



**NEWS FEATURE
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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (right) has the attention of newly appointed Commissioner of Police Dr. Kevin Blake, during a tour of police facilities in Westmoreland and St James, earlier this year.

Shifting Gears - JCF embracing transformation for operational effectiveness and community engagement

The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) has embarked on a transformative journey, reflecting a commitment to innovation and excellence in law enforcement.

With a storied history of over 150 years, the JCF's evolution is a testament to the government's resolve to meet the security needs of the nation.

The ramping up of recruitment activities, overhaul of police facilities, adoption of cutting-edge technologies, the passage of key pieces of enabling legislation, and the emphasis on community



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policing are pivotal elements in redefining the JCF as a modern entity ready to confront the challenges of today.

These initiatives are not merely about expanding operational capabilities; they are about cultivating a relationship of trust and accountability within the communities they serve and protect.

Project ROC (Rebuild, Overhaul, and Construct) stands as a monumental endeavour in this transformation, aiming to provide state-of-the-art, citizen-centric facilities that benefit both law enforcement personnel and the public.

The Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, highlighted the project's impact, noting its role in fostering a positive work environment and boosting the morale of police officers.

“This initiative is not only providing a conducive work environment for effective law enforcement but also serves as a significant morale booster to our police officers, knowing that they can go to work in functionally appropriate spaces,” Minister Chang said, during his contribution to the Sectoral Debates, at Gordon House on Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

The government's dedication to this cause is further evidenced by the substantial investments in the JCF's infrastructure, which include the construction of new Divisional Headquarters in Westmoreland and St. Catherine North as well as the Specialised Operation West facility in Montego Bay, St. James.

These projects, with a collective budget of J\$15 billion, signify a major investment in the nation's security infrastructure, aimed at enhancing JCF's capabilities and the working conditions for its members. The Westmoreland project alone, which is currently being constructed at J\$2.7 billion, underscores the scale of this commitment.

Such investments are crucial for the JCF's mission to serve and protect, ensuring that the Force is not only well-equipped but also operates within an environment that supports its strategic objectives.

The construction of new police stations in strategic locations such as Frome, Little London, Anchovy, and Lacovia marks a forward-thinking approach to infrastructure development for the JCF.

Simultaneously, the public investment process is continuing for the construction of new police stations at Amity Hall, Granville (St. James), Bull Bay (St. Andrew), Cave Valley (St. Ann), and Dias (Hanover), signifying a continuous effort to strengthen the JCF.

The transformation of the Force is a multifaceted process, involving organizational restructuring, policy reform, and cultural shifts within the organization. It is a comprehensive approach that seeks to address the root causes of crime and violence while promoting a more proactive and preventive stance in law enforcement.



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By focusing on community engagement and partnership, the JCF is moving towards a model of policing that is more responsive to the needs of the citizens it serves.

The JCF's transformation is a clear indication of Jamaica's dedication to public safety and the rule of law. It is a forward-thinking initiative that promises to bring about a new era of policing in Jamaica, characterized by efficiency, transparency, and a deepened connection with the community.

As the Force continues to evolve, it stands as a beacon of hope for a safer, more secure Jamaica.

The government's strategy encompasses a comprehensive transformation of the country's security forces, a targeted investment in vulnerable communities, and a revision of the legislative framework to support law enforcement activities.

These efforts are aimed at fostering a society where the rule of law is not only respected but forms the foundation of peace and security.

The Ministry of National Security has outlined three strategic policy directions to achieve these goals. Firstly, the transformation and fortification of the JCF are crucial for enhancing its operational capabilities.

Secondly, investing in socially challenged communities holistically addresses the root causes of crime and violence.

Thirdly, ensuring an effective and relevant legislative framework provides the necessary legal backing for law enforcement actions.

To support these strategic directions, significant resources have been allocated, including a record budget for the JCF.

This funding has enabled the rebuilding and refurbishment of police stations, the upgrading of the Force's technology infrastructure, the procurement of essential safety equipment such as bulletproof vests, and the implementation of specialized training programs.

These programmes, including the Accelerated Promotion and High Potential Detective initiatives, aim to elevate the crime-fighting proficiency of police officers.

Moreover, the government's investment extends to enhancing the mobility of the JCF. Between the Financial Years 2016/2017 and 2023/2024, the government procured a substantial fleet of vehicles to bolster the Force at a cost of approximately J\$4.6 billion.

This level of investment is critical to ensuring that law enforcement officers can respond swiftly and effectively to incidents across the nation.



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Technological development



The Republic of Korea recently donated two hundred-fifteen (215) CCTV cameras to the Government of Jamaica. The cameras are intended to be used to expand the JamaicaEye Network during the 2024/2025 Financial Year.

Over the past five years, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) has advanced the use of technology in its operations to enhance public safety and improve policing efficiency.

The Station Records Management System, aimed at digitizing police records for streamlined operations, complements these efforts and is currently being rolled out across the JCF.

The overarching goal of these projects is to equip the Force with the tools necessary to tackle the complex challenges of contemporary law enforcement, the security minister noted.

“Efficient communications in real-time at any time, anywhere on the island, is the most far-reaching change for the JCF. The digitization, and automation of the Force’s business processes will, of course, leverage the foundation laid with the effective communication infrastructure,” Minister Chang said.

In addition, the expansion of the JamaicaEye Programme has been instrumental in the fight against crime, violence, and public disorder. There are currently over nine hundred (900) CCTV cameras under the programme.



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Plans are now far advanced to bring another five hundred-fifty (550) CCTV cameras online this year, with a further three thousand (3,000) expected to be added to the system over the next three Financial Years.

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