



INTEGRITY COMMISSION

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Statement of the Integrity Commission

Issued in Response to the Prime Minister's Invitation for the Commission to sit as an Observer on the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project Negotiating Team

May 25, 2021. The Integrity Commission has taken note of public statements that have been attributed to the Most Hon. Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, indicating that he has asked his “Permanent Secretary to write to the Integrity Commission to invite them to sit as observers on the negotiating team” for the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project, and that he hopes that the Integrity Commission “will respond to us in a positive way and come on board to be an observer in the process.”

In response, the Commission wishes to publicly state and confirm the following:

- (1) The Commission’s Executive Director, Greg Christie, did receive a letter, regarding the matter, from the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Audrey Sewell, JP, via email, on May 19, 2021.
- (2) Immediately upon his receipt of the letter, he responded in writing to the Permanent Secretary. He respectfully thanked her “for bringing to the Commission’s attention the matters that are set out in your letter, inclusive of your notice of the intended invitation that is to be issued to the Integrity Commission “to attend the meetings to oversee the process ...””
- (3) The Commission was, however, of the view that the Government should be reminded that the Commission is an Independent Commission of Parliament and does not need an ‘invitation’ to discharge its mandates, nor to be guided as to the manner in which it should do so, or the times when it should do so.
- (4) In the circumstances, the Permanent Secretary was advised by the Commission’s Executive Director as follows:

“Notwithstanding your letter, it is important for me to point out that the Commission, by virtue of its mandates, responsibilities and enforcement powers, under the Integrity Commission Act, is at liberty to either monitor and/or investigate the captioned project, its associated contracts, and/or any other issue that is associated therewith, at its discretion, and in such manner that it may deem appropriate”.
- (5) Section 6(3) of the Integrity Commission Act provides that, in the exercise of its powers and performance of its functions under the Act, the Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority, other than the Court, and shall act independently, impartially and fairly in the public interest.

- (6) Due care must, therefore, be taken by the Commission to ensure that it does not act in a manner which could compromise or be perceived as compromising or undermining its independence and impartiality and, in particular, its ability to investigate any matter, issue, complaint or allegation that has already arisen or which may arise in relation to the Montego Bay Perimeter Road project.

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