

CABINET AGENDA ISSUES – 7 APRIL 2014

The House is asked to note the following matters which were considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 7 April 2014:

1. Contract;
2. Annual Reports;
3. Appointments;
4. The Conditional Waiver of Visa Requirements for Nationals of 16 European and 7 Latin American Countries;
5. The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Training Advisory Committee Regional Field Epidemiology Training Programme Steering Committee and Executive Board Meeting, 10 – 11 April 2014; and
6. Reports.

Each matter shall be elaborated on in turn.

1) Contract - Procurement and Distribution of Textbooks

Cabinet approved the award of contracts in the amounts of US\$2,972,990.00 and £473,620.00 to Carlong Publishers Limited, for the supply and distribution of primary textbooks under the Primary Textbook Scheme for 2014/2015

In 2010, the Evaluation and Utilisation Section of the Media Services Unit conducted a review of books to be used in Primary and All-Age Schools in the Areas of Integrated Studies, Science, Social Studies and Mathematics. The review was conducted to determine the extent to which the textbooks focus on and are aligned with the Revised Primary Curriculum and to select the best quality textbooks to be procured for use in all primary schools. The textbooks being procured under the Primary Textbook Scheme was informed by this evaluation.

2) Annual Reports

Cabinet considered the Annual Reports of the:

- (i) Consumer Affairs Commission for the Financial Year 2011/2012; and
- (ii) National Family Planning Board for the Financial Year 2012/2013.

These Reports will be tabled in Parliament at a later date.

3) Appointments

(i) Access to Information Appeal Tribunal

Cabinet gave approval for the appointment of the following persons to the Access to Information Appeal Tribunal for a period of five years with effect from 16 February 2014 to 15 February 2019:

- (1) Honourable Dorothy Pine-McLarty, OJ;
- (2) Professor Edward Baugh, CD;

- (3) Ms. Fae Ellington;
- (4) Justice Roy Anderson (Retired);
- (5) Rev. Phillip Robinson.

(ii) Overseas Examinations Commission

Cabinet gave approval for the appointment of Mrs. Grace McLean to the Overseas Examinations Commission with effect from 7 April 2014 to 17 April 2015 when the tenure of the Commission would expire.

(iii) University Council of Jamaica

Cabinet gave approval for the appointment of the following persons to the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) with effect from 7 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 when the tenure of the Council would expire:

- (1) Dr. Angela Samuels-Harris;
- (2) Dr. Wayne Wesley;
- (3) Professor Archibald McDonald;
- (4) Dr. Phylca Marshall; and
- (5) Mr. Joseph Taffe.

(iv) Jamaica Vacations Limited

Cabinet gave approval for the extension of the tenure of the current Board of Directors of the Jamaica Vacations Limited for a period of three months, with effect from 7 April 2014 to 6 July 2014 as under:

- (1) Senator Noel Sloley – **Chairman**;
- (2) Mr. John Lynch;
- (3) Mr. Gairy Saddler;
- (4) Ms. Angella Bennett;
- (5) Mr. Robert Hendricks; and
- (6) Ms. Elizabeth Scotton.

4) The Conditional Waiver of Visa Requirements for Nationals of 16 European and 7 Latin American Countries

Cabinet gave approval for the:

- (i) conditional waiver of visa requirements for nationals of Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Estonia, Kosovo, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Paraguay, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru travelling to Jamaica for tourism purposes for periods of 30 days or less, on the following conditions:
 - a. they were in possession of a valid visa from either the United States of America, Canada or the United Kingdom/Schengen Region;
 - b. Nationals of the 16 European countries were in possession of proof indicating vaccination against Measles, Rubella and Polio; and
 - c. Nationals of Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru were in possession of proof of vaccination against yellow fever; and
- (ii) evaluation of the programme after two years.

The Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, in an on-going thrust to expand the reach of Jamaica's tourism product into non-traditional markets, is seeking to further extend its reach in the European and Latin American tourism markets.

5) The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Training Advisory Committee Regional Field Epidemiology Training Programme Steering Committee and Executive Board Meeting, 10 – 11 April 2014

Cabinet gave approval for Jamaica's hosting of meetings of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Training Advisory Committee, the Steering Committee of the Regional Field Epidemiology Training Programme, and the Executive Board over the period 10 to 11 April 2014.

The Committee Meetings are being convened to discuss, among other issues, the draft Strategic Framework for CARPHA's Training Function, development of CARPHA's Plan of Action for training along with major elements and activities under Caribbean Regional Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Programme. The 10th CARPHA Executive Board Meeting will allow for the consideration of the report from the Technical Advisory Committee; update on Chikungunya in the Region; economic value of the public health coverage provided by CARPHA, among other things.

6) Reports

(i) The International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA) National Report, 1994-2014 and Post 2014 ICPD Agenda

Cabinet noted a report on the National Report on the Review and Appraisal of the Programme of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 1994-2014 and the ICPD Agenda Beyond 2014.

The report advised that the Programme of Action reflected global consensus on principles, objectives and actions with regard to population and development. The report provided information on the ICPD and the genesis of the Programme of Action; the key actions for implementation of the Programme of Action; Jamaica's membership of the Commission on Population and Development; the consultations and process for preparing the Report; the major achievements in implementing the Programme of Action and the constraints faced in doing so; and the Post 2014 Agenda for the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

(ii) Funding and Sustaining the National Mathematics Programme

Cabinet noted a report on the funding and sustainability of the National Mathematics Programme.

The report outlined the overall goal of the Programme to improve the performance of students in the subject; the slow rate of improvement of student performance in Mathematics at the primary level and the low number of students exiting the secondary school system with certification in the subject; data for 2010 to 2013 on student performance showing, inter alia, less than 60% achievement of mastery in the Grade 4

Numeracy Test and an average of 20% of a given cohort attaining a pass in the subject at CSEC; and an analysis undertaken and some of the factors identified as contributing to the poor performance of students. The report provided information on the development of the National Mathematics Programme to support the implementation of the National Mathematics Policy Guidelines; interventions under the National Strategic Mathematics Plan to strengthen teaching capacity and improve student performance; the estimated costs for implementation of the National Mathematics Programme over four years; and funding for the first year (2014/2015).

(iii) Observations From the Recent Travel of a Government of Jamaica Delegation to Equatorial Guinea

Cabinet noted a report on the visit to Equatorial Guinea by a delegation led by the Minister of Finance and Planning over the period 8 to 16 March 2014.

The report provided information on the objectives of the visit to negotiate economic assistance offered by Equatorial Guinea to Jamaica towards its debt reduction initiatives; strengthen the relationship between the countries; and prepare for an official visit to Jamaica by the President. The report advised of the signature of a joint communiqué with regard to areas including agriculture, tourism, culture and economic assistance; and further action required to give effect to the economic assistance and increased level of cooperation envisaged.



Portia Simpson Miller, MP

Prime Minister

23 April 2014