



Government of Jamaica

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Prepared by:

The Office of the Prime Minister

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Communication Policy of the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) has been developed to provide a comprehensive framework for a well-managed and coordinated communication machinery across GoJ Institutions, promote the effective dissemination of official information and meaningful engagement with the people of Jamaica.

The Government realizes that accessible, accurate and timely information (in particular, that which relates to its policies, programmes and services) is necessary to enable Jamaicans, including those in the Diaspora, to participate more meaningfully in the democratic process and the realization of the national developmental goals. It is also seen as critical, to facilitate responsiveness, to the diverse information needs of all citizens. The Policy has been formulated through research, a review of comparative Communication Policies in other jurisdictions, assessment of other available data, consultation with Government Communicators and inputs from an advisory team of Communication Specialists.

Pillars of the Government of Jamaica's Communication Responsibility

The GoJ's chief communication responsibility to the people of Jamaica is to:

- i) provide timely, accurate, clear and complete information about its programmes, services and initiatives;
- ii) deliver prompt, courteous, professional and responsive communication services;
- iii) ensure GoJ Institutions are visible, appropriately branded, accessible and accountable to the people they serve;
- iv) utilize the variety of media, channels and platforms to effectively provide information and reach Jamaicans both at home and in the diaspora;
- v) encourage continuous improvement in relations with the media;

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- vi) safeguard the trust of the Jamaican people in the integrity and impartiality of government;
- vii) establish consultation mechanisms with the people on an on-going basis;
- viii) use research to identify, evaluate and address the public's information and communication needs and concerns as well as to inform government policy, programmes and services; and
- ix) ensure increased collaboration and cooperation among the agencies of government in coherent and effective communication with the public.

Its premise is that a modern, well-organized and transparent system of communication effectively deployed across the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government will fulfill the diverse needs of the Jamaican public and augur well for greater accountability and transparency in Government, and contribute to the creation of a more informed and participatory citizenry.

The Policy places emphasis on the consistent use of clear, understandable language and messaging with respect to communicating information on the policies, programmes, services and initiatives of the Government, while underscoring the need to facilitate uniform and wide appreciation of current issues, strategies and opportunities.

It underscores the need for collaboration at all levels within and between GoJ Institutions in order to ensure effective communication and places considerable emphasis on appropriately employing all forms of media in the dissemination of official information. Government information must be provided free of charge, *except in defined instances*.

The need for GoJ Institutions to be properly branded and easily identifiable is given great importance in the Policy with stated minimum features which must obtain at GoJ institutions, offices and corporate settings, as well as appear on communication material and at marketing and publicity events. Further, the Policy stipulates adherence to the GoJ Web Standards Compliance Manual in the development and maintenance

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of GoJ institutional websites and the established protocol covering the use of National Symbols and Emblems. The requirement for appropriate branding is tempered by the need to preserve and maintain the integrity of official symbols where same is used as part of a branding exercise.

An evidence-based approach to communication management is also signaled in the Policy, which highlights the need for on-going research to better understand and evaluate the public's needs and expectations and by extension to:

- anticipate, identify, or clarify issues of national or sectoral importance;
- develop informed plans and appropriate responses; and
- assess the effectiveness of policies, programmes and services and the public's awareness of and reaction to them.

This approach will ensure that policies and programmes of the Government benefit from the necessary public consultation and independent research which will ensure policies are more targeted and inclusive.

It is important in going forward that the corporate management processes and procedures be better informed by integrating the communication function. MDAs will be required to evaluate the effectiveness, including cost-effectiveness of communication programmes and campaigns and to make such improvements or adjustments as may be needed, based on research findings.

The Policy also identifies the need to incorporate risk management planning as part of all communication plans. Specific attention has been given to the incorporation of risk analysis and management in the design and execution of the communication programmes of GoJ Institutions. This will require identification and assessment of the possible risks (both negative and positive) to communication programmes and formulation of strategies to avoid, mitigate or manage such risks as appropriate.

Effective communication is recognized as integral to both *crisis* and *emergency* management -the former being situations that challenge the public's sense of tradition, safety or the integrity of the Government, without necessarily posing a threat to life or property, while the latter

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refers to an abnormal situation, such as natural disasters and which require prompt action to limit damage to person, property and/or the environment.

In both crises and emergencies, assessment and timely communication of the pertinent facts, strategies and necessary actions are paramount. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has lead responsibility for communication in both national crises and emergencies. The Policy also identifies the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and the Jamaica Information Service (JIS) as having major roles in these circumstances. Further, all MDAs are required to take appropriate action in times of an emergency or crisis, inclusive of adjusting priorities and resources to respond effectively in each instance and to communicate all necessary information to the public, in keeping with the risk strategy in the respective Communication Plans of the MDAs, or as otherwise directed.

The role and impact of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in enhancing government communication has been recognized as a key factor requiring a changed approach in the formulation of communication strategies. The Policy encourages all MDAs to embrace and incorporate ICT and the use of all media platforms, inclusive of new media, in an effort to reach and ensure government information is available and accessible to the widest possible cross section of citizens, both locally and in the diaspora.

The thrust therefore, is toward leveraging the new technologies, media platforms and social media in maximizing government communication and greater citizen engagement in the governance process. Consequently, minimum requirements are embedded in the Policy to guide MDAs in responsibly navigating these new and emerging communication spaces and incorporating social media use in communication plans. Each MDA is responsible for developing detailed social media strategies aligned to its unique needs and environment.

This notwithstanding, the GoJ is mindful of the fact that not every citizen is on-line and therefore while provision is made in the Policy for the incorporation of new media into communication strategies this is not to

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be at the exclusion of those in the society who have limited access to such technology or prefer to receive information via traditional media formats.

The GoJ Communication Policy acknowledges the need to foster and maintain a good, professional working relationship with the media, and encourages proactive interface with the media to facilitate public awareness and understanding of government policies, programmes and initiatives. In this context, the Policy draws attention to the need for MDAs to identify in the relevant instances, appropriate officers to undertake this media relations function, which may include speaking to the media, on its behalf.

The Policy also highlights the need for adherence to high journalistic standards, values and ethics in the conduct of government communication so as to promote and maintain the integrity of the GoJ.

Notwithstanding the presence of the Access to Information Act and the success of the regime, it is acknowledged that the public continues to face some challenges in accessing information. The need for improved access to government information is therefore highlighted as a key issue and the Policy encourages MDAs to abide by statutory guidelines for the publication, dissemination and preservation of information.

The Policy also aims to promote knowledge of and compliance with the Jamaican Copyright Act and its Regulations, the Intellectual Property regime as well as the Legal Deposits Act and emphasizes the need for MDAs to ensure that ownership rights associated with protected works are fully respected and adhered to in all media applications.

Other issues and strategies outlined in the Policy include advertising, marketing and sponsorship; records management; monitoring and evaluation and the roles and responsibilities of government spokespersons.

The Policy concludes by underscoring the fact that open, effective communication between the Government and the Jamaican people and among Public Sector employees, is a linchpin of good governance. The Policy constructs an ethos consistent with the vision of Jamaica attaining

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developed country status by 2030 and is in line with the Vision 2030 goal of making Jamaica *“the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.”*

SECTION 1: CONTEXT & SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

1.1 Background

The GoJ recognizes that official information must be available and accessible to Jamaicans (as appropriate) wherever they reside so the citizens are fully aware of, understand, and able to respond to the development and implementation of government policies, programmes, services and initiatives. The diverse needs of the Jamaican people, whose communication skills and educational backgrounds differ, must also be recognized and accommodated in Government communication.

The Government has also placed increasing emphasis on communicating in different formats and through multiple channels, such as service centres, telephone, traditional and electronic mail, print and broadcast media, the Internet and social networks. Overtime, there has been greater focus on making government messaging clear, understandable and also easy to obtain. There is now also the recognition that official information needs to be distinctly and consistently identifiable, to minimize instances of confusion on the part of the public in recognizing official information.

These advances have occurred in the past on an ad hoc basis and without the benefit of a comprehensive written guide to government communication. It is acknowledged throughout this Policy, that communication affects all aspects of government policy and programme administration and as such, all institutions of the Government must collaborate to ensure coherent and effective communication with the public. The policy thrust is that the communication function is a core activity, for which there is shared responsibility and must involve employees throughout government working together.

The GoJ Communication Policy framework outlined in this document is based on an assessment of the internal communications environment which, *among other things*, identifies the GoJ communication mechanisms, available channels and the potential audience for each platform. It also signals the commitment of the government to responsible communication and citizen participation.

Nine (9) pillars of government communication responsibility and nine (9) guiding principles are highlighted as necessary for effective operation of the Policy and Policy issues, objectives and strategies are presented for each of the twenty (20) policy elements addressed. Importantly, the Policy includes a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure its objectives are being met by MDAs. Appendices are provided which highlight, among other things, key stakeholders and their roles in government communication along with guidelines for the use of national symbols and social media writers and editors.

1.2 Government Communication Overview

The GoJ has a strong tradition in disseminating official information to the public through its established communications apparatus. Communication activities are highly devolved within MDAs with significant levels of autonomy thus allowing GoJ Institutions to communicate messages that are readily executed by technocrats and other subject matter experts. The functions are coordinated by trained Jamaican professionals who occupy posts in Public Relations and Marketing Communications.

The GoJ communication network includes in the main, the:

- i) Communications and Public Affairs Unit and Media Monitoring and Research Unit, which provides communication services to the OPM and which also serves to co-ordinate the flow and quality of information coming from the GoJ;
- ii) Communications and Public Affairs Units within each MDA – staffed and equipped at varying levels and which is responsible directly for communication services specific to that MDA;
- iii) Jamaica Information Service (JIS) an Executive Agency mandated to provide information to the public relative to the Government’s policies, programmes and activities;
- iv) Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBCJ) which carries out the mandate for public service broadcasting;

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- v) Creative Production and Training Centre (CPTC) which provides mediacommunications training and other audio visual related courses; and

- vi) radio presence provided through an island-wide radio station, KOOL 97FM, as well as segments provided on other radio/television stations in Government Reserved Time (GRT).

While the decentralized structure of the GoJ communication system facilitates easier decision making within MDAs, a lack of co-ordination has occasioned premature and inconsistent messaging as well as quality control issues, a diverse *'look and feel'* of packaged content, high operational costs, inefficiencies and less than effective communication interventions.

Generally, Communication Units within MDAs experience an inadequacy of financial resources to support communication programmes, limited capacity and inadequate human resources, limited communication planning and coordination, and an absence of an appropriate and effective mechanism to track public feedback on the implementation of programmes, policies, projects and other GoJ initiatives.

Government Reserved Time (GRT)

The GoJ's communication apparatus currently includes free access to air-time on all Television and Radio broadcasting platforms. This is referred to as Government Reserved Time (GRT). The time is administered by the JIS and is used to inform the public about GoJ priorities, plans, policies, programmes and initiatives.

The current GRT construct requires that radio and television broadcasters allocate 30 minutes and 45 minutes (respectively) between the hours of 4:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. on Monday to Saturday and 2:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. on Sundays. Maintenance of this arrangement going forward has been the subject of policy discussion.

The responsiveness of the communication system to assess trending public views and perspectives about the activities of the GoJ has been flagged as requiring immediate attention, in order to provide timely responses, clarify issues or share information.

Communication with the citizenry is underscored as one of the most important indicators of good governance. It is against this background that a decision has been taken to conduct a comprehensive review and re-structuring of the GoJ communications network to improve output and secure optimal impact of government messaging. The review will include an assessment of the apparatus, personnel, and over-arching risks to effective communication with the citizenry and present strategies for improving government communication.

While all MDAs currently have some website/ internet presence, the use and operational effectiveness of these websites is not optimal. MDAs' success in regularly updating content on websites, attracting viewers/ visitors to their websites and capturing essential feedback varies. This notwithstanding, the JIS website registers some 1.5 million views per month and is an important source of government information especially for Jamaicans overseas.

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Guidelines for the creation of government websites are prescribed by the Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining (MSTEM). This notwithstanding and mainly due to financial and technical challenges, there is still some way to go to achieve either a professional, standardized *'look and feel'* of websites across MDAs or maximize the use of this communication channel.

1.3 The Media Communication Environment

The Broadcasting Commission's Annual Report 2013 indicates that the electronic media landscape currently consists of 27 radio stations, 3 island wide Free-to-Air (FTA) television stations and 41 STV operators (with one operator, FLOW, offering triple play (voice, video, data) services and one mobile television service, offered by Digital Media and Entertainment Limited – a subsidiary of LIME Jamaica now FLOW¹. According to the Market Research Services Limited, All Media Survey 2014, the potential audience for cable is 728,000, with the share for discrete categories of content being 61,000 for local content and 667,000 for international content.

Significant changes in the cable sector signal a deepening of convergence in media (e.g. the acquisition of content provider Sportsmax and cable system operator Telstar Limited, by telecommunications company Digicel, and the acquisition of FLOW by Cable and Wireless).

Broadcast media, especially radio, has the greatest penetration among the Jamaican population. An economic study conducted by Broadcasting Commission found that radio penetration remained the highest form of information access in Jamaica, (Economic Study, 2012). The study also showed that radio instruments were more prevalent in the low middle to low income demographic, which had a potential listenership of 57.48%. This medium also remains the most cost effective method for communication with the public. This notwithstanding, the Economic Study highlighted an expectation that radio listenership will trend down in the coming years as broadband internet usage on the rise, thereby increasing access to internet radio and use of mobile devices (e.g. tablets, mobile phones and iPads) to access radio and other media content.

Television placements, while more costly, are also critical to the success of public education and awareness campaigns. The All Media Survey 2014 found that there was a potential audience of 1,530,000 for FTA TV.

As is the case for radio, the majority of viewers of FTA TV (51.69%) were mature individuals, aged 35 and upwards. The age group 20 - 34 makes

¹ Cable and Wireless PLC acquired FLOW during 2015.

up only 25.62% of the total audience. In addition, like radio, these FTA TV viewers were from the low middle to low income socio-economic group.

Jamaica is also in the concluding phases of introducing an electronic media policy which will provide for the implementation of Digital Switchover. Digital television broadcasting is seen as the next necessary step in the evolution of the electronic media environment. The framework promises greater access to content by consumers and promotes interactivity between consumers and the content they want to watch.

The electronic media environment is poised for further growth and development based on the technology and services required by consumers. GoJ communication strategies must therefore take account of and be sufficiently agile to target and reach members of the public utilizing the multiplicity platforms available.

Table 1 (below) shows the results of the All Media Survey 2014 as it relates to the potential audience for a range of media platforms.

Table 1: Potential Audience Across Media Platforms

Media Platform	2012	2014
Radio	1,305,000	1,293,000
FTA TV	1,585,000	1,530,000
Local Cable	62,000	61,000
International Cable	541,000	667,000
Newspaper	1,404,000	1,395,900
Internet	1,381,000	1,676,000

Source: Extract, MRSL, All Media Survey 2014

The data shows a 1% reduction in the radio audience, while the TV shows a 4% reduction. Local cable content and newspaper audiences decreased by 2%, and 3%, respectively. The audience for international cable content saw a significant increase of 23%.

Of particular note, there was a marked increase in internet audiences which grew by 21%. Available data shows Jamaica had a 16% internet penetration rate and broadband penetration of 4%. It is anticipated that

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as these rates improve, greater audience share may be seen relative to mobile and internet based access to content in the future. This would signal a need for government communication to be accessible and effectively utilize all available media.

Jamaica has two morning daily newspapers - The Gleaner and the Jamaica Observer and an afternoon daily, The Star, also published by the Gleaner Company. The print media landscape also includes a range of niche type publications focused on the youth, business and communities – western, central, northern regions of the island.

The All Media Survey 2014 puts the Gleaner readership in both the daily and Sunday editions at 51.4% and 77.3% respectively, to the Jamaica Observer's 48.6% and 22.7%.

Advertising in the print media and on television is the most costly. Both have good audience reach making for wider utilization in planning for communication with the public.

The GoJ Communication Policy seeks to promote dynamism in the manner and the modalities of public engagement and raise the overall performance standards for successfully connecting with the public and satisfying their need for information and to focus resources and strategies on increasing the public's understanding of GoJ initiatives and policies while fulfilling the requirement for broader access to government information and services.

1.4 Communication and Citizen Participation

The Government is committed to pursuing targeted strategies to provide citizens with timely, accurate and relevant information in order to satisfy their diverse information needs. It will meet this mandate *through*:

Transparency and Accountability

- MDAs conformity to the requirements of the Ministry of Finance & Planning and the National Contracts Commission in the tendering of contracts; and
- facilitating open, responsive and factual communication to the **public**.

Effective Management

- establishing processes and procedures for the effective management of the communication function, within and among MDAs as well as with the public, in keeping with the dictates of good governance and the achievement of effective outcomes.

Public Collaboration and Consultation

- building and maintaining communication links with various sectors of society to help meet the diverse information needs of Jamaicans and to achieve government objectives;
- ensuring information is presented to participants in simple language; and
- ensuring that communication requirements are taken into account in the planning, management and evaluation of public consultations and other citizen engagement activities.

Media Relations and Collaboration

- building and maintaining effective relations with journalists and other communicators; and
- increasing dialogue and scheduling periodic meetings with business and industry groups, trade unions, academia, NGOs among other opinion shapers.

Advertising and Marketing

- strategically planning, co-ordinating and implementing advertising, marketing, publishing and public awareness programmes and campaigns embracing traditional and new media.

Public Relations and Promotions

- strategically planning, co-ordinating and promoting the government's participation in public events, including fairs and exhibitions.

Training and Capacity Building

- promoting an environment (within MDAs) in which communication staff are adequately trained and otherwise equipped to provide the necessary support and advice to the relevant Minister and/or the organization's leadership, and ensuring commitment of the necessary funds for same

Monitoring and Evaluation

- monitoring and evaluating the degree to which operational practices comply with the requirements of the Communication Policy and achieve stated objectives.

The Government recognizes that it has an obligation to disseminate information pertaining to its plans, policies and programmes in order to achieve the national goals of creating a healthy, stable and informed

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population. To this end, Government will facilitate the development and implementation of communication strategies and plans which enable open, responsive and factual communication with the citizenry and support lifelong learning.

With the passage of the Access to Information Act in 2002, a general right to access GoJ information was conferred upon the public. Communication resources of the Access to Information Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister have since been committed to the sensitization of citizens to the usefulness of exercising this right to inform meaningful and increased participation in decision-making. Further, in keeping with its legislative mandate, the Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica transmits the sittings of the Houses of Parliamentary, Jamaica House Press Briefings and other programmes which build awareness of the democratic process and current affairs.

Strengthening citizen participation in governance will be achieved by identifying and utilizing other appropriate channels and platforms for effectively creating, sharing and accessing official information.

1.5 The Broader National Development Plan

Although the Vision 2030 Plan does not speak specifically to the GoJ's communication obligations, the long term strategic vision delineated below is in keeping with the overall national outcomes and the important role for communication, in achieving the Vision 2030 Plan.

The elements below form part of the overarching ethos of the GoJ under which the Communication Policy is built:

- strengthening the process for citizen participation in governance;
- strengthening accountability and transparency mechanisms;
- strengthening Public Institutions to deliver efficient and effective public goods and services;
- ensuring that Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential;

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- encouraging greater use and application of ICT by government and private; enterprise, including MSMEs;
- encouraging government to become an exemplary user of ICT applications; and
- encouraging innovative use and application of ICT by Jamaican private enterprise and government.

1.6 Existing Legal Framework

The Communication Sector is governed by several pieces of key legislation, consideration of which is integral to this Policy. They include:

- The Broadcasting and Radio Re-Diffusion Act (1944)
- The Executive Agency Act (2002)
- The Telecommunications Act (2000)
- The Radio and Telegraph Control Act (1973)
- The Electronic Transactions Act (2006)
- The Consumer Protection Act (2005)
- The Access to Information Act (2002)
- The Archives Act (1983)
- The National Library of Jamaica Act (2010)
- The Copyright Act (1999)
- The Trade Mark Act (2001)
- The Patent Act (Amended 1976)
- The Official Secrets Act (1911)
- The Disaster Preparedness and Management Act (1993)

1.7 Linkages with other Policies and Programmes

The GoJ's Communication Policy will complement the following policies of the Jamaican government: -

- The Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan;
- The Public Sector Modernization Vision and Strategy 2002 – 2012;
- The National Information and Communications Technology Strategy 2007-2012;
- ICT Policy 2011;
- GoJ Staff Orders;
- The GoJ Procurement Policy (and amendments);
- Ministry Paper No. 114, Strategy for Restructuring the Public Sector;
- Citizens Charter 2002;
- Environmental Regulatory Authority Green Paper No. 2 /2010; and
- Jamaica National Environmental Action Plan 1992.

Other relevant policies/procedures/legislation being developed or to be developed include:

- The Electronic Media and Content Policy;
- The Records and Information Management Policy;
- The Public Sector Data Collection and Information Sharing Policy²;
- The Customer Service Policy;
- The GoJ Corporate Governance Framework; and
- The Data Protection Act

² The mechanics for sharing information within the GoJ Communication Network and across GoJ will benefit from the elaboration provided by the Data Collection and Information Sharing Policy.

SECTION II: THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Vision

Creating a modern, well co-ordinated, credible, effectively managed and responsive system of communication across and between Government and citizens, that will facilitate information exchange and serve the diverse information needs of Jamaicans, including those in the diaspora.

2.2 Mission

The Policy Mission is to:

- provide the public with timely, accurate and clear information, about the activities, policies, programmes, services and initiatives of the Jamaican government;
- develop citizen centric policies, programmes and services through integration of communication functions, from formulation through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and
- facilitate and promote a visible, accessible, easily identifiable, responsible and accountable system of Government communication.

2.3 Goals

The GoJ seeks to have:

Visible, accessible, transparent and accountable Government

- An efficient and effective communication machinery will consult with and optimize dialogue between citizens and their government; increase visibility, transparency and accountability in decision making, as well as build awareness

and understanding of Government initiatives, priorities, policies, programmes and services.

Proactive and responsive Government communication and other services

- Proactive disclosure of relevant, accurate and credible information and the timely provision of communication services will promote the alignment of Government policies, programmes, initiatives and services with citizens' needs and expectations.

Integrated and sustainable planning, management and service delivery

- Open, courteous and continuous communication with the public as well as within and between staff at all levels in MDAs will yield integrated, successful and sustainable plans, processes, policies and programmes; promote the effective management of public resources; yield high levels of service delivery and secure public trust.

2.4 Pillars of GoJ's Communication Responsibility

The GoJ's chief communication responsibility to the people of Jamaica is to:

- i) provide timely, accurate, clear and complete information about its programmes, services and initiatives;
- ii) deliver prompt, courteous, professional and responsive communication services;
- iii) ensure GoJ Institutions are visible, appropriately branded, accessible and accountable to the people they serve;
- iv) utilize the variety of media, channels and platforms to effectively provide information and reach Jamaicans both at home and in the diaspora;

- v) encourage continuous improvement in relations with the media;
- vi) safeguard the trust of the Jamaican people in the integrity and impartiality of government;
- vii) establish consultation mechanisms with the people on an on-going basis;
- viii) use research to identify, evaluate and address the public's information and communication needs and concerns as well as to inform government policy, programmes and services; and
- ix) ensure increased collaboration and cooperation among the agencies of government in coherent and effective communication with the public.

2.5 Guiding Principles and Values

The following principles and values will underpin the strategies outlined in this Policy:-

People-centred Governance

- o Inclusiveness in the formulation of policies, design of programmes, delivery of services and satisfactorily meeting the information and communication needs of citizens are essential for effective governance.

Diversity and Equality

- o Government communication must be inclusive and promote equality, inclusive of gender equality and communication output must be mindful of and address vulnerable audiences and depict the diversity of the Jamaican society.

Transparency and Accountability

- o Government must at all times operate in an open environment which is encouraging of public input to produce laws and policies that more accurately reflect the needs of its

citizens and to secure public trust and 'buy in'. Public officials are ultimately accountable to the citizenry with respect to their stewardship of public resources and must therefore communicate in a timely manner, critical policies and other decisions, as well as developments which affect their daily lives.

Accuracy, Integrity and Reliability

- The dissemination of accurate, reliable and objective information is essential to ensure that the Government is the authoritative and credible source of official data, material, news, updates and reports. The integrity of government information and actions, as well as adherence to high standards of journalism, augur well for safeguarding the reputation of the Government and its institutions.

Accessibility, Timeliness and Responsiveness

- The Government must be visible, readily available to the citizenry and uniformly recognizable in its communication over multiple media platforms. It is the responsibility of government to provide citizens with information which satisfies their needs on a timely basis and enables them to make informed decisions.

Respect

- Public officials and government communicators must place a premium on respectful engagement and interaction with the citizenry and members of the media in communicating factual information.

Rights

- Citizens have a general right to access official documents that are not exempt under the Access to Information Act, 2002. In satisfying requests for information, the Government

will ensure that same is delivered in a manner that balances the right to information against other considerations, including privacy.

Consultation

- The GoJ is committed to stakeholder consultation in the formulation of major policies and to facilitating and encouraging participation in the decision-making process.

Joined up Government

- All MDAs must communicate efficiently and collaborate in providing integrated and coherent policies, programmes and services for a stated common purpose.

2.6 Key Policy Outcomes

Consistent with the goals of open, transparent and responsible government communication, the key outcomes of the Policy include:

- (i) clear and coordinated communication within and between MDAs;
- (ii) timely, accurate, transparent and effective delivery of official information from identified government sources, to all sectors and segments of the country's diverse society;
- (iii) wider accessibility of government information and services (locally and in the diaspora);
- (iv) increased knowledge and understanding of government initiatives, policies, programmes and services;
- (v) optimal integration of GoJ communication machinery and services;
- (vi) modernized, ICT driven, GoJ communications system including Social Media Platforms;
- (vii) increased citizens' engagement in the democratic and national development processes;
- (viii) improved management of risk, crisis and emergency communication;
- (ix) transformed culture, work ethic and operations throughout the Public Service with a focus on citizen-centred communication, policy making and programme formulation, as well as the delivery of prompt, courteous and responsive service that is sensitive to the needs and concerns of the public and respectful of individual rights ;
- (x) sustained productive, professional and mutually respectful relations with the media;

- (xi) transparent and equitable advertising, marketing and sponsorship arrangements;
- (xii) timely release and increased long term accessibility of government communication material and published information in multiple formats;
- (xiii) increased knowledge of and compliance with the Legal Deposit Act, Jamaica Copyright Act and all aspects of the Intellectual Property regime within the relevant sections of the Public Service; and
- (xiv) enhanced visibility and profile of the Government at the leadership and institutional levels.

SECTION III: POLICY ELEMENTS, ISSUES, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

1. Policy Element: Accessible, Understandable, Identifiable GoJ Information

It is the policy of the GoJ to provide the public with timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information about its policies, programmes, services and initiatives. In the interest of good governance, there is a firm commitment to explaining government policies and decisions and to inform the public of its priorities for the country. Moreover, effective two-way communication is necessary for all Jamaicans to participate in the democratic process and access/utilize government programmes and services.

The Access to Information Act, 2002 (the ATI Act) embodies this commitment and stands as an expression of the value that Jamaicans place on openness and access. As such, all GoJ Institutions must comply with the provisions of the ATI Act, which provides an orderly manner in which the public may access official information, records and documents.

Additionally, citizens who have studied, lived and worked abroad and also persons who are of Jamaican descent continue to contribute to Jamaica's development. Accordingly, the Government acknowledges the importance of keeping Jamaicans living on the island and those overseas, fully informed of its policies, programmes and services that are accessible to them, as well as apprised of opportunities for them to participate in national initiatives.

Policy Issues

i) Need for more effective and efficient communication

There is a need for the GoJ to more efficiently and effectively:

- communicate decisions and /or developments of national importance, inclusive of those which relate to government policies, strategies, initiatives and programmes;
- provide information held by MDAs which bolster wide understanding of their role, mandate and work; and
- leverage ICTs to secure wider dissemination of and access to GoJ information readily and affordably.

ii) Appropriate strategies to address communication imperatives are required

Adequate communication strategies have not been sufficiently developed or consistently implemented to address considerations such as communication efficiency and effectiveness, or to:

- facilitate optimal engagement with the public and the diaspora;
- increase utilization of government services and access to benefits;
- inform citizens' decision making and participation in the democratic process; and
- define the circumstances in which GoJ communication is to be disseminated free of charge.

iii) Cultural diversity needs to be consistently taken into account

The communication needs of the diverse Jamaican public are not consistently taken into account with respect to:

- determining the content or presentation of government messaging;
- accommodating the use of the Jamaican language and cultural expressions in certain official communication activities (e.g. oral and dramatic presentations); or
- the selection of media platforms to which the public have access.

iv) Need to provide for consistent Information Access, Proactive Disclosure, Publishing and Preservation

While the ATI Act confers on the public, a right to access official documents that are not exempt, there is no articulated framework to guide the proactive and responsible disclosure of information, particularly at the administrative level of the MDAs. Further, to build on the successes of the ATI programme, enabling policies and processes need to be fully integrated into the operations of MDAs.

There is inconsistent adherence to publishing requirements, standards and best practices as provided for in legislation such as the ATI Act, the Public Bodies Management and Accountability Act and the Financial, Administration and Audit Act.

Additionally, GoJ publications and official records are not being optimally preserved, and there is an absence of a comprehensive policy framework to govern same, in an era where there is a proliferation of documents and archival material being created on multiple formats which need to be preserved for posterity.

Policy Objectives

To provide a comprehensive policy framework which promotes:

- (i) transparent, efficient and effective communication with the public and diaspora, consistent with their needs;
- (ii) inclusiveness, gender equality, diversity, and wide access to information;
- (iii) proactive disclosure of information;
- (iv) free dissemination of critical GoJ communication output;
- (v) responsiveness to requests and expressed interest or public concerns;

- (vi) adherence to statutory requirements for publishing and communication best practices;
- (vii) the preservation of GoJ communication material and published information on multiple and archival formats to ensure current and long-term accessibility; and
- (viii) the leveraging of affordable, appropriate and available Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Policy Strategies

All MDAs must ensure that:

- (i) information communicated within and between MDAs, to the Parliament (or any other official body) and to the public, particularly with respect to GoJ policies, programmes, initiatives, benefits and services is:
 - o consistent, clear, accurate, relevant and useful;
 - o written in plain and simple language for ease of comprehension; and
 - o spoken or written in English, except in cases where it is contextually relevant to use the Jamaican language or cultural expressions or where use of local drama is the chosen medium of communication;
- (ii) communication plans consider the needs of stakeholders, including Jamaicans overseas, mindful of cities of the world and institutions that have significant populations of Jamaican people;
- (iii) there is on-going assessment of information needs (utilizing appropriate research and media monitoring mechanisms), of groups such as the youth, aged, disabled and the vulnerable as well as geographic communities, Sectors; Industries, civil society and the diaspora, so that information that is in demand may be made accessible to the public;

- (iv) there is on-going assessment of gender specific information needs (consistent with the National Policy for Gender Equality 2011) to include information required to:-
- build women's awareness of strategies, programmes and legal remedies which are available to strengthen and protect families
 - interventions to halt the attrition of boys at all levels of the education system
 - access support services for women in small and medium enterprises
 - improving the working conditions for low paid workers
 - encouraging men to seek preventative health information and services
 - improving road safety awareness for boys and men as part of safer cities and communities initiative
 - reducing the proliferation of music that celebrates exploitation and abuse of women and girls;
- (v) Communication Plans, Strategies and Programmes are developed to satisfy the identified and diverse needs of the GoJ's internal and external stakeholders and the wider public;
- (vi) Communication Plans, Strategies and Programmes are reviewed at minimum, every three (3) years and recast and /or appropriately modified as the context requires so as to align with Government priorities and to respond to emerging interests and public concerns;
- (vii) wherever feasible, institutions should proactively disseminate publications and other written forms of GoJ communication output free of charge, particularly where such information:
- alerts the public about imminent dangers or high levels of risk to health, safety or the environment;
 - is required for public understanding of significant new laws, policies, programmes, initiatives, or services; and
 - explains the rights, entitlements and obligations of citizens;

- (viii) information requests (however made) or inquiries from the public are responded to as soon as practicable and no later than the timelines provided under various legislation, citizens' charters and other governing instruments for the relevant MDAs;
- (ix) adequate and timely explanations are provided where information requested by the public is unavailable, or otherwise, may not be disclosed, due to considerations such as the violation of privacy, confidentiality, breach of national security, or any other consideration that would involve disclosing information contained in documents that are exempt under the ATI Act;
- (x) information about an institution's structure, mandate, programmes, services, service standards (as set out in a Citizens' Charter) and information holdings are available to the public on as many (traditional and new media) platforms as is affordable, appropriate and practical, to raise the public's awareness and to comply with the ATI Act;
- (xi) where feasible, publications such as annual reports and special technical reports, especially those which allow for understanding and update of the work, mandate, structure, programmes and services of the MDA, should be posted on the website of the MDA, presented in a timely manner to the Houses of Parliament where required or appropriate, and otherwise disseminated to the public in an affordable manner;
- (xii) a (physical or virtual) library and a comprehensive index is maintained which is accessible to the public and which lists their published works (both free and priced publications); co-publications, communication records, documents, and material;
- (xiii) communication outputs are maintained on multiple formats (including archival formats) and stored centrally for purposes of long-term retention and access;

- (xiv) a current, comprehensive and well structured identification or classification system that provides an effective means for organizing and locating information is maintained;
- (xiv) their operations integrate enabling policies and processes, such as those related to records management and data sharing, to allow for greater efficiency in responding to requests and complying with the provisions of the ATI Act, as well as current and long term access; and
- (xv) appropriate media platforms are utilized to best address the information/communication needs and preferences of target groups, communities, Sectors and civil society and take account of affordability and access to the selected media platform.

2. Policy Element: Corporate Identity and Standards

GoJ Institutions must be visible, accessible and accountable to the public they serve, and all MDAs must be easily identified in whichever fora they are present.

Policy Issues

Need for consistent focus on:

(i) ***Identity, Branding and Ease of Recognition***

It is important for GoJ Institutions to be readily identified, and uniformly branded wherever they are present. Similarly, GoJ information, activities and the various modes of communication need to be instantly recognizable in all circumstances, as having been originated or produced by or for the MDA.

(ii) ***Preservation of Official Symbols and Standards***

GoJ branding must reflect high standards and take account of the importance of preserving the integrity of official symbols, their specifications and proper usage. Further, standards have not been developed to expressly require that branding features unique to an

MDA (such as its logo) do not conflict with *national values or identity*, both of which are underpinned by the core principles of inclusiveness and diversity.

These considerations are important in assisting the public to clearly identify and establish GoJ institutional presence and distinguish authentic GoJ documents, information and services, from other sources and providers.

Policy Objective

To ensure distinctive, visible and consistency in branding of all GoJ institutions, their activities and communication outputs, and provide also for the establishment of standards to guide the creation of branding features unique to each MDA and which are representative of the Jamaican people.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must ensure that:

- (i) operating locations, (including their satellite offices, buildings and facilities, prominently and appropriately display the name of the MDA, the Jamaican Flag and the Coat of Arms. The positioning and placement of the Flag and Coat of Arms must be in keeping with the preservation and integrity of these national symbols, and must comply with the relevant specifications and guidelines issued from time to time by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM;
- (ii) their buildings and facilities display in the main entrance, a framed official photograph (appropriate to space) of the Governor General, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the MDA, bearing in each instance, their names and official titles. Official photographs must be procured from the Jamaica Information Service (JIS);

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- (iii) all publications and other communication material and applications, where the context allows, depict the society in a fair, representative and inclusive manner and reflect the national motto ‘Out of Many, One People’;
- (iv) all stationery, information products/written GoJ communication material and applications, whether prepared for internal or external use, must be clearly identified as being GoJ communication and as such, the Coat of Arms must be appropriately displayed, along with the name of the MDA. In this regard, the relevant specifications and guidelines issued from time to time by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM, must be adhered to;
- (v) their Websites are clearly identified by a prominent and appropriate display of the Coat of Arms, along with the name of the MDA in a manner consistent with:
 - o the relevant specifications and guidelines issued from time to time by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM; and
 - o the GoJ Web Standards Compliance Manual (or any other issued from time to time by the relevant government body with responsibility for web standards);
- (vi) permission is sought from the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM, if there is an intention to use National Emblems³ and/or Symbols⁴;
- (vii) prepared GoJ communication over audio-visual media such as television, and cable, so far as the context permits, appears with the appropriate display of the Coat of Arms and the name of the MDA at the ‘top’ and/ or ‘tail’ of the presentation, advertisement, public service announcement or other communication package. Film and video productions should include the title, the date of the production and the name of the producing entity;

³ The National Emblems include: The Coat of Arms and the National Flag or the National Anthem.

⁴ The National Symbols of Jamaica are the Blue Mahoe Tree; Lignum Vitae Flower, Ackee fruit, and the Swallowtail Hummingbird.

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- (viii) any prepared GoJ presentation, advertisement, public service announcement or other communication package, for broadcast over the radio or any other medium that can only be heard, carries an announcement at the ‘top’ and ‘tail’ of same that indicates the name of the MDA and identifies the entity as a ‘Ministry’, ‘Department’ or ‘Agency’ of the GoJ whenever the context permits;
- (ix) any prepared GoJ presentation, advertisement, or other communication package which appears in print, so far as the context permits, appears with the appropriate display of the Coat of Arms and the name of the MDA;
- (x) any graphic design/representation using or incorporating a national emblem(s) or symbol(s) (including on MDA logos, letterheads, corporate apparel or promotional material) should be considered and approved by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM, prior to production, reproduction or use;
- (xi) the design of branding features unique to each MDA must not imitate or alter national symbols; must not conflict with national *identity or values*; challenge or violate the principles of inclusiveness and diversity; or derogate from the dignity of the MDA or the Jamaican people and must comply with specifications and standards of the GoJ which may be otherwise issued by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM in this regard;
- (xii) their corporate identity is managed and protected in a manner that is befitting the dignity of the entity and reflects GoJ values, standards and priorities;
- (xiii) there is appropriate identification and recognition of the entity’s contribution and participation in public events, sponsorships and collaborative arrangements;
- (xiv) where appropriate and feasible, overarching themes, messaging and priorities of the GoJ (such as economic reform, gender related considerations and environmental imperatives) are consistently

identified and included in communication internally and to the public; and

- (xv) pending the development by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM of a complete Manual governing the use of national symbols and emblems, the specifications and standards which appear in Appendix II. The Use of National Emblems and National Symbols” of this Policy will serve as an initial guide for the purposes of this section.

3. Policy Element: Research, Public Feedback, Monitoring and Evaluation

Communication between MDAs and citizens must be continuous, open, inclusive, relevant, clear and reliable and communication strategies and plans must be routinely evaluated and revised. The Policy encourages consultation with the public and also independent research as a precursor to the successful execution of the business of government, to include, its communication strategies.

It is envisaged that this approach will result in outputs and outcomes which support the goals and objectives of the entity and the Government. Research tools, including citizen feedback, policy inquiry and analysis, media monitoring, public opinion research, market research, customer satisfaction studies, etc. should be utilized to identify the public’s needs and requirements. The impact of current initiatives, marketing strategies, and the degree of successful service delivery must also to be measured.

In keeping with the principles of a non-partisan public service, MDAs may not issue contracts or expend public funds for research on electoral voting intentions, or political party preferences or party standings with the electorate.

MDAs that are engaging in public consultations must inform the public in a clear and timely manner about the opportunities for them to participate. This may be done online through use of websites or

other social media networks, issuing letters of invitation, publishing notices or paid advertisements in the media, or other communication channels.

Policy Issues

i) Inadequate utilization of research

There is the need for the GoJ to better integrate and utilize research methodologies and analysis to inform the communication process. This is important for increased understanding of the public's information needs and responses with regard to GoJ policies, programmes, services and initiatives.

ii) Limited mechanisms for public feedback and evaluation

MDAs do not routinely monitor and evaluate the public environment as it relates to the need for or the effectiveness of GoJ communication programmes. Effective communication must be reciprocal and as such, efficient and adequate mechanisms for public engagement and obtaining feedback must be established. Further, most MDAs do not have mechanisms for structured monitoring of the media on an on-going basis to identify current and emerging public issues and assess feedback.

Policy Objective

To provide a structured research, analysis, monitoring and evaluation framework for identifying and assessing public information requirements, inputs and responses with respect to GoJ policies, programmes, services and initiatives, in order to create a communication model of government that encourages citizens' engagement in the democratic and national development processes.

Policy Strategies

All MDAs must ensure that:

- (i) research tools, including gap analysis; opinion and market research; quality of service/customer satisfaction studies and programme evaluation, and others are to be appropriately and effectively utilized;
- (ii) periodic public consultations and citizen engagement initiatives including town hall meetings, community meetings, exhibitions, workshops and others are to be conducted as part of its research and monitoring functions;
- (iii) public consultations are conducted in a manner which facilitates open and responsive communication; as such, the planning, management and evaluation of public consultations and other citizen engagement initiatives must meet the communication requirements of conveying factual information in simple language;
- (iv) research is coordinated between MDAs and conducted in an objective and transparent manner and must conform to the GoJ procurement requirements;
- (v) no public funds are to be expended to carry out research of a partisan nature such as electoral voting intentions, political party preferences or party standings;
- (vi) promote transparency in public opinion research that quantifies, qualifies or evaluates the views, attitudes or perceptions of the population;
- (vii) adequate and structured mechanisms are available to engage citizens; promote GoJ policies, programmes, services and initiatives; public feedback and participation (including use of websites, social media, letters of invitation, notices in the

media, paid media advertising and other means normally used by MDAs to communicate with the public;

- (viii) adequate and structured communication mechanisms are established to inform, among other things, the review/evaluation of the impact of communication interventions, national policies, programmes, services, initiatives and plans;
- (ix) media monitoring services are utilized to identify and track current and emerging public issues, needs, moods and trends reported by the media;
- (x) their communication plans and programmes, activities and marketing initiatives, etc. among others, are periodically assessed against planned objectives and relevant standards, and make the necessary adjustments;
- (xi) the performance of communication outputs is tracked and results measured against objectives set in communication and business plans;
- (xii) the effectiveness of communication components and activities, including advertising is evaluated against objectives of policies, programmes, services or initiatives which the GoJ has introduced and implemented; and
- (xiii) an environment is created in which line staff are adequately trained to provide support and advice to managers to ensure a seamless execution of the consultation and citizen engagement processes.

4. Policy Element: Communicating Risk-Related Information to the Public

Proactive and responsible governance requires of GoJ institutions that they have the capacity to not only anticipate and assess potential risks to the country, but also, are able to identify risks

internal to their operations, areas of public responsibility and develop timely responses to such risks, including the appropriate communication response.

Policy Issues

MDAs need to communicate in a structured manner, potential and actual risks to public health, security, and the environment, as well as risks associated with major policies and programme

Policy Objective

To communicate effectively with respect to anticipated and assessed risks involved in matters of health, safety, the environment or major policies and programmes.

Policy Strategies

The relevant GoJ institutions must:

- (i) facilitate timely dialogue with the public and stakeholders about identified risks and associated factors and encourage a culture of trust through proactive disclosure of available facts, evidence and information concerning risk, related decisions and evaluation;
- (ii) take into account in decision making, the public's perceptions, perspectives, as well as the public interest;
- (iii) provide informed and appropriate responses to address concerns, misunderstandings, or divergent perspectives related to risks;
- (iv) include situational/environmental analysis and communication planning and strategy into risk assessment and decision-making processes;
- (v) establish an executive team including the Communications Officer/Specialist that will identify risks to MDA's operations or areas of public responsibility and develop timely strategies and

responses, including the communication messages to address same; and

- (vi) ensure that the Policy and administrative directorate benefits from the expert guidance of the Communication Officer/Specialist and team with respect to, among other things, best practices with engaging with the media around the identified risk and that appropriate preparatory material (e.g. “FAQ Sheets” and Information Kits) are provided to all officials that are likely to engage with the media and the public on the matter.

5. Policy Element: Crisis and Emergency Communication

Emergencies are abnormal situations requiring prompt action in order to contain and limit the extent and severity of any resulting damage to property, person and the environment. A crisis is a situation that challenges the public’s sense of tradition, safety, security, values and even the integrity of or confidence in the Government, without necessarily posing a threat to life or property. An emergency refers to an extra ordinary circumstance which requires a response outside of normal procedures to limit damage. In *crises* and *emergencies*, assessment and timely communication are paramount.

Policy Issue

Effective communication is an overriding consideration in instances of crisis and emergency management and as such, there is a need to ensure that communication planning (in all MDAs) determines the communication policies and procedures which obtain during either a crisis or emergency.

Policy Objective

To provide for an appropriate and effective communication management system before, during and after a crisis or an emergency to help prevent injury or loss of life, limit damage to assets and property, maintain public services, assist in the process of recovery, and to maintain or restore public confidence in the government. The ODPEM must assume a major role in communication in times of a national emergency.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) build capacity in disaster risk management (DRM) at the community and institutional levels by conducting training workshops/seminars and disseminating printed material, particularly in at-risk communities and for those Agencies classified as first responders in a crisis or emergency;
- (ii) be prepared to respond and comply with directives from the OPM which has lead responsibility for communication during a national crisis or emergency, and work in conjunction with ODPEM in coordinating resources and communicating strategies and actions through the JIS;
- (iii) recognize that extraordinary and rapid action might be required in times of crisis or emergency and be prepared to adjust priorities and resources accordingly;
- (iv) put the necessary plans, partnerships, tools and strategies in place to allow government officials to communicate seamlessly and effectively before, during and after an emergency or a crisis;

- (v) be prepared to cooperate with other players, such as industry and community leaders and non-governmental organizations, as required; and
- (vi) pay attention to the crisis and emergency communications protocol provided at Appendix 6.

6. Policy Element: Adoption and Use of New Media Platforms

While there is a recognition of ‘late adapters’ to change, even in instances of accepting that such change is important and useful, the level of ‘late adopters’ in the use of new media communication platforms means that not only will there be inconsistencies between and among GoJ Institutions which can impact operations, but important information needs of a growing segment of the population would remain unmet.

Policy Issue

There is a need to embrace new and emerging communications platforms, practices and technologies and for MDAs to retool and continuously upgrade their ICT infrastructure in keeping with institutions’ modernisation plans. Where GoJ institutions do not adapt to new communication norms, gaps emerge between the mode, timeliness and responsiveness with which the public or sections thereof expect to access information and interact with MDAs and the Government’s capacity to meet those expectations.

This notwithstanding, adoption of new and emerging communication technologies and media platforms must be managed in a manner that will not exclude those citizens whose access to such technology may be limited and/or non-existent or those who prefer to receive government information through traditional channels.

Policy Objective

To ensure that new and emerging technologies are used to advance government's ability to communicate and connect with Jamaicans in increasingly diverse, more efficient and practical ways while maintaining use of effective traditional media forms.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must ensure that:

- (i) where feasible, adequate investment in appropriate technologies be made, deployed and utilized to optimize communication with stakeholders and the public;
- (ii) managers in information technology, communications and other key areas collaborate in developing and implementing integrated communication plans and strategies;
- (iii) new and emerging technologies are used to encourage interactive communication, facilitate public consultation and enhance public access to information on GoJ programmes and services;
- (iv) efficiency is achieved in the preparation, public access to and dissemination of information, as well as its preservation for use by future generations; and
- (v) overall service performance and service delivery are improved through the use of new media technologies.

7. Policy Element: Internet and Electronic Communication Usage

The Jamaican Charter of Rights recognizes Jamaica as a democratic nation, which embraces the participation of citizens. Participation however, presupposes an informed public.

In this regard, information strategies, messages and distribution channels must consider a wide range of formats, techniques and technologies, including, but not limited to audio-visual productions, multimedia presentations, print, performing arts and the Internet.

The Internet and other means of electronic communication are powerful enablers for building and sustaining effective communication within institutions and with stakeholders across Jamaica and around the world.

As an important tool for providing information and services to the public, the Internet enables interactive, two-way communication and feedback. It also provides opportunities to reach and connect with Jamaicans wherever they reside, and to deliver personalized services. Delivery of information should consider the use of assistive technologies to allow as many persons as possible to access the information they need independently and with dignity.

Modes of communication must take into consideration the age, gender, disabilities, geographical location and other pertinent factors that describe the target audiences.

Policy Issue

While some GoJ institutions operate websites, overall, there is an absence of active presence on the Internet to facilitate 24-hour electronic access to public programmes, services and information.

There is also insufficient recognition of the importance and use of electronic communication as well as limited collaboration in its planning, management and effective use.

Policy Objective

- to establish effective web presence and the increased application of electronic communication by MDAs; and
- to build awareness throughout the public sector of the benefits of electronic communication; and
- to ensure public service managers and employees engage in direct communication through more effective use of electronic communication.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) ensure that managers, line staff and others responsible for the technical /operational aspects of their Web-based systems collaborate with those responsible for communication strategy and content including editorial and visual design presentation;
- (ii) advance GoJ on-line initiatives to expand the reach and improve the quality of internal and external communications to: accurately reflect GoJ themes and messages; improve service

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- delivery; connect and interact with citizens; enhance public access and foster public dialogue;
- (iii) ensure that Internet communications conform to GoJ Web Standards Compliance Manual (or any other issued from time to time by the relevant government body with responsibility for web standards) including website accessibility, usability, online communication best practices, etc.;
 - (iv) ensure consistency with other communication activities, for example information in printed material, where feasible, should be posted concurrently on the internet;
 - (v) ensure that information on their websites and portals is reviewed and updated regularly by the Head of Communications, or his/her designate;
 - (vi) ensure that web content is accurate, worded simply and available in multiple formats, including a format for persons with disabilities;
 - (vii) incorporate mechanisms into their on-line services for receiving and promptly acknowledging public feedback;
 - (viii) ensure that information about their external public consultations and citizen engagement activities is posted on their websites;
 - (ix) respect privacy rights and copyright ownership in all on-line publishing and communication, in compliance with the Copyright Act and the Intellectual Property regime;
 - (x) ensure that information published on websites, prior to making any changes or updates, is recorded and archived for posterity; and

- (xi) abide by the ICT Policy 2011, Cyber Security Act 2015 and the Electronic Transactions Act.

8. Policy Element: Communication Management and Coordination

Communication within and between GoJ Institutions must be open, proactive and inclusive, to achieve governmental and organizational goals and ensure that high quality information is conveyed to the public.

Policy Issue

Internal communication is necessary for effective organizational management.

Currently, internal communication does not form part of all MDAs communications strategy or plans and may result in staff being alienated or unaware of important issues affecting the organization or the Government in general.

It is important that internal stakeholders benefit from an inclusive approach to government communication which will involve keeping employees abreast of the initiatives, programmes, services and priorities of Government; the goals of the respective organizations and about developments and new initiatives affecting their work. It also entails taking into account the ideas, concerns and suggestions of the employees, their unions and staff associations.

Policy Objective

To enhance and fully integrate internal communication in the GoJ corporate communication strategy and in the planning process.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must ensure that:

- (i) the entire management team provides visible leadership and support to their internal communication process;
- (ii) employees are consulted in the preparation of the organization's internal communication plan;
- (iii) there is collaboration between Human Resources Management and the Communications Departments to ensure that internal communication requirements are met;
- (iv) communication with employees is open and frequent and that information to the public is relayed to staff either in advance or at the same time;
- (v) training, in internal communication techniques which must include a mix of published materials (in multiple formats), oral presentations, staff meetings and learning events, is available to staff to enhance their skills and knowledge base;
- (vi) internal communication activities and processes are frequently reviewed to evaluate results, identify areas for improvement, and make adjustments as necessary; and
- (vii) a labelling system to indicate hierarchy of urgency be developed to inform decision makers involved in approving press releases and other communiquè (eg numeric or colour coding).

9. Policy Element: Role of Ministers as Conveyors of Government Information

Ministers are the principal spokespersons of the Government. They are supported in this role by their Permanent Secretaries, Special and

Technical Advisors, other senior management personnel within the MDAs, Special Assistants and Communications Specialists.

Policy Issue

There is a need to codify the protocol which governs how Ministers engage with the media and the public especially given the absence of a structured framework which clearly distinguishes:

- the political and governmental roles of Ministers as information purveyors; and
- how best to engage in and explain government policies, priorities and decisions to the public.

Policy Objective

To have an established framework, to guide Ministers of Government, in engaging with the media in their capacity as official conveyors of Government information

Policy Strategies

Ministers and GoJ officials who are designated to speak in their official capacity must:

- (i) be so identified by name and position and introduced as speaking in an official capacity
- (ii) confine engaging with media to matters of fact and issues about which they are fully knowledgeable, relative to the policies, programmes, services and initiatives within the purview of the relevant MDA, or otherwise, be authorized so to do;
- (iii) where feasible, receive prior guidance from their internal communications and media relations specialists on the details of

such media engagement and fully briefed on the issues in order to more effectively perform their duties;

- (iv) be familiar with the guidelines for appearing before Parliament and other official public bodies or committees (Parliamentary Committees/ Commissions, etc.) when representing their MDAs; and
- (v) respect official protocol, privacy rights, security needs and concerns, matters before the Courts, Government policy, Cabinet confidences and Ministerial responsibility in their communications with the public.

10. Policy Element: Building Capacity for Communication Policy Implementation

Policy Issue

Successful implementation of the GoJ Communication Policy will require that managers and employees at all levels receive the necessary training and orientation.

Policy Objective

To fully inform GoJ staff , both present and new, of the Communication Policy and encourage its use.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) organize structured orientation sessions for staff at all levels to expose them to the Communication Policy;
- (ii) facilitate professional development of their communications staff to ensure they are fully conversant with the

Communication Policy and well versed in the current tools and techniques of communications practice; and

- (iii) Identify and plan for their communication training requirements and programme implementation by allocating adequate resources, including financial for such activities, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of both training and programme implementation, over time.

11. Policy Element: Cooperation Between The Media & Public Institutions

The GoJ recognizes the important role of media in strengthening the democratic process and disseminating news and current affairs to the public; facilitating the flow of information between the Government and the citizenry and providing a mechanism for public input and engagement around issues of importance.

Policy Issue

In today's 24-hour media environment, MDAs are not adequately equipped to operate and respond effectively and efficiently to the information needs of the media and the public. MDAs must be able to, on short notice, provide information to the media on relevant and topical issues.

Policy Objective

To develop and maintain a productive working relationship with all sections of the media with a view to securing at all times, the highest levels of cooperation and coverage of information on government policies, programmes, services and initiatives.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) develop plans and strategies for building good media relations specifying processes, procedures and timelines for responding to the media;
- (ii) facilitate and ensure that media requests for information or interview are addressed promptly (either by telephone, electronic mail, surface/air mail, or in person);
- (iii) give their Minister adequate notice when planning media campaigns or strategies that require Ministerial participation, or when preparing responses to media enquiries that have implications for the Minister;
- (iv) encourage and facilitate dialogue with the media, whether proactively or at the requests of the media for information and interviews;
- (v) engage the media using a variety of communication tools, including news conferences, background or technical briefings, news releases, telephone interviews and audio-visual presentations;
- (vi) ensure, as far as is practicable, that Members of Parliament learn about planned major initiatives before such information is released to the media;
- (vii) notify Members of Parliament and Councillors of any official events being held in their constituencies and divisions;
- (viii) ensure that requests from the media are directed to the appropriate staff designated to speak as official representatives of their institutions, or any other person(s) so authorized; and

(ix) encourage productive and mutually respectful relations between themselves, their Ministers and the media.

12. Policy Element: Coordinating Communication Across Government

Policy Issue

Presently, there is insufficient collaboration among and between MDAs to better understand the communication environment in which they operate, and in how best to respond to the needs and concerns of the public.

The production and dissemination of government information will have greater impact where it is undertaken in a coordinated manner. A 'joined up' approach is critical to the success of any communication strategy.

Policy Objective

To achieve higher levels of effective coordination in communication planning and execution throughout Government and improve cooperation among Ministers, and collaboration with senior officials, policy advisers, analysts, programme managers, communications staff, specialists in human resources, information technologists, webmasters, graphic artists, researchers, marketing specialists, access to information and privacy co-ordinators, librarians, receptionists and others.

Policy Strategies

- i) As the focal point in the coordination of GoJ communication, **the Communications and Public Affairs Unit supporting the** Information Minister's office must:
 - o receive from all MDAs, a monthly forecast of major planned activities (including upcoming announcements, speaking engagements for Ministers, and official visits/tours/travels);
 - o convene regular meetings (at least bi-monthly) of the Group of Government Communicators to, among other things, review forecasts, discuss major communication issues, new priorities and strategies;
 - o review, for purposes of coordination, news releases of major announcements from MDAs;
 - o provide leadership of the GoJ communication process through the sharing of best practices, new ideas, communications approaches and new technologies with MDAs; and
 - o encourage coherence and consistency of GoJ communication across all channels (i.e. telephone, in-person, mail, publications, web sites, social media etc.).

- ii) As personnel directly responsible for communication, **Heads of Communication in all institutions of the Government** must:
 - o provide the necessary leadership, management, budgetary and other support to ensure that communication strategies are integrated into all phases of policy and programmes planning, implementation, marketing, research and other activities;

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- prepare and implement annual communication plans and strategies in support of policies, programmes, services and initiatives;
- assess performance and evaluate results and adjust processes and activities to enhance effectiveness;
- ensure appropriate accountability and reporting mechanisms exist for the proper administration of all communication activities;
- coordinate activities with Ministers' offices to advance the communication goals and priorities of government;
- provide communication support and advice to Ministers and senior officials on government matters, including the preparation of speeches, news releases, briefing notes, presentations, memoranda and correspondence;
- collaborate where necessary and appropriate, to promote shared communication objectives;
- provide advice and support in the establishment and management of partnership arrangements and sponsorships
- integrate communication plans into the strategic planning exercise and budgeting cycle;
- integrate all communication activities (including internet, social media, marketing, advertising, public opinion research and media relations) to promote consistent and well co-ordinated communication with the public;
- advise on and assist in the development of internal communication strategies and activities;
- recognize and support the role all employees have in communicating effectively with the public;
- support a cooperative and consultative culture at the workplace, which is open to the views and concerns of

employee unions, representatives and associations on workplace issues;

- ensure that there is appropriate and effective use of information technologies and electronic communications; and
- advise on and assist in the development and management of risk, crisis and emergency communication plans and strategies.

All communication personnel across MDAs must leverage the network of the **Group of Government Communicators** for optimal information sharing, guidance and support.

13. Policy Element: Planning and Evaluation

Policy Issue

There is a need for MDAs to integrate communication planning into their annual corporate planning process and budget cycle, recognizing that the communication function is integral, not tangential to their operations.

The strategic corporate plan of the MDAs must take account of its communication needs and requirements.

Policy Objective

To formulate, evaluate, review and update the corporate communication plans of public sector organizations in conjunction with MDAs strategic plans and budgets.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- prepare a corporate communication plan that integrates governmental, ministerial and organizational priorities; identifies target audiences; takes account of the needs and concerns of those audiences; delineates strategies, tools, messages and responsibilities and identifies operational needs and resources;
- ensure that the communication function – has the resources needed to fulfil the requirements of this policy, and that resources are prudently managed such as taking care to make adequate budgetary provision for the essential communication elements of their policies and planned programmes, initiatives and activities;
- ensure that the public environment, particularly the views and needs of citizens, is reflected and assessed throughout the communication process;
- ensure that communication plans and strategies for policies, programmes, services and initiatives are developed collaboratively with input from responsible managers and with the on-going advice, support and involvement of specialists in communication;
- collaborate with other Government institutions to develop joint communication plans (to include messages and themes) and strategies in areas of mutual interest;
- evaluate the effectiveness (inclusive of cost), of communication programmes and campaigns in support of policy or programme initiatives, and make improvements or adjustments as needed to ensure their efficacy;

- evaluate periodically (at least every two years) the degree to which their management practices comply with the requirements of this Policy;
- include, an assessment of the degree of compliance with this Policy in their annual performance appraisals and evaluations of programmes and services;
- ensure that staff at all levels of the Public Sector carry out their unique role in, and shared responsibilities for, delivering and managing government communication; and
- ensure the coherence and consistency of information provided and GoJ messages across all channels of communication, from in-person service, telephone and mail, to facsimile, Internet and electronic transmission and social media

14. Policy Element: Values, Ethics & Anti-Corruption

Policy Issue

There is need to strengthen communication protocols and practices across government so that the culture within MDAs is in keeping with the expectation of the public for credible information from the Government.

It is necessary for MDAs to ensure that accurate GoJ information placed in the public domain is of a high professional standard, is transparent and non-partisan.

Policy Objective

To proactively communicate Government information in a manner that is consistent with the core values of journalism and is done in a manner consistent with timeliness, transparency and professionalism.

Policy Strategies

To maintain public confidence and trust, MDAs must ensure that all their communication undertakings are conducted in a manner that promotes the integrity of government through:

- ethical and effective interaction with all stakeholders;
- providing timely, accurate, objective and understandable information; and
- respecting privacy rights, security requirements and matters before the Courts; and avoiding conflicts of interest and the appearance of promoting or providing an unfair advantage (competitive or otherwise) in conducting business or entering into transactions with any service provider, supplier, or other private individual or entity.

15. Policy Element: GoJ Advertising, Marketing and Sponsorship

Government advertising is defined as any message conveyed in print (newspapers, magazines etc.), electronic, new, non-traditional

(e.g cinemas) and other media, either in Jamaica or overseas and which is paid for by a GoJ Institution.

It is critical that advertising, marketing and sponsorships arrangements, whether collaborative or solely undertaken by the Government be carried out in a manner that is fair and equitable. Collaborative arrangements may include advertising, promotional efforts or partnering activities involving the media as part of the communication strategy.

Policy Issue

There is an absence of a structured and integrated framework governing GoJ advertising, marketing practices, sponsorship and procurement of such related services. In addition, there is insufficient consistency with regard to GoJ messaging to the domestic and wider audiences.

The hallmark of a successful Government advertising and marketing campaign is one in which Jamaicans are kept well informed about their rights and responsibilities; government policies; programmes; services; initiatives; or about dangers or risks to public health, safety or the environment. The GoJ therefore needs to ensure that advertisements achieve a defined objective(s), are easily understood and appropriately placed to reach the target audience, while representing the best value for GoJ expenditure.

The placement or purchase of advertisements and marketing strategies directed at audiences in the diaspora must also promote Jamaica's interests overseas and inform/engage them, with respect to, among other things, local developments and critical initiatives.

Policy Objective

To establish a framework within which MDAs can be engaged in collaborative promotional arrangements, including financial and/or in-kind, and which promote integrity and efficacy of government advertising, sponsorship and related expenditure.

To advertise and market, using appropriate media to inform, in clear terms, the domestic and diaspora audiences, about their rights and responsibilities; existing, new or adjusted government policies, programmes, services or initiatives and/or about the dangers or risks to public health, safety or the environment.

Policy Strategies

It is imperative that MDAs:

- (i) consult with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Tourism and Entertainment and agencies like JAMPRO and the JIS, and any other MDA deemed relevant, when planning overseas advertising and promotional initiatives;
- (ii) utilize where appropriate and cost effective, the services of the JIS and CPTC in the development and execution of advertising programmes;
- (iii) ensure consistency of the local advertising message with the overseas communications and marketing thrust;
- (iv) avoid any appearance or public perception of endorsing or providing a marketing subsidy or unfair competitive advantage to any person or organization;
- (v) do not advertise or publicly endorse the products or services they purchase or obtain from the private sector;

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- (vi) do not use public funds to purchase advertising in support of a political party;
- (vii) suspend advertising which promotes or references the achievements of the GoJ during the period of a General Election, with the exception of:
 - i) public education type advertisements eg. ongoing programmes which explain citizens' rights and responsibilities; and/or
 - ii) essential advertising such as the issuing of public notices required by statute or regulation; informing the public of a danger to health, safety or the environment; or posting an employment or staffing notice.

The period of a General Election commences the day that Parliament is prorogued. Suspended advertising must not resume until authorized by the newly elected administration.

- (viii) take account of the requirements of the communication framework when planning, negotiating or implementing sponsorships or collaborative arrangements;
- (ix) communicate in an objective, fair and equitable manner to the parties (e.g. government, company, organization, groups or individuals) involved in any joint activity, initiative or collaborative arrangement;
- (x) clearly articulate the associated objectives, delineated contributions, risks and benefits of the advertising, marketing or sponsorship undertaking;
- (xi) partner with institutions or individuals that have common, compatible or shared objectives relative to the envisaged collaboration;

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- (xii) establish agreements to govern collaborative or sponsorship arrangements which set out, among other things, the communication roles and responsibilities of the parties involved, use of corporate images, visibility, publishing, marketing or promotional activities, among other things;
- (xiii) approach the negotiation and implementation of collaborative arrangements, in a manner that is informed by consultation with internal communications and media relations specialists and where necessary, benefits from their ongoing advice and support, for purposes of ensuring that same aligns with the communication goals and strategies of the relevant MDA and the wider GoJ;
- (xiv) ensure that all participants in sponsorship/collaborative arrangements are duly acknowledged and appropriately recognized. Use of Corporate names and logos, without promotional tag lines, are appropriate identifiers in acknowledging the contribution of participants;
- (xv) use the national emblems and symbols to identify the participation or association of the GoJ in collaborative arrangements, and to ensure public recognition of such contribution, in keeping with guidelines issued from time to time by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM;
- (xvi) ensure that, unless otherwise specified by the relevant MDA, collaborating parties acknowledge the role and contribution of the MDA in advertisements and other forms of publicity or public engagement;
- (xvii) do not advertise commercial products or services of private sector entities with which they are engaged in collaborative arrangements except those which appear in Appendix IV or are otherwise authorized/designated by the Cabinet from time to time;
- (xviii) do not accept sponsorship from the private sector in exchange for commercial advertising or endorsing goods or services of the

private sector sponsor, except those which appear in Appendix IV or are otherwise authorized/designated by the Cabinet from time to time;

- (xix) analyze the public landscape and take account of the views and concerns of citizens and stakeholders before entering into any collaborative arrangement;
- (xx) be mindful of public perceptions, avoid conflicts of interest, uphold public trust and confidence in the impartiality and integrity of the Public Service, and honour the value and reputation of public institutions; and
- (xxi) ensure that all information and requirements with respect to entering into partnerships and collaborative arrangements are clearly articulated, to facilitate:
 - (i) adequate and timely planning
 - (ii) incorporation into communication and business processes
 - (iii) communication of the results of collaborative arrangements through normal audit, evaluation and performance reporting processes, and
 - (iv) conformity to relevant specifications and guidelines issued from time to time by the Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM, with respect to communication activities including the design and implementation of marketing initiatives, projects or campaigns.

16. Policy Element: Procedures Regarding Public Events & Press Conferences

Policy Issue

There is need for a framework to be established to guide GoJ institutions in observing the appropriate communication and other protocols in instances where Government officials or institutions

are planning, participating, or partnering in the staging of an event or press conference.

Policy Objective

To provide an appropriate framework for effective participation and the successful coordination and management of public events, which meet the stated communication (and other) objectives and befits the dignity of the office of the Government representative or the MDA.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) plan participation in public engagements, either through initiating or accepting invitations to such events speaking engagements, press conferences, church and town hall meetings, etc. and use their participation to, among other things, inform the public about significant issues, initiatives, programmes or services of the GoJ;
- (ii) establish guidelines to govern the convening and conduct of press conferences which will prescribe minimum standards and procedures in order to assess the appropriateness of the use of this medium to treat with the particular issue, as well as to preserve the efficacy of the information to be provided. The engagement of the necessary government stakeholders must be timely and to that end, a minimum notification period to the political and administrative directorate of two (2) weeks must be observed (with attendant briefing documents forwarded). Criteria for the convening panel should be developed to ensure attendance of the appropriate technical and other inputs and knowledgeable panelists. Consideration of the attendance of stakeholders should include an assessment as to whether it is appropriate and useful for

stakeholders such as the relevant Minister, government or public official, to attend;

In instances of a crisis or an emergency, the required two week notification period will not apply, however the political and administrative directorate must be notified and briefed as soon as possible, of any decision to host a press conference;

- (iii) ensure that where press conferences are convened in matters pertaining to regulation, care is taken that commercially sensitive, or information which could be deemed damaging/prejudicial, is not divulged and that the appropriate officials (and where relevant, stakeholders) are involved in the engagement with the press;
- (iv) ensure that protocols are introduced, maintained and communicated to members of staff to govern the participation of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and/or their designate(s), or other senior officials in public events and press conferences, to avoid scheduling or other conflicts, including conflicts of interest;
- (v) establish, disseminate and adhere to internal procedures which provide for the making of adequate and appropriate arrangements for the participation of the Minister, Parliamentary Secretary (or their designates) or other senior officials, ahead of an event or press conference. In so doing, support staff and communication officer(s)/Unit(s) must be included in the process of confirming and determining agreed timeframes and other attendant requirements, such as the timely preparation of speeches, printed messages, press releases, press kits and media coverage;
- (vi) establish protocols internally to ensure that the GoJ will be identified and represented at any event with which it is associated, in a manner that is both appropriate and desirable, having regard to the character/nature of the event

and the extent of the GoJ's contribution or association with the event;

- (vii) ensure that where any civic, national or public event is staged with external partners or sponsors, appropriate means of acknowledging other participants or sponsors are determined by the parties before the staging of the event, with due regard to the character/nature of the event and in the instance of a civic or national event, with reference to Chancery and Protocol Division of the OPM;
- (viii) ensure that where multiple MDAs are involved in the staging of an event, a lead MDA must be identified from the planning phase and the roles and responsibilities of all MDAs defined and articulated; GoJ communication professionals must be included at an early stage;
- (ix) issue media advisories and invitations to the JIS for the coverage of the event up to 1:00p.m the day of the event; and
- (x) refrain from associating, supporting or participating in political events.

17. Policy Element: Public Access to Government Publications/ Documents

Policy Issue

Notwithstanding the existence of the ATI legislation, which gives the public a right of access to official documents, there is a need for MDAs to improve access to their publications, as part of a broader culture of openness and transparency within government.

Policy Objective

- (i) To facilitate ease of public access to government publications, and
- (ii) To ensure MDAs are compliant with statutory requirements for the development and dissemination of government publications.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must:

- (i) maintain an index of all published works and co-publications, with a schedule of free publications and those for which payment of a fee is required;
- (ii) ensure the index is available to the public and accessible in multiple formats;
- (iii) submit the index, and periodic updates, to the Communications and Public Affairs Unit of the OPM;
- (iv) expose and train frontline staff in the key principles of access to information and where appropriate, proactive disclosure, as part of engendering a culture of openness; and
- (v) publish notices, annual reports and other material in multiple formats and in keeping with the requirements under their Statutory Regulations and the Public Bodies Management and Accountability Act.

In keeping with (v), the office of the Permanent Secretary must have in place a monitoring framework to ensure compliance by the respective MDA under their purview.

18. Policy Element: Records Management/ Cataloguing and Securing Information

Librarians, Document Information and Access Services Personnel provide an important service in government communication and within each MDA, the ability must exist or be created for that institution to organize and be able to readily retrieve official documents and information of any kind whether required for internal purposes and/or to satisfy requests from the public. Against this background, timely, efficient and effective work of librarians in cataloguing, preserving and making accessible indices with respect to published materials and official documents are highlighted as critical for successful current and future retrieval and usage.

The preservation, cataloguing and securing of GoJ communication material and published information (across formats) occur routinely but on a mostly ad hoc basis. This does not augur well for optimal public access or the preservation of such records for future generations.

It is therefore important that all GoJ communication material and published information be properly catalogued, appropriately stored and securely maintained to ensure accessibility for both current and future use.

Policy Objective

To ensure current and long term accessibility of all GOJ communication materials and published information in multiple formats.

Policy Strategies

All MDAs must:

- i) adhere to the guidelines prescribed by the Jamaica Archives and Records Department (and ultimately to be contained in the GoJ Records and Information Management (RIM) Policy) as it relates to cataloguing, storage and preservation of documents and materials in multiple formats;
- ii) maintain a comprehensive description and classification system for all information holdings as an effective means for organizing and locating information, and for use as required by the Access to Information Act;
- iii) ensure that their communications, registry and relevant administrative personnel are sensitized to the requirements and importance of the RIM and the Access to Information Act; and
- iv) maintain a repository of copies of all publications issued, for long-term access.

19. Policy Element: Compliance with Jamaica's Intellectual Property Regime and Legal Deposit Act

Policy Issue

MDAs often have in their possession, protected works of which they are not the rights holders. It is important that all MDAs are aware of the provisions of the Copyright Act and its Regulations and the requirements of Jamaica's Intellectual Property Regime and ensure that the ownership rights associated with protected works are fully respected in all media applications.

Further, in keeping with the Government ethos on preserving print and non-print publications for current and future generations, the provisions of the Legal Deposits Act need to be widely known, understood and adhered to by MDAs.

Policy Objective

To promote awareness of, respect for and compliance with:

- i) the Jamaican Copyright Act and its Regulations and all aspects of Jamaica's Intellectual Property regime; and
- ii) the Legal Deposits Act , for the central storage and preservation of both print and non-print publications in a repository.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must ensure that:

- their communications personnel, senior management and procurement officers are sensitized to the requirements and importance of the Legal Deposits Act, the Copyright Act and Regulations; and all aspects of Jamaica's Intellectual Property regime;
- productions across all media applications, inclusive of film, video, audio-visual, audio, publications, multimedia productions that they commission, comply with the provisions of the Jamaican Copyright Act and more generally, all aspects of Jamaica's Intellectual Property regime; and
- copies of all print and non-print publications (including finished productions in film, video, compact disk, audio-visual, audio, publications and multimedia formats) must be deposited with the National Library of Jamaica in keeping

with the Legal Deposits Act and the Jamaica Archives and Records Department of Jamaica (JARD).

20. Policy Element: Leveraging Social Media

The advent of social media has made the communication environment more dynamic and vibrant. Government like businesses and individuals must leverage the advantages inherent in the new communication technologies and social media platforms.

One of the limitations of traditional communication models - direct mail, print media, television, radio, press releases, etc. is that it is essentially one-way, whereas social media opens new opportunities for two-way communication between government and citizens. Social media can change the way government engages with the public as it can provide dialogue between users.

Publicly available social media sites and tools, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube etc. provide a range of audio, video and interactive capabilities and are a cost effective, robust option for MDAs to meet their public communication and organizational objectives.

The social media platform can accomplish several goals. These include:

- providing a real-time channel to deliver messages directly and answer queries;
- supporting crisis and emergency management efforts (including responding to inaccuracies and providing information and updates during emergencies);
- assisting with research and consultation; and

- encouraging transparency, accountability and open dialogue.

Policy Issue

Despite its impact, popularity and increasing use, there is an absence of clear guidelines governing how MDAs engage the audience and benefit from the social media platform. There is generally insufficient take-up, indeed even reticence, on the part of some MDAs in embracing social media.

A majority of MDAs currently do not fully exploit social media tools, lack the resources (technical and otherwise) to effectively manage this communication opportunity even if they do recognise its importance and potential. In some instances where accounts are established, there is improper use and there is evidence of personal accounts being inappropriately used to communicate government information.

All this speaks to the need for clearly established guidelines and mechanisms for proper and effective social media use. There is a need for an overarching framework to leverage social media and promote its responsible use by MDAs.

Policy Objective

The broad policy objects are therefore to:

- achieve improved communication flows, enhance service quality and delivery as well as foster greater citizen engagement in the governance process, through the structured and professional use of social media by MDAs;

- integrate social media as a central part of the government communication framework to achieve higher levels of citizen engagement;
- provide a framework for the development of guidelines and standards for the effective, appropriate and responsible use of social media within MDAs; and
- ensure that social media platforms in MDAs are solely utilized to advance the objectives of the MDA.

Policy Strategies

MDAs must adhere to the following:

- develop a social media strategy which acknowledges social media platforms as an official communication organ, detailing the intended use and establishing operational guidelines covering such key areas as, information governance (including content management), transparency, collaboration, privacy and security and risk, mitigation protocols and applicable best practices;
- ensure social media accounts are clearly branded as an official account of the entity and must be listed on the official homepage of the website;
- prohibit the use of personal social media accounts as the official account of the entity. In emergencies and where authorized by the head of entity, personal social media accounts may be used. The recommended format in such instances is for the user to identify him/herself by name, position and the entity e.g *I am Jane Brown, Customer Service Manager for the Ministry of Information... etc*';
- invest in research software and establish baseline goal of social media analytics and ensure such data are used to

improve service delivery and input in the more effective planning and operations of government;

- ensure appropriate training is provided to communication personnel responsible for the use and management of social media platforms and related applications, including analytical applications, to extract data related to the organization's goals, keep track of news and build networks, etc;
- designate a senior officer within the communications unit (or in the absence of such a unit, such other applicable programme area) to be responsible for social media management;
- ensure that the social media strategy is delineated in their Communication plans; and
- utilize social media in a manner consistent with the Social Media Guidelines for Writers and Editors (See Appendix III).

SECTION IV: Policy Monitoring and Review

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring the implementation of the GoJ Communication Policy will be conducted through the development of an Action Plan. Key performance indicators and targets will be determined in collaboration with the Minister responsible for Information, the Communications and Public Affairs Unit supporting the Minister of Information's office and the GoJ Communication Network. A critical activity to be assessed will be the extent to which communication plans are incorporated into the budgets and strategic plans of MDAs.

An evaluation of the communication management initiatives by GoJ institutions will serve to inform the Policy review process and provide inputs to the development of best practices in this area.

MDAs will be required to report on their Communication Plan within strategic and corporate plan reports and the Ministry responsible for Information will assess compliance with the requirements of the Policy. Such a review should include but not be limited to media use, the tracking of information requests, correspondence, website development and navigation, an examination of communication plans and strategic plans, social media reviews and audits.

Policy Review

The GoJ Communication Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years from the date of its inception; or at such earlier intervals as may be deemed necessary given fundamental changes in Government's approach to communication, technological advancements and any other matter which may significantly, as determined by the Information Minister, impact the requirements as set out in the current Policy. A Progress and Analysis Report with respect to the impact of the Policy will be prepared to inform review and modifications.

SECTION V: CONCLUSION

Essentially, Government communication should inform, advocate and engage citizens. Oftentimes, it is not sufficiently recognized that communication is a critical component of the operation of Government and it is necessary that dissemination of **accurate information** to the public on a timely and ongoing basis contributes to building trust and smooth functioning of MDAs.

Two-way communication between the government and the public produces governance outcomes that are of a higher quality and are more sustainable. In practice, therefore, government communication should be more than just a crisis response tool. Rather, it must involve a variety of elements, such as consulting for policy-making, raising awareness, changing behaviour, fostering transparency, civic education and listening to and feeling the pulse of society through structured feedback.

Enhanced citizen participation is also a key indicator of effective government communication and strengthening relations with citizens is a core element of good governance. Equally important, is the fact that effective communication contributes to public trust in government, deepening democracy and strengthening of the civic capacity.

Jamaicans desire an efficient, timely and professional public service that operates with integrity. Public service managers and employees therefore have a duty to provide information in a clear, non-partisan manner, consistent with the principles of parliamentary democracy. The GoJ Communication Policy provides an efficient, responsive and effective framework in which timely, accurate, objective and clear information can be disseminated while ensuring that feedback from the public can be incorporated into policy, programme, projects and activities of the Government, at all levels. To ensure success, a joined up approach to governance is required.

The Policy will serve to better target communication strategies to ensure effective communication with all sectors and segments of Jamaica's diverse society, with keen attention being paid to socio-economic and socio-cultural disparity. It will also assist MDAs to improve their

operations and promote the efficient use of communication machinery, thereby, fostering better co-ordination of activities and plans as well as ensuring quality standards in content and output. A critical element of the Policy promotes the use of multiple formats to meet and interface with members of the public, locally and in the diaspora. By so doing, the Government will be better able to engage citizens wherever they may reside and regardless of the media platform through which they access information.

It is the expectation of the Government that the communication function within MDAs will be managed in an effective and accountable manner and will be underpinned by sound values, professional ethics, structured feedback and periodic evaluation while meeting the diverse needs of its audience and facilitating the easy identification of GoJ information, events and activities through appropriate use of official symbols in all media applications.

In the final analysis, the Government must never lose sight of the symbiotic relationship between accountability, transparency and effective leadership and that effective communication with the people, plays a pivotal role in ensuring that a positive and beneficial relationship is nurtured and sustained.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Key GoJ Communication Stakeholders

The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister determines and signals the priorities of the Government around which communication activities are to be planned implemented to support the policies and programmes of the Government. The Prime Minister, through direct and indirect engagement with various sectors, groups and individuals within the society, leads the national dialogue and communication on matters of national importance. The Prime Minister will continue active engagement with the people of Jamaica using various avenues of communication.

The Cabinet

Under Jamaica's Parliamentary system of government, the Cabinet (headed by the Prime Minister and comprising Ministers) is the principal policy and decision-making instrument of Government. The Cabinet is collectively accountable to the Parliament. The Cabinet Office supports the Cabinet and its Committees and performs coordinating, monitoring and evaluation functions with respect to the strategic policies and programmes of the Government. The Minister of Information is the principal communicator of information pertaining to the decisions emanating from the Cabinet.

Ministers of Government

The Minister with responsibility for Information is the chief spokesperson for the Cabinet and has responsibility for the direction and output of the communication arm of government, the JIS. Respective Cabinet Ministers are the lead communicators in relation to the policies, priorities, initiatives and programmes of the MDAs under their portfolio.

Ministers provide leadership in establishing the priorities and overall themes of government communication and in so doing must:

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- adopt an inclusive approach in developing the communication priorities and objectives through consultation with internal communication specialists and technical teams;
- approve communication plans for their respective Ministries;
- establish a communication protocol for staff within the Minister's office which, among other things, delineate the authority, roles and responsibilities of each team member in appropriately disseminating information internally and externally; and
- establish mechanisms for efficient and effective interaction between ministerial staff, internal communication specialists and protocol officers to ensure coordinated and appropriate communication; and that Ministerial interaction with the media and the public adhere to the communication policies and guidelines.

The OPM

As the coordinating Ministry for Government information, the Office of the Prime Minister, OPM, will have lead responsibilities for managing and co-ordinating government communications in keeping with the decisions of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The management and exercise of this responsibility resides with the Minister with responsibility for Information and the Director of Communications and Public Affairs within the OPM.

The Ministry will, *among other things*, have responsibility for:

- providing advice and making recommendations to the Cabinet on communication issues, themes and strategies to be circulated to MDAs;
- establishing a framework for improving the capacity of government communicators and communication;

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- establishing the appropriate support and monitoring mechanisms, within the Communications apparatus of the OPM for:
 - collecting and analyzing information on the public environment in order to alert and where necessary advise the Prime Minister, other Ministers and MDAs;
 - providing institutions with advice and support in communications planning, and management;
 - evaluating the success of communication strategies relative to policies, programmes, services and initiatives, through regularly scheduled interface with the network of Government Communicators;
 - assessing the success in implementing communication decisions across government;
- overseeing and supporting the coordination and planning of horizontal or government-wide communications and seeing to improving government communications activities island wide.

Heads of Communication and their staff

The communication function within each Ministry will be managed by a Director. As head of communication for the Ministry, he/she will be responsible for securing their entity's compliance with the GoJ Communication Policy and for effectively managing the communication functions and processes of the Ministry. To this end, Heads of Communication must be a member of the senior management team of the Ministry, reporting directly to the Permanent Secretary and/or the responsible Minister.

The Head of Communication provides leadership to the staff of the Communication Unit and contributes to the strategic instruments of government communication developed by the Unit, as well as carry out operational and other activities associated with the Communication function. In the discharge of such duties, the objective of meeting the anticipated and identified needs of the public should be paramount.

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The responsibilities of Heads of Communication will include but not be limited to:

- coordinating internal; multi sectoral or institutional messaging; and/or communications activities and interventions;
- spearheading research initiatives and activities; identifying risks; consultation; marketing, sponsorship and collaborative arrangements, government participation in promotional activities and public events and other key communication activities;
- managing emergency and crisis communication; managing the MDA's corporate identity, web presence and compliance with established protocols and standards;
- providing input or expert communication advice with respect to policies, programmes, services and initiatives; and
- providing guidance and instruction to public officials who will appear in Parliament or other institution or formal setting; speak to the public on the government's behalf or otherwise participate in public events.

Policy Advisers, Programme Managers and Functional Specialists

The communication function is a shared responsibility that requires the support, co-operation and interaction of various personnel throughout the Government. All administrators, technocrats and functional specialists within MDAs, are required to operate within and carry out the provisions of this Policy, in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

Government officials are required to consult with the Head of Communication, or his/her designate, wherever public engagements are contemplated or where there is need to coordinate communication of information to stakeholders. More generally, collaboration at all levels and between functional areas must promote consistent messaging;

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precision in identifying and addressing communication needs and in formulating effective policies, initiatives, services and programmes.

Officials must ensure that systems and processes which support timely consultation with staff and facilitate the dissemination of information to all stakeholders including those in the diaspora, regionally and globally are utilized.

Policy Advisers, Technical Directors and other functional specialists – analysts, researchers, human resource officers, access to information and privacy co-ordinators, marketing specialists, information technologists, Web masters, graphic artists, librarians, receptionists and call-centre staff – all must adhere to the requirements of this Policy.

Programme Managers must incorporate communication strategies (including new technologies) programmes and initiatives into unit, divisional and corporate plans and budgets. Such personnel must participate actively in the planning, co-ordination and implementation of the institution's communication plan. They should ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for communications and that the institution's communication needs, both domestic and international, are addressed in all programmes and policy activities.

Collaboration among policy advisers, programme managers, analysts, researchers, marketing specialists and communication staff ensures that public needs and concerns are routinely identified and addressed in the planning, management and evaluation of policies, programmes, services and initiatives. It also ensures that the communication goals and priorities of the government are consistently and coherently reflected in programmes and services. Collaboration between specialists in human resources and communication staff ensure that an institution's internal communication requirements are met.

Appendix 2: Support Agencies

The Access To Information Unit, OPM

The Access to Information Unit leads and guides the implementation and administration of the Access to Information, ATI Act, which was passed in June 2002. The Unit falls within the Information Division, OPM.

It is charged with providing guidance and training for government bodies on how to interpret and administer the Act; identify and address difficult or problematic issues arising from its implementation and provides policy recommendations on how best to address these problems. This Unit also has the task of guiding and monitoring compliance levels by the various MDAs.

Jamaica Archives and Records Department and the National Library of Jamaica

Jamaica Archives and Records Department (JARD) is the permanent repository of the GoJ and its institutions. Preserving published and unpublished information for current and future generations, the Department works to ensure that government information is available and accessible to decision makers and the public both in the immediate and long-term. It works with institutions to preserve the nation's published heritage.

MDAs are required to deposit all newly published material in various formats with the National Library. The Library manages the redistribution of surplus materials and also co-ordinates government library services, including providing them with leadership and direction.

Jamaica Information Service (JIS)

The JIS is the official information arm of the GoJ and is mandated to disseminate information (in different formats and using all available media) that will enhance public awareness and increase knowledge of the government's policies and programmes.

The agency utilizes airtime allowed under the broadcast regulations, for government programming. The communications services of the JIS – design/production/ printing/ public relations/ editorial/ ad placements, etc are used by Government communications managers to disseminate their messages.

Creative Production and Training Centre (CPTC)

The CPTC's mandate is to record, archive and promote diverse expressions of Jamaica's indigenous culture. The entity trains media practitioners and provides television video production, editorial and post production services, among other things. This entity is among those that assist the GoJ to connect with citizens via the range of services it offers.

Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBCJ)

The PBCJ is a major component of the public communication environment disseminating news and information on matters of general public interest. Its transmission facilities provide coverage of State and national events including sittings of Parliament and the Senate. It specialises in producing programmes which contribute to educational, cultural and social development. PBCJ productions support: literary and artistic expression; human resources development; sports development; and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Appendix 3: Acronyms (used in the document)

ATI	-	Access To Information
BC	-	Broadcasting Commission
CPTC	-	Creative Production and Training Centre
GoJ	-	Government of Jamaica
ICT	-	Information and Communications Technology
JIS	-	Jamaica Information Service
JARD	-	Jamaica Archives and Records Department
MDA	-	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MSME	-	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
ODPEM	-	Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
OPM	-	Office of the Prime Minister
PBCJ	-	Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica
PIOJ	-	Planning Institute of Jamaica

Appendix 4: National Ensigns – Coat of Arms/National Flag

(Extract from the Armorial Ensigns of Jamaica)

The coat of arms signifies national sovereignty or ownership. It belongs to Jamaica and, in general, is for official use only. It is used on government possessions such as buildings, official seals, money, passports, proclamations, publications, certificates, national honours and badges.

In 1967, the Cabinet decided that the use of the Coat of Arms for commercial purposes should never be granted. Permission for the use of the Coat of Arms must first be obtained from the Prime Minister.

Use on letterheads, other official documents and publications.

The Coat of Arms is the Official Seal of the Government of Jamaica and it should be placed, when used on letterheads, in the position of prominence, which is the top left followed by the top middle then top right or centre.

Department logos when used in conjunction with the Coat of Arms should be placed at the bottom centre of the letterhead or alternately, below the Coat of Arms at the top left hand corner of the letterhead, if the logo can be appropriately accommodated in the space available.

If the Arms or logo is reproduced in colour, the other must be similarly reproduced.

The Arms should only appear once in a document.

For brochures or transitory communications, such as television and print advertisements, the Arms may be placed elsewhere as appropriate, provided the dignity of the Arms is maintained and they are not reproduced in a size which renders the arms unrecognisable.

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Use on Size and Colours

In accordance with international conventions, when the Coat of Arms is being reproduced in colour, the correct colour should always be used.

Where the use of colour is not appropriate, the Arms may be reproduced in stylized form as a line drawing, for example, black and white, silver, gold, or as a mould or bas-relief.

The Coat of Arms should not be reproduced in sizes less than 20 mm across.

Use of Coat of Arms on Identification Badges

The Coat of Arms should be placed on the top left of Identification Card, that is, the left as seen by an observer looking at the card.

Use of Coat of Arms for Sporting Events

Sporting and competitive representations sponsored by their national controlling body may receive permission to wear the Coat of Arms on the pockets of their blazers or other suitable jackets appropriately defaced with the name and date of the event when competing in international or inter-Commonwealth events.

Use of the Coat of Arms with the National Flag

The National Flag and the Coat of Arms may be used together with the position of prominence taken by the Arms.

Use of the Coat of Arms in Electronic Media

The Coat of Arms should be part of the Government of Jamaica electronic documents to indicate the authority for issue and the source of information.

The Arms should be prominently located and reproduced accurately and in a size that enables it to be clearly recognised. Electronic media published by and on behalf of the Government of Jamaica should carry an image of the Coat of Arms to indicate authority and source of

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information. The guideline for placement of the Arms also applies to documents such as web pages.”

Approval must be obtained from OPM for the use of the official graphic representation of the six National Symbols by MDAs and projects.

Appendix 5: Social Media Guidelines for Writers and Editors

Writers and editors on government social media space must:

- be professional in their conduct and use understandable language;
- not use social media as a way to only disseminate news content, but also for responsibly and appropriately interacting with audiences, confining such interaction to factual content on the topic of engagement. Stick to the facts;
- use non-emotive language in their conversations;
- be aware of the sensitivities of your audience on emotive topics and refrain from taking sides;
- post content related to the objective of the account as much as possible and not use the social media platform to comment on peripheral matters;
- in all instances, confine your posts/comments to the Portfolio to which the MDA belongs or is otherwise authorized to treat with the subject matter;
- be fully seized with current affairs/the social media and traditional news media environment and post accordingly. For example, in a time of national mourning or emergency it might be wise to delay cheerful announcements or put out any other content that may not be well received or overlooked at that time;
- utilize third party information where content is verified as truthful and appropriate;
- avoid protracted arguments;
- maintain impartiality on political matters;
- maintain confidentiality and respect personal privacy;
- acknowledge mistakes as soon as possible, delete, explain and apologise and post correct information; and

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- for sensitive matters, refer to the Director of Communications for information and input. If necessary, report the matter to the MIS Manager or the lead IT officer, if online assistance is needed.

Appendix 6 Crisis and Emergency Communication Protocol

Coordination Requirements

1. Once an issue has been assessed as presenting either an imminent or actual crisis or emergency, the matter must be brought to the immediate attention of the Minister of Information by the Administrative or Political Directorate of the relevant MDA for advice, guidance and/or attention. This requirement also obtains where the media has raised an issue which is perceived to be a crisis or emergency.
2. The Minister of Information will engage the relevant stakeholders and provide advice, guidance or take the appropriate measures for the management of the (imminent or actual) crisis or emergency.
3. For media treatment, the Minister of Information will engage the Communications and Public Affairs Unit supporting the Minister of Information's office on the matters referred for attention and the CEO of JIS, who will mobilise a designated team to work closely with the MDA.
5. Technocrats, and or subject experts of MDAs are to prepare comprehensive Briefs and/or Reports (including Status Reports) for the attention of the Minister of Information and the Subject Minister.
6. Comprehensive reports or status updates with background information will be provided to the JIS as appropriate.
7. The Communications and Public Affairs Unit supporting the Minister of Information's office and JIS personnel will monitor the media to ascertain public sentiment and provide feedback to the Minister of Information, portfolio Minister and the MDAs' Team
8. A "war room" will be established at the OPM, MDA or at JIS, as the circumstances dictate, to prepare for media and public engagements.
9. JIS to advise on the holding statement (acknowledging the issue) or news releases to be dispatched by the MDA on the issue, paying close attention to:
 - o tone;

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- o overarching message (with emphasis on ensuring accuracy and, ease of understanding of core messages and context) particularly on technical matters;
 - o consistency of messaging internally and externally and across multiple media;
 - o acknowledging public concern and sentiment;
 - o outlining measures to address issue/concern (to include the prevention of injury or loss of life, property, reputation, provision of public services, recovery efforts etc);
 - o Minister's instructions and policy directive where appropriate;
 - o Role of Permanent Secretary or Head of Agency;
 - o the audience
10. News releases are to be approved by the Portfolio Minister, the Minister of Information and the relevant Permanent Secretary; input of technocrats is to be sought where the matter is of a technical nature.
11. Approval from all levels must be timely and in targeting wide dispersion, should pay close attention to the news cycle.
12. MDAs must be prepared to respond and comply with directives from the OPM which has lead responsibility for communication during a national crisis or emergency, and work in conjunction with ODPEM in coordinating resources and communicating strategies and actions through the JIS.

Agency crisis and emergency management requirements:

MDAs must:

- o craft a communication plan that articulates the roles and responsibilities of communications personnel and identifies

- the officer/expert who prepares messages for consumption for the staff, other MDAs, the public and the media;
- ensure consistent messaging by coordinating the release of information through all channels, including the intranet;
- ensure there is a cadre of informed and trained spokespersons available to support the communication efforts of MDAs;
- designate an officer responsible for liaising with the Communications and Public Affairs Unit supporting the Minister of Information's office and their Minister's Office;
- utilize appropriate tools (e.g a template) to track and address the information needs of internal and external stakeholders as determined by an environmental scan.

Appendix 7: Definition of Terms

- **Biennial**

Taking place every two (2) years

- **Citizens' Charter**

A document which sets out the commitment of the organization towards its clients/customers in respect of standards of service, information exchange, choice and consultation, non-discrimination and accessibility, grievance redress, courtesy and value for money. This also includes the organization's expectations of the client/customer.

- **Communications and Public Affairs Unit**

The Communications and Public Affairs Unit supports the Minister of Information's office; is currently located in the Office of the Prime Minister and is the focal point for GoJ Communication. Any reference to this Unit, is to be understood to be a reference to any Unit conducting this function from time to time.

- **Government Crisis & Emergency Communication**

Crisis Communication & Emergency Communication occurs during periods, when societal norms, safety or security are challenged.

Efforts are taken to communicate with the public or stakeholders when a potential hazard, an unexpected event or a crisis occurs that could have a negative impact, as well as during times which require action outside of the norm to limit or treat with damage or loss (such as an impending storm which could have a catastrophic impact)

- **Risk Communication**

An exercise which assesses, anticipates and appreciates all pertinent factors associated with a potential risk (danger, hazard or threat) to health, safety or the environment with due cognizance given to the perspectives and interests of all stakeholders likely to be affected by the risk.

- **Facilities**

Any place used to officially conduct GoJ business including Business office(s), satellite offices, and depots among others.

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