

CABINET AGENDA ISSUES – 21 MARCH 2016

The House is asked to note the following matters which were considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 21 March 2016:

1. Contract;
2. Annual Report;
3. Proposal for Increased Benefits to Government Pensioners;
4. Name Change of the Bureau of Women's Affairs;
5. Update on the Ministry of Health Preparedness and Response to the Zika Virus; and
6. Response of the Ministry of Health to Confirmed Cases of the H1N1 (Influenza A) Viral Infection in Jamaica.

Each matter shall be elaborated on in turn.

1. Contract

Renewal of Insurances for the 2016/2017 Contract Year in respect of the National Housing Trust

Cabinet approved the award of the following contracts for the renewal of insurance coverage for the risk portfolio of the National Housing Trust for the 2016/2017 contract period:

- (i) Houseowners Comprehensive with JN General Insurance Company Limited fronting Lloyd's Syndicate MSF Pritchard (MSP) 318 at a cost of J\$1,131,364,762.00, excluding General Consumption Tax;
- (ii) Excess Liability Layer (Public, Employer and Motor Third Party Liability) with Lloyd's Syndicate Axis Capital Holding 1686 at a cost of J\$200,000.00, excluding General Consumption Tax;
- (iii) Combined Property and Business Interruption all risks, Computers and Art Work, Loss of Money and Fidelity Guarantee, Employers and General Liability and Motor Risk with British Caribbean Insurance Company Limited at a cost of J\$76,270,440.00, excluding General Consumption Tax; and
- (iv) Comprehensive Crime, Directors and Officers Liability with Lloyds Syndicate AUL at a cost of US\$74,943.00, excluding General Consumption Tax.

2. Annual Report

Cabinet considered the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Maritime Authority of Jamaica for the Financial Year 2014/2015.

The Report will be tabled in Parliament at a later date.

3. Proposal for Increased Benefits to Government Pensioners

Cabinet approved increased benefits to Government pensioners, including widows/widowers and dependents, with effect from 1 July 2015.

The increases range from \$1,100 per month for pensioners receiving sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00) and over per month, to \$2,000 per month for retirees receiving a pension of under thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000.00) per month.

4. Name Change of the Bureau of Women's Affairs

Cabinet approved the change of name of the Bureau of Women's Affairs to the Bureau of Gender Affairs, in keeping with the National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE).

In the last decade, there has been a movement toward involving men in the gender dialogue; and the Government has taken various steps to ensure that, not only were issues affecting both women and men addressed, but that services and support were provided to men and women. The current name under which the entity operated implied that its sole mission was the promotion of women's advancement and empowerment, while the NPGE promotes gender equality. The new name would properly reflect the work and mandate of the Bureau in that regard.

5. Update on the Ministry of Health Preparedness and Response to the Zika Virus

Cabinet noted a report on the preparedness and response of the Ministry of Health with respect to the emergence of the Zika Virus Disease in the country.

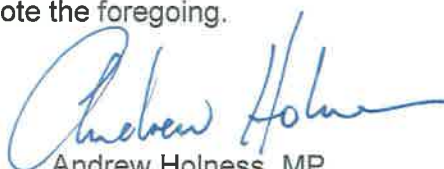
The report advised of the confirmation of four cases of the Zika Virus infection in Jamaica since 29 January 2016; and that Jamaica currently had the capacity to carry out testing, which was being done at the University of the West Indies Virology Laboratory. The ongoing response strategies and actions, including heightened surveillance, vector control, public education, encouragement of individual responsibility, community mobilization, partnerships, and international cooperation, were outlined.

6. Response of the Ministry of Health to Confirmed Cases of the H1N1 (Influenza A) Viral Infection in Jamaica

Cabinet noted a report on the number of cases of the H1N1 (Influenza A) viral infection in Jamaica, the confirmation of six related deaths (all of which were of persons who had had other risk factors for severe disease), and the transmission and symptoms of the disease.

The report also informed of response activities undertaken by the Ministry of Health to date, including public education, review and circulation of the National Influenza Pandemic Plan, conduct of a needs assessment of the equipment/material required in the public health system, upgrading of all Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARIs) to Class I reporting and all physicians being informed accordingly, and verification of the laboratory capacity at the University Hospital of the West Indies National Influenza Centre. It advised that some 95% of front-line staff in the health sector had chosen to be vaccinated for H1N1, and that the current vaccine inventory is sufficient.

The Honourable House is asked to note the foregoing.



Andrew Holness, MP

Prime Minister

8 April 2016