

MINISTRY PAPER 86/15

THE FIREARM LICENSING AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 1, 2013 TO AUGUST 31, 2014

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Ministry Paper is to introduce the contents of the Annual Report of the Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) for the period September 1, 2013 to August 31, 2014 and provide an update on operations, policies, structure, earnings as well as achievements over the period under review.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Section 26A of the Firearms (Amendment) Act, 2005, establishes The Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA), as a self sustaining agency which commenced operations on 1st March, 2006. Its main strategic objectives are as follows:

- To provide a decision for new firearm applications within six to nine months.
- To process renewals and recertification in less than one hour.
- To perform audits on security companies, dealers, ranges, gun clubs, at least biennially.
- To ensure that there are adequate risk management systems to protect the Authority's database of licence records.
- To ensure the timely payment of and accounting for all fees due and payable to the FLA for the delivery of its services.
- To ensure consistently high levels of customer service for internal and external customers.
- To provide a regular forum to meet with our main stakeholders.

- 2.2 Section 26B of the said Act outlines the responsibilities and functions as follows:

- To receive and consider applications for firearm licenses, certificates or permits
- To grant or renew firearm licenses, certificates or permits
- To revoke any firearm license, certificate or permit granted under this Act
- To amend the terms of a firearm license, certificate or permit
- To receive and investigate any complaint regarding a breach of a firearm license, certificate or permit

- 2.3 Section 14 (1)(2) of the Third Schedule of the Firearms Act notes that the FLA shall within four months after each financial year submit an annual report for the preceding financial year to the Minister for tabling in the Houses of Parliament. It is in this regard that notification be given for tabling of the said report in the Houses of Parliament.

A comprehensive audit of the FLA's financial statements was done for the period under review and is included in the annual report attached. At the end of the Financial Year 2013/2014 the Firearms Licensing Authority made a net loss of Thirty Million Thirty-One Thousand and Ninety-Two Dollars (\$30,031,092.00). This deficit is mainly due to

3.5 Income & Expenditure

There is no provision in the Firearms Act with respect to meeting dates and time for members of the Authority. As a practice however, a meeting of the FLA Board, that is the Authority, is held at least once per month and other meetings are conducted as deemed necessary.

3.4 Meetings and Attendance

3.3.1 Approval for the FLA to collect fees at its locations rather than at the Tax Offices; and
3.3.2 Approval for an increase in fees for several services provided by the Authority;

3.3 There were also several policy related achievements by way of Cabinet approvals that positively affected the FLA's operations. These include:

- Relocation of the Authority's Head Office to 90A Old Hope Road which now provides a more spacious work environment and ample parking facilities for staff and customers;
- The implementation of a Procedural Manual which outlines the various processes utilized by the Authority;
- The implementation of process improvement practices which resulted in the reduction in Renewal and Recertification processes from several hours to 30 minutes and 1 ½ hours respectively;
- Approval of two (2) additional ranges bringing the total island-wide to thirteen (13). Also, there are now fifty (50) active firearm trainers certified by the Authority;
- The commencement of a firearm marking project on June 18, 2014. This is in keeping with a Corporation Agreement between the Government of Jamaica and the Organization of American States (OAS);
- A total of ten (10) approved ranges/dealerships and seventy (70) security companies were audited;

3.2 Significant achievements of the Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) for the period under review include the following:

3.1 Activities of the Authority are contained in the Annual Report for the period under review which can be seen at *Appendix I*.

3.0 ACTIVITIES OF THE AUTHORITY

the relocation of the Authority from 12-14 Worthington Terrace to 91A Old Hope Road, particularly relating to the following:

- i. Subsequent to relocating to 91A Old Hope Road, the Authority experienced an overlap period where they incurred expenses of \$13.1 Million for both properties (Worthington Terrace and Old Hope Road) while refurbishing activities were being conducted in a fairly short period of time.
 - ii. The Authority was forced to lease two (2) separate adjoining properties in order to satisfy the parking needs of the staff and clients. Consequently, the contracted amount for refurbishing the three (3) buildings to be occupied by the Authority was \$64,990,000.00 which was more than expected. However, the Authority implemented several cost saving measures which reduced that cost to \$57,822,000.00 saving \$7.16 Million.
 - iii. Leasehold improvements at the Worthington property were not yet fully depreciated thereby incurring a depreciating amount of \$7M
- 3.6 The retained earnings at the end of the Financial Year 2013/2014 were One Hundred and Eighty-Four Million, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand, and Five Hundred and Sixty-Four Dollars (\$184,992,564.00).
- 3.7 The FLA generated its income from revenue collected for core services offered by the Authority.
- 3.8 Details of the salaries and emoluments of all Board Members and Executive can be seen at *Appendix 2*.



Honourable Peter Bunting M.P.

Minister of National Security

April 8, 2015