

**Statement by Deputy Prime Minister of Jamaica and
Minister of National Security
At the Sitting of the House of Representatives
On July 11, 2023**

Madam Speaker, I am happy to report to the Parliament today, that further to the Government's commitment to transform Jamaica's Police Force into a more modern law enforcement institution reflecting of a *Force for Good*, and its commitment to reduce the number of contract workers within the public service, a total of one thousand, one hundred and five permanent civilian posts will be added to the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

Madam Speaker, this marks a major and significant milestone in the practice of employing civilian workers to support non-policing functions in the JCF. These workers, for several decades, were employed on fixed-term contracts which limited their access to critical health and pension benefits.

Madam Speaker, the Office of the Services Commission (OSC) undertook an audit and produced a report entitled *'Human Resource Audit Report: Police Department in relation to Management of the Functions Delegated Under the Public Service Regulations (1961) for the period August 1, 2018 to April 30, 2021'*. The audit revealed that the JCF had a civilian staff complement of approximately one thousand nine hundred (1,900) persons and close to fifty percent (50%) were employed on a contractual basis, as either casual daily paid (CDP) or part-time (PT) workers.

As a consequence, Madam Speaker, and in fulfilment of the mandate to improve compensation and benefits afforded to public sector workers, the Ministry of National Security undertook the necessary consultations with the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, to increase the civilian establishment of the JCF to address this anomaly and to execute the new policy direction of the government. This administration Madam Speaker, led by The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, remains steadfast in its drive to create a public sector characterized by efficiency, productivity, and competitive salaries for the hard-working people of Jamaica.

Madam Speaker, just to indicate that the duties performed by the civilian staff include administrative roles in areas such as accounting, human resource management, medical services, information technology, sanitation and janitorial services. Their work is critical to the proper functioning of the organization and allows the trained service men and women to focus more fully on core policing functions that directly combat crime.

These workers will now be able to access the benefits offered to permanent government employees, such as the health and pension schemes, which provide basic health insurance to offset medical expenses and pension benefits upon retirement. Madam Speaker, most importantly, the practice of sending these workers home after more than thirty years of service with just a 'handshake', will now end.

Madam Speaker, while the change will result in an increase in the total compensation of workers, it is a necessary increase and will collectively benefit what I consider to be

among the most vulnerable group of workers in the JCF. This positive development outweighs the additional expenditure by far. This development will affect Secretaries, Records Clerks, Office Attendants, Cell Attendants, Mail Attendants, Grounds men Messengers, Motor Vehicle Washers and Handymen, for example.

Madam Speaker, to conclude, this administration will continue its focused effort to improve the public sector and to deliver programmes to attain the goals articulated in the National Development Plan, Vision 2030, to make Jamaica the place of choice to “live, work, raise families and do business”.