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## Communities, Businesses Urged to Make Use of JamaicaEye

The Ministry of National Security is encouraging more communities and businesses to make use of the JamaicaEye initiative.

Speaking at a recent JIS Think, Senior Director of Modernisation and Strategic Projects in the Ministry, Arvel Grant, said there are various options available for persons to set up a closed circuit television (CCTV) system and contribute the feed to JamaicaEye.

He noted, for example, that citizens and business associations have been pooling their resources to purchase CCTV cameras to cover specific areas.

**"In some communities they may have two or three main roads, so they are installing CCTV cameras along those main roads and connecting those cameras to the system. They are setting up a camera system for the community and sharing the cost with members in the community,"** he said further.

Launched in March, JamaicaEye is a national CCTV surveillance programme geared at improving public safety and emergency response.

It is designed to network all the CCTV systems owned by the Ministry as well as accommodate feeds from privately-owned cameras.

Mr. Grant said that JamaicaEye can be a major emergency tool for communities.

**"Say there is a major flooding in an area of Kingston; we can use the cameras to immediately assess the situation,"** he pointed out.

He noted that **"typically what happens now is that you would send a team out, they would go and survey and take a view of what is happening on the ground and come back in to some central planning location and then deploy resources."**

**"What CCTV allows us to do in cases of emergency or disaster is to immediately begin that assessment and start deploying resources,"** he said.

Mr. Grant noted that JamaicaEye will also improve response to crimes and accidents.

**"We cannot have a policeman on every corner of every street 24 hours per day, but the cameras can be there,"** he contended.

He explained that the software can determine that an accident has happened at an intersection, allowing for quick assessment and deployment of response teams.

**"The software can tell when there is a crowd at a location where typically there is none, so it will bring that camera into focus and allow the security personnel to start looking at it to determine whether there is a response needed from the police,"** he noted further.

Mr. Grant is advising communities interested in setting up CCTV systems to visit the website jamaicaeye.gov.jm, where a range of specifications can be found at various prices.

**"You can take those specifications to the security companies and they can customise a suite of cameras that can fit your budget,"** he said.

Meanwhile, JamaicaEye Project Coordinator, Emil Holgate, said that since the roll-out of the programme **"the uptake has been phenomenal with nearly 35,000 visits to the website."**