for firefighters.

JFB gets Fire Boats, Four New Trucks, cont'd



BUILDING BILL WORKSHOP: More than 100 local government practitioners were exposed to the rudiments of the new legislation during a sensitization workshop in February.

"The modern fire service must respond to both present and emerging threats," he said. "My hope is that in the next three and a half years when the Jamaica Fire Brigade celebrates its 150th anniversary, we will have an improved citizen-centered fire service that provides swift response and value-added service."

Commissioner Spencer expressed gratitude to the Jamaica Defence Force for assisting with the training of staff of the fire boat, which will be maintained by the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation.

"The response capability is quite important to the building of a city. We are growing the City (of Kingston) in every way and we must be able to respond to emergencies quickly and effectively," Senator Williams said in his greetings. "A coordinated multi-agency approach is important to disaster preparedness and emergency response."

Minister McKenzie also shared that there is an additional sum of J\$189m in the 2018/2019 budget to purchase new fire trucks. This budgetary support will be augmented by a partnership with the Jamaica Social Investment Fund through which will provide financing for six more units.

Legislative Milestone

The Building Act 2018 - a modern legislative framework that will serve to reduce the vulnerability of Jamaica's built environment and ensure public safety - was approved by the Senate with 30 amendments in January.

The legislation seeks to streamline the permit application system to eliminate unnecessary referrals and expedite responses; enable the introduction of special express services as well as safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities in terms of accessibility, safety and user-friendliness.

The Act provides for the establishment of the National Building Code and identifies the Bureau of Standards Jamaica as the agency that will set the acceptable local and international standards for construction. It also establishes the municipal corporations as the local building authorities responsible for inspecting, certifying and taking the actions necessary to approve new structures, change existing buildings or destroy dangerous structures.

Minister Hands Over Houses In Clarendon



PRAYER OF DEDICATION: Honourable Desmond McKenzie (far right) in prayer with (from left) Bishop Kenneth Letford, Councillor Karlene Benjamin, Deputy Mayor Clive Mundle and house recipient, Miss Patsy Wheatley

Two Clarendon families were presented with keys to their new homes that were constructed under the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development's Municipal Social Assistance Programme (MSAP).

"The Ministry of Local Government and the direction of the Government of the day is to ensure that we improve the bread basket of those who are less fortunate and destitute in the society," Honourable Minister Desmond McKenzie said during the official handover ceremony in Palmer's Cross, Clarendon on February 9.

"We have to take care of the most vulnerable among us and too often there is a general feeling that once you reach a certain age, you must be disregarded and treated as if you are of no use." general area for living dining and sleeping, bathroom and a kitchen space.

Minister McKenzie announced the MSAP model during his sectoral presentation in April last year with its objective to advance and empower the

poor and vulnerable. The MSAP is grounded on four components comprising social housing assistance (house repairs, minor improvements, disaster preparedness and response assistance); education and funeral grants; office/administration support for parish councillors and indigent housing assistance. The programme is administered through the local authorities.

"We have to take care of the most vulnerable among us"

Four parishes were identified for pilot projects under the indigent housing assistance that will see the construction of two houses in each locale. The first phase of the project was undertaken in Clarendon. The roll-out will continue in East Rural St. Andrew, St. Thomas and St. Catherine.

According to Minister McKenzie, the idea is to build 28 such houses across the island, with a goal of 60 houses by the end of 2019.

Water Shop Prototype unveiled in Clarendon



WATER IS LIFE: An elated resident of Back

Pennants helps to fill a drum at the first Watershop Prototype in Clarendon. Standing with her from left are Hon. Desmond McKenzie; Mayor of May Pen, Councillor Winston Maragh and Hon. Parnell Charles, Member of Parliament for North Central Clarendon.

Jamaica's first water shop prototype is officially open in Pennants, Clarendon.

The project - undertaken by the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development at a cost of \$8.7 million - will make potable water more accessible to more than 1,000 residents in and around Pennants.

"A retrofitted 20ft. container will house an office"

The project is the collaborative effort of the Ministry, the Clarendon Municipal Corporation and Rural Water Supply Limited. The concept will be introduced across the island as a means of improving the availability of potable water in communities that experience scarcity especially during dry spells.

"If we are to replicate it across the country, which we intend to do, then this pilot project has to be successful. Therefore, community members have to

buy into the project and own the project as their personal responsibility," remarked Honourable Minister Desmond McKenzie during the handover ceremony last November.

The water shop prototype comprise the construction of a fenced complex to accommodate eight 1,000-gallon water tanks. A retrofitted 20ft. container will house an office that will be managed by the Clarendon Municipal Corporation.

There are high commendations for community member Mr. Selvin Morgan, who donated the lands to accommodate the water shop. Ground was broken for the project in November 2016.

The roadway leading to the facility was also rehabilitated to make it easier for water trucks to deliver the commodity to the community. Minister McKenzie emphasized that the water shop will provide an innovative method of supplying potable water while promoting self-sustainability and independence amongst residents.

New Acting Permanent Secretary



Director of Hazard Mitigation and Risk Management. Mrs. Henry Martin was also a participant in the Public Sector Senior Management Leadership Development Programme (PSSMLOP) in 2016.

This daughter of St. Thomas and past student of Morant Bay High School has a knack for higher learning and holds a Diploma in Physical Planning with Honours; a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Planning & Environmental Resource Development with first class honours as well as a Masters in Natural Resources Management with Distinction.

She is described by peers as an orator and is God-fearing. Mrs. Henry Martin is the mother of two children.

Mrs. Marsha Henry Martin is the new administrative head of the Ministry of Local Government & Community Development.

The new Acting Permanent Secretary, who took up office on January 8, 2018, is no stranger to the Local Governance fraternity, having started her career as a civil servant at the St. Thomas Municipal Corporation (formerly Parish Council).

Her career in the public sector has spanned the positions of Director of Planning, Director of Urban and Regional Planning and most recently, Senior

Municipal Police Training

Two cohorts of municipal police officers, numbering 51 officers, were trained during the 2017/2018 fiscal year and deployed within their respective parishes. The municipal police officers are tasked with maintaining public order; enforce municipal laws and regulations; support revenue generating efforts and assist in disaster management activities.



Property Tax Collection



PROPERTY TAX COMPLIANT: A member of the visually-impaired community pays his property taxes at the Mobile Collection Unit stationed at National Heroes Circle on March 23, 2018.

Property Taxes are due and payable on the first day of April in each year and represent the single most important source of revenue for the Local Authorities in Jamaica. Property Taxes account for more than fifty percent of the budgets of the Municipal Corporations.

These taxes pay for:

- Streetlights
- Garbage Collection and Disposal
- Community Beautification
- Minor & Social Water
- Parochial Road Repairs

"Central Government subsidizing shortfall in expenditure"

Property Taxes are collected in each parish by the Tax Administration of Jamaica on behalf of the Local Authorities.

Two Mobile Units were introduced last year for ease of accessibility and collecting revenues. To date, they account for more than \$100 million being collected across the 14 municipalities via electronic payments through a partnership with the Tax Administration of Jamaica (TAJ).

Improving collections and compliance is even more urgent as the Local Authorities no longer benefit from Central Government subsidizing shortfall in expenditure. It is the responsibility of owners, tenants and occupiers of premises to ensure that property taxes are up-to-date.

Compliance rates in Jamaica which averages 52%, are low when compared with developed nations that have compliance rates in the high 90s percentile. Compliance is achieved through voluntary payments, enforcement by the Local Authorities and legislative changes.

Fire Service gets 106 new recruits



Some 106 recruits were officially presented as the newest members of the Jamaica Fire Brigade (JFB) during a graduation exercise in February.

Honourable Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Community Development, urged the recruits to always remember the sacrifices made by their parents and relatives to afford them a higher quality of life.

"Despite the challenges of crime and violence; there is a greater number of constituents who are prepared to take the high road. The 106 of you here today have not gone down the path of taking up the M16 or AK-47," he said.

"I want to thank you for choosing a career in the Jamaica Fire Brigade. There are exciting times ahead for all of you...As the latest intake into the Jamaica Fire Brigade, you have the unique opportunity of responding to people's needs, and also, of teaching them valuable life skills."

The ceremony was for the 20th batch of recruits was held at the Madge Saunders Conference Centre in Tower Isle, St. Mary on February 8, 2018.

Minister McKenzie also reminded the new firefighters that their role is critical to the nation's road map in becoming a developed country.

"Despite the challenges of crime and violence; there is a greater number of constituents who are prepared to take the high road."

"The men and women who will officially join the ranks today, are entering public service in a very special way. Just like our doctors and nurses, you will be on the frontline of human interaction," he charged.

"That is why the placement of the Jamaica Fire Brigade as an Agency of the Ministry is highly appropriate. My Ministry, through the Local Authorities and Agencies, is indeed the first point of government's service delivery to the Jamaican people, and you have a vital role to play as we build a developed country for all our citizens."

#HIGHLIGHTS



Trelawny Municipal Corporation's Presentation Ceremony for the parish's Local Sustainable Development Plan (LSDP) and the opening of the Clark's Town Transport Centre.



Tablets, Computer and Truck handed over to the St. James Municipal



CONTACT US :

Ministry of Local Government and Community Development

85 Hagley Park Road, Kingston 10

Telephone: 754-0992 - 9 | Fax: 754-1011 | www.localgovjamaica.gov.jm

Email: Communications@mlgcd.gov.jm | FB: [mlgcdjamaica](https://www.facebook.com/mlgcdjamaica) IG: [localgovjamaica](https://www.instagram.com/localgovjamaica) Twitter: [LocalGovJa](https://twitter.com/LocalGovJa)