



Any reply or subsequent reference to this communication should be addressed to the Contractor-General and the following reference quoted:-

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**OCG Challenges Veracity of Works Ministry's Response and Issues Final Demand to Permanent Secretary to Provide Outstanding JEEP Information**

**Kingston; March 22, 2012** – The Office of the Contractor General (OCG) has noted with alarm and surprise the content of the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing's (MTWH's) Media Release of March 22, 2012, in which the Ministry has accused the OCG of "a misrepresentation of the issues", regarding the OCG's Requisitions that have been issued to the Ministry to provide several items of particularized information concerning the Jamaica Emergency Employment Programme (JEEP).

The OCG wishes to categorically deny the Ministry's assertion that "There have been meetings and the exchange of Memoranda between the MTWH and the OCG". The OCG also refutes the MTWH allegation that "All questions raised by the OCG in relation to JEEP, including those that relate to design of the programme in a pre-emptory way, have been responded to on a timely basis".

Other than its meeting of March 20, 2012, with Permanent Secretary Audrey Sewell, when an OCG Team made an unannounced visit to the MTWH, no member of the OCG's staff has ever met with any member of the staff of the MTWH, to discuss any matter which pertains to the JEEP.

Additionally, the only correspondence that the OCG has exchanged with the MTWH, regarding the subject of JEEP, is as follows:

- (a) The OCG's initial Letter of Requisition, to the Permanent Secretary, dated February 27, 2012;
- (b) The Permanent Secretary's Letter of Response, to the OCG, dated March 7, 2012, in which only some of the items of information which were requisitioned by the OCG were satisfied;
- (c) The OCG's further Letter of Requisition to the Permanent Secretary, dated March 20, 2012, which was hand-delivered to her, in her office, when she met with an OCG Team which had made an un-announced visit to the MTWH on March 20, 2012; and
- (d) The OCG's final letter of Requisition to the Permanent Secretary, which is dated today, March 22, and which is referenced herein.

Further, and contrary to what has been inferred by the MTWH, there are several Requisitions of the OCG, regarding JEEP, which are yet to be satisfied by Permanent Secretary Audrey Sewell, and in respect of which the Permanent Secretary, during the OCG's unannounced visit to her office, on March



20, unequivocally asserted that neither her, the JEEP Project Manager, nor the MTWH, was in a position to provide to the OCG. The referenced outstanding items are as follows:

1. Evidence of the Ministry of Finance, Planning & the Public Service's support for the Programme.
2. An Implementation Schedule for the Programme, and its associated projects.
3. A list, and site location, of all the projects to be implemented.
4. Details of the criteria for the selection and prioritization of the projects.
5. Details of the Procurement Methodologies which will be utilized, to engage contractor(s)/subcontractors for the relevant projects.
6. An indication of how the projects will be monitored/managed.
7. A listing of the names of the Project Managers for the Programme/Projects along with their contact numbers.

In light of what the OCG has now come to regard as the Permanent Secretary's misleading inferences to the Media, regarding her imputed satisfaction of the OCG's Requisitions of her, the OCG has, today, written to her to formally demand that all outstanding OCG Requisitions, as are itemized above, regarding the JEEP, be fully satisfied by her, by 3:00 PM, tomorrow, Friday, March 23, 2012, failing which she will be liable for referral for prosecution under Section 29 of the Contractor General Act.

With reference to the Permanent Secretary's Memorandum of March 20, 2012, a copy of which was circulated to the Media by the OCG on March 21, 2012, the OCG has also noted that the MTWH, in its Media Release today, has asserted that "the information, improperly circulated in the press, arises from a memorandum to the Honourable Minister, taken from the Permanent Secretary's office by the team from the OCG."

The foregoing is also a false statement. The referenced Memo was not "taken from the Permanent Secretary's office by the team from the OCG", but, at the request of the OCG, was faxed by the Permanent Secretary herself, directly to the OCG's Mr. Craig Beresford, at approx. 1:59PM on March 20, 2012 – after the OCG had concluded its visit at the MTWH and had left the premises. The OCG, is of course, seriously concerned as to why the MTWH Permanent Secretary would have stated otherwise.

Finally, on the issue of the Ministry's allegation that the OCG had 'improperly' circulated the Permanent Secretary's Memorandum to the Media, the OCG wishes to respectfully direct the MTWH to Section 24 (1) (b) of the Contractor General Act. The provision en-clothes a Contractor General with the discretionary power to do precisely what he did in his efforts to shine the light of transparency on the conduct of Public Officers, such as the MTWH Permanent Secretary and its Minister, as they discharge their public duties, as public servants, for and on behalf of the People and Taxpayers of Jamaica.

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