

MINISTRY PAPER 23 /2019
THE REVISED NATIONAL QUALITY POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AS
A WHITE PAPER

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Tabling of the Revised National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan as a White Paper.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The National Quality Policy (2001) was approved by Cabinet Decision #36/01 dated 8th October 2001. Significant changes have taken place in the global trading environment over the sixteen-year period from 2001 to 2017. The revision of the National Quality Policy, therefore, was necessitated by these changes in the international trading environment that required corresponding adjustments in the local quality infrastructure and procedures. Consequently, an updated National Quality Policy was required to drive further development of the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI), which is the infrastructure through which Jamaica can provide the required evidence of compliance with the relevant standards and regulations. It is well accepted that standards are the language of trade and that a robust quality infrastructure is a prerequisite for sustained consumer protection, vibrant industry and trusted trading networks.
- 2.2 The completion and approval of the Policy forms a critical plank within the country's Stand-by Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The development of the updated National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan has been led by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAFA) through the World Bank funded Strategic Public Sector Transformation Project being administered by the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service.
- 2.3 While formal approval for the revision of the Policy was granted in October 2017, the Ministry, along with the various stakeholders, had commenced work through sector-wide consultations from as far back as 2015 towards the updating of the Policy. Cabinet, by way of Decision No. 45/17 dated December 8, 2017, granted approval for the updated National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan as a Green Paper. The revised Policy and Implementation Plan was tabled in Parliament on January 23, 2018 and in the Senate on January 26, 2018 as a Green Paper.
- 2.4 Cabinet, by way of Decision No.11/19 dated 23 April 2019 approved the adoption of the National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan as a White Paper, and the tabling of the document in Parliament.

3.0 The Policy

3.1 The vision of the National Quality Policy is that Jamaica will have a national framework for the development of a sustainable “Standards-Led, Market-Driven” economy supported by a culture of high quality to achieve global competitiveness and consumer protection.

3.2 The policy goals to be achieved over a five (5) year period are:

Goal 1: Jamaican goods and services are compliant with global requirements through assistance from the National Quality Infrastructure and a national quality promotion strategy

Goal 2: A functional, effective, efficient and adequately legislated National Quality Infrastructure with upgraded and strengthened metrology, standards, accreditation and conformity assessment systems

Goal 3: The public sector is transformed and transformative in offering quality service through the implementation of international quality systems standards

Goal 4: An effective and efficient internationally recognized Technical Regulations Regime

Goal 5: A coordinated programme to build, support and sustain a National Quality Culture

Goal 6: A private sector that supports, and is strongly supported by the National Quality Infrastructure

3.3 The revised Policy has three areas of focus:

- (i) Quality Culture
- (ii) Quality Infrastructure
- (iii) Quality Management

Quality Culture – this establishes governmental commitment for the building of a National Quality Culture which permeates all aspects of national life.

Quality Infrastructure - the Policy established the National Quality Infrastructure through which both public and private sectors in Jamaica can achieve excellence for the benefit of society. This policy is also intended to enhance Jamaica’s reputation as a provider of quality goods and services in the global market place.

Quality Management – The Policy proposes the implementation of the International Quality Management System Standard, ISO 9001, and other international management

systems standards as vehicles to transform most public and private institutions, organizations and businesses to facilitate the socio-economic transformation of the Jamaican society to achieve global competitiveness.

4.0 Legal Considerations

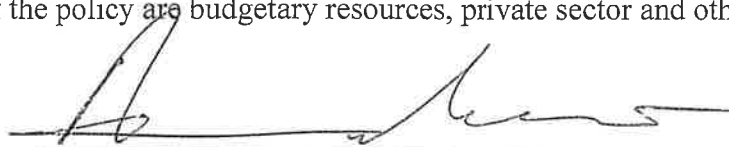
4.1 In order to facilitate the implementation of the National Quality Policy, an appropriate and adequate legal framework will be put in place to underpin the effectiveness and sustainability of the NQI and compliance with Jamaica's national, regional and international obligations. In this regard, new enabling legislation for the National Compliance and Regulatory Authority will be enacted while the Standards Act, Weights and Measures Act, Process Foods Act and any other legislation which impact standards and quality activities will be repealed or amended. In addition, the review of all applicable legislation is being conducted under a consultancy funded by the Strategic Public Sector Transformation Project. The findings of this consultancy will determine which legislation are recommended for repeal, the nature of the amendment to the remaining legislations as well as the need for any new legislation to give effect to the policy.

5.0 Environmental Protection

5.1 The development of the Jamaican economy must take place in the context of a global natural environment which is increasingly affected by phenomena such as global warming. A major effect of global warming is "Climate Change" which could lead to devastation of costal infrastructure, including tourism and traditional farming. This poses severe negative consequences for health and safety, as well as general economic outlook. The global trading community, in seeking to protect national and regional natural environments, requires that all inputs in the value chain for traded goods and services must be in compliance with internationally accepted standards and regulations for environmental protection.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 The Revised National Quality Policy and Implementation Plan will be implemented over a period of five (5) years, with estimated funding requirements amounting to approximately J\$1.3 Billion. Among the targeted sources of funding for the implementation of the policy are budgetary resources, private sector and other interests.



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