

Majority of Personnel in the Canine Division Are Not Certified As Trainers/Handlers



Whilst canines at the Canine Division of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) are for the most part satisfactorily housed and cared for, the majority of the personnel assigned to the division are not certified as trainers or canine handlers. This was one of several key findings from a thematic inspection conducted by the PCOA Team at the division in November 2023.

The division is a specialized unit within the JCF that focuses on the training and handling of canines. Its mandate is to prevent the transportation of drugs through the borders of Jamaica



FILE PHOTO: Inspections and Monitoring Manager, Nichelle Duncan (left) petting a retired canine at the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Transformations 2023: People, Technology and Quality Expo at the National Arena in May 2023.

via the international airports and other ports of entry. Other responsibilities include: firearm, ammunition and spent casing detection; locating missing persons; cadaver detection and, explosives detection. At the time of inspection, the division, which had a total staff complement of 70, but a working strength of 61, had only one person certified as a canine trainer. Of the working strength, thirty-one were trained as canine handlers but, not certified. In addition, twenty-seven personnel did not receive any canine handlers' training. The PCOA Team also found



FILE PHOTO: A display board at the Canine Division booth at the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Transformations 2023: People, Technology and Quality Expo at the National Arena in May 2023.

that the housing and working conditions provided for the personnel at the locations in Montego Bay, St. James (Summit Station and Sangster International Airport); and in Kingston (Divisional Headquarters at Harman Barracks and Norman Manley International Airport) were not suitable due to limited space and inadequate furniture, among other issues.

In the case of the Sangsters International Airport in Montego Bay, St. James, the location for the personnel was adequate, however, the furniture was in a poor state and cracks were seen along the walls of the guardroom. There were also missing plasterboards from the ceiling and water marks, indicating that there was water leakage.

At the Summit Station Barracks in Montego Bay, St. James, the five rooms in the complex were in a deplorable condition, requiring renovation. In each room there were several missing window blades as well as the ceiling had several holes, showing signs of termite infestation and leakage. Three of the rooms had containers catching waste from a broken sewage line in the ceiling. The bathrooms were also in a

deplorable state, with both the toilets and faucets malfunctioning. There was no kitchen, therefore the microwave, refrigerator and stove with gas cylinder were located in each room.

Meanwhile, at the Divisional Headquarters (DHQ), which is located on the Harman Barracks compound, the ceiling of the barracks and bathroom were in need of repair. The AC unit in the guardroom was out of service and the windows were sealed with plexi-glass, resulting in poor ventilation and intense heat.

The barrack rooms were small and had defective lighting fixtures. The toilets in the bathrooms were malfunctioning. The kitchen was in a deplorable condition, rust and corrosion were visible on the sink and refrigerator.

There was also raw sewage running from the South Camp Correctional Centre onto the compound of the DHQ, resulting in a stench which impacted the health of staff.

At the Norman Manley International Airport, the staff occupied a small room with limited furniture, for administrative duties. The refrigerator was in poor working condition and the AC unit, malfunctioning, in addition to the fan.

The Canine Division was officially formed in 1979 .

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## The Management of Records at the Canine Division Needs Attention

The management of records at the Canine Division require urgent attention as none of the locations were fully compliant in maintaining the records reviewed during an inspection by the PCOA.

This determination was made despite the Canine Division not having any Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The PCOA Team relied on general policies of the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Jamaica Defence Force SOPs as it related to canines and international best practices to support the inspection.

In regards to Station Diaries, none of the locations were fully compliant in the maintenance of this record as it applied to police practices such as briefings, debriefings, certifications and lectures.

However, all locations were compliant in mentioning the Use of Force Policy in all briefings conducted within the review period.

It was a similar issue with the Firearm Register, which were also not maintained according to JCF policies, as there were missing diary entry numbers and no inventory inside the register among others breaches.

Other records, such as the Duty Forecast Register and the Medical Journal (for canines), which were managed at the Divisional Headquarters (DHQ) in Kingston,



The PCOA Team (left and third right) looking at a record with personnel from the Canine Division at the headquarters at Harman Barracks in Kingston.

were compliant with JCF policies. Meanwhile, as it pertained to the division being equipped with the basic resources to carry out its mandate and functions, it was found to be lacking in some areas. These areas included a shortage of service vehicles whereby of the 16 assigned to the division, 50% were not operational; the vehicles assigned to transport canines were not in keeping with international best practices; and currently, the division was without a dedicated veterinarian and has to rely on the services of the Jamaica Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals (JSPCA), which does not provide a 24-hour service.

Additionally, none of the locations had Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, earmuffs and safety eyewear. Also, personnel in Kingston and Montego Bay locations were without a police radio (portable or base radio): a dedicated cell phone or landline to communicate with the DHQ. Personnel instead had to rely on their personal phones.

There was concern that the number of locations for the division was not adequate to effectively secure all airports. As it stands, there are three international airports in Jamaica, however, the newest one, the Ian Fleming International Airport (IFIA) did not have an outpost. It must be noted that in the absence of this outpost, dogs will have to travel a distance of 105km from the DHQ in Kingston to IFIA in St. Mary, which may impact on their ability to perform their duties effectively upon arrival.

Aside from these concerns, the 62 canines were adequately provided for, having sufficient water buckets and feeding pans; and there were suitable supplies for them including reward balls, collars, harness/lead and grooming tools.

## Bath Station Attains Perfection in the Maintenance of PIC Records

Bath Station in the St. Thomas Division was the only one of 8 Prisoners in Custody (PIC) stations inspected in Area 5 that achieved perfection when maintaining (PIC) records.

This was one of several findings from a special inspection of two of the most populated lock-ups in each of the St. Andrew North, St. Thomas, St. Catherine North and St. Catherine South divisions, all of which fall under the remit of the Area 5 Command.

The lock-ups inspected were: Constant Spring and Lawrence Tavern (St. Andrew North Division); Morant Bay and Bath (St. Thomas); Spanish Town and Linstead (St. Catherine North); and Portmore and Central Village (St. Catherine South).

The lock-up staff adhered to policies of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) as it pertained to the following records - PIC Register, PIC Cards, Charge and Prisoners' Property Book, Remand



Legal Counsel, Sheldon Clarke (seated left) going through his list of findings from an inspection with Bath Station Commander, Inspector Donald Burke. Looking on are: Inspection and Monitoring Officers as well as two representatives from Detention and Courts

Book and Medical Journal.

Not only did the lock-up maintain its records in accordance with JCF policies, but it also held prisoners according to the gazetted capacity of cells; conducted the required number of physical cell checks as mandated by JCF policy; and also carried out more than the required number of cell searches.

Unlike some of the other lock-ups inspected, the Bath lock-up did not have any evidence or reports of disease outbreak nor pest infestation.

The station, which serves 19 communities, is managed by Inspector Donald Burke, who is on his second stint as Station Commander, having initially taken the reins from 2014-2016, returning in January 2019.

Under his watch, the station won the Top Station Award for the St. Thomas Division in the 2020 Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition in Area 5. This is in addition to winning a similar award in the former JCF Best Station Competition in 2014 and 2015.

When winning the TOPS award in 2020, Inspector Burke told the *PCOA Monitor* that the award was an acknowledgment of his hard working staff. "They are so encouraged having won the award," he said, adding this was despite the challenges encountered at the station.

## PIC Records in Fairly Good Order in Area 5 Lock-ups

The Prisoners in Custody (PIC) records in the lock-ups inspected in Area 5 were in fairly good order.

The lock-ups included in the inspection were the two most populated in each of the four divisions that comprise Area 5 - Morant Bay and Bath (St. Thomas); Constant Spring and Lawrence Tavern (St. Andrew North); Portmore and Central Village (St. Catherine South); and, Spanish Town and Linstead (St. Catherine North).

As it turns out the most problematic record for the 8 lock-ups was the Charge and Prisoners Property Book, whereby only two stations - Bath and Spanish Town - maintained it in accordance with policies of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

This was followed, albeit a distant second, by the Remand Book, with only two lock-ups failing to adhere to JCF policies in regards to maintaining this record.

All stations inspected conformed to JCF policies when maintaining both the PIC Register and Cards and also the Medical Journal.

The lock-ups were exemplary when



Inspection and Monitoring Officer, Norville Davy (left) explaining findings from an inspection to the sub-officer at the Central Village Station in the St. Catherine North Division.

conducting cell searches, with all meeting the JCF requirement. In fact, the two lock-ups in the St. Andrew North Division conducted more than the required number of searches. As for physical cell checks, with the exception of one station - Morant Bay - all stations conducted these checks as mandated by the JCF.

The vigilance of lock-up personnel becomes all the more important as only three of the 8 stations kept prisoners within their gazetted cell capacity.

Meanwhile, as it pertained to having sufficient restraining devices such as handcuffs and batons, only two of the 8 lock-ups reported not having adequate amount of these devices. Likewise only two lock-ups indicated that they had malfunctioning generators.

In regards to safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, only four stations had serviced ones. Whilst the remainder had extinguishers, that were not serviced.

On the matter of security, of profound concern was the lack of surveillance systems (CCTV) for staff to monitor prisoners or areas surrounding the lock-ups. Only two of the 8 lock-ups had fully operational systems. At least most of the security perimeter fencing/walls at these lock-ups were in good condition, with only one damaged.

The PCOA Team also found that all of the divisions were equipped with the appropriate JCF vehicle to transport prisoners, however one was out for repairs.

Two representatives from Detention and Courts Division partnered with the PCOA Team to conduct the PIC inspections in Area 5.

## More Vehicles Will Improve JCF Service in Area 1— TOPS Survey

The consensus of most residents in Area 1 is that the police service can be improved with the provision of more vehicles.

This is according to a customer satisfaction survey conducted by the PCOA Team during the Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition in Area 1 (Trelawny, St. James, Hanover and Westmoreland divisions).

The survey revealed that 44% of the respondents felt that the provision of more vehicles would improve the service offered by the police. This feeling was particularly strong in the Westmoreland Division, where 54% or more than a half of the respondents indicated this as their first choice to help the police to improve their service in the Area. In the case of both the Hanover and St. James divisions, the majority of residents interviewed, which represented 49% respectively, agreed that the provision of more vehicles would most improve the police service.

While only 29% of the respondents in the Trelawny Division believed that



Inspection and Monitoring Officer, Toni-Ann Baker (right) interviewing a resident for TOPS Customer Satisfaction Survey in Wakefield, Trelawny.

more vehicles would improve the service offered by the police, the majority (49%) stated that the service would be better improved by more patrols.

Overall, the need for more patrols as a means of improving the service offered by the police ranked second in three of the four divisions. In the Hanover Division, it was 41% of the respondents; 36% from St. James Division; and 23% from the Westmoreland Division.

When combining the top two areas (more

vehicles and patrols) for the police to improve services in Area 1, it becomes apparent that both impact on residents feeling safe in their communities. This is based on the majority of the respondents (77%) indicating that they felt safe with the presence of the police, as opposed to those (21%), who did not.

In regards to the overall satisfaction with the service provided by the police, 66% of the respondents deemed the service satisfactory. However, there was an acknowledgement by the residents that *"there was always room for improvement"* as this was ranked first on how they rated the JCF.

*Overall good service/ not a lot of issues; Trying hard/ doing the best job they can; Need to provide more effective service; and Not enough resources/ tools/ equipment to do the job* rounded out the top five reasons for their JCF rating.

As for Jamaica being a safe place to live, work and raise families (Vision 2030), 67% of the respondents were in agreement. The survey was conducted in September, 2023 and assisted in determining the Top Customer Service Division Award.

## Survey Reveals More Customer Service Training Required in Area 1

One of the main takeaways from the Area 1 Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Customer Satisfaction Survey is that all divisional commanders need to ensure that, all police personnel in their divisions are exposed more to customer service training to enhance relations with citizens.

When distilling responses from residents in the four divisions - St. James, Westmoreland, Hanover and Trelawny - which comprise Area 1, just about 40% gave a poor to average rating in the areas of customer service (approachable/courteous, helpfulness, and knowledge and information given).

A breakdown by division in the three listed categories revealed that respondents from the St. James Division had the most issues regarding the customer service provided by the police. In terms of the police being approachable/courteous, 48% of those interviewed rated the service average likewise in the category of knowledge/information given. For the helpfulness category, 45% of the residents considered the police, average.

Coming in second in terms of issues with the customer service provided by their division was Westmoreland, where in the category of helpfulness, 40% gave an average rating. While, in the category of approachable/courteous, only 33% ranked



Inspection and Monitoring Officer, Adin Grant (right) interviewing a resident in Wakefield, Trelawny for the Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Customer Satisfaction Survey,

the police as poor to middling; and similarly 38% of those interviewed deemed the knowledge/information given by the police as average.

In the Trelawny Division, 33% of the respondents ranked the three categories as average.

It was only respondents in the Hanover Division that seemed to have the least issues with the customer service provided

by their police. In the categories of helpfulness and knowledge/information given, 26 % and 27% respectively, ranked the police as average, with 35% of the residents rating their police in the category of approachable/courteous, poor-to-middling.

Given that almost 40% of the respondents deemed the customer service average, it is evident that more work is needed to improve customer service. Therefore, in addition to exposing personnel to more training, divisional commanders are also being urged to ensure that personnel assigned to specialized areas are aware of the policies and rules for the areas that they are assigned to. This will improve the accuracy of the information disseminated to citizens by police personnel.

Despite having customer service related issues, residents in Area 1 were overall satisfied with the service provided by the police to the citizens of Jamaica, whereby 66% indicated they were satisfied.

The Westmoreland Division won the Top Customer Service Division for the Area 1 TOPS Competition last year. The division also swept the other major awards including Top Division, and Top Station, which was won by Bluefields. For the past three years of the competition, the Top Customer Service has also won Top Division.

## 2024 TOPS Competition to Be Held in Area 2

The Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition will return to the Area Command where it all started in 2019 - Area 2, marking a new cycle of the competition.

Area 2 is comprised of St. Ann, St. Mary and Portland divisions which collectively have 31 stations.

The competition has grown exponentially since its launch in 2019, which can be chalked up to not resting on one's laurels, but instead, identifying ways to improve upon this game-changing initiative.

A testament of this lies in the increase in the number of main awards, which initially started out as four - Top Station, Top Prisoners in Custody and Top Division, and the recognition of Top Station in the other divisions - but grew to include others such as the Top Customer Service Station Award, which was added in 2020. This award evolved into the Top Customer Service Division



**2019 FLASHBACK:** Then PCOA Member, the late Dr. The Hon. Marshall Hall (right) posing with Bamboo Station Commander, Sgt. Patricia Brown (centre) and her colleagues, Constable Rohan Smith (left) and Corporal Ronald Brown (second from left) and St. Ann Divisional Commander, Calvin Small holding winning cheque. Bamboo Station won the Top Station Award in the inaugural Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition in Area 2

Award the following year, with an accompanying TOPS Customer Satisfaction Survey to involve stakeholders in the selection process.

Additionally, in 2020, the TOPS programme was further expanded to include a third and fourth phase— a Performance Review Meet-

ing and Re-inspection. The Dr. the Hon. Marshall Hall Award was introduced for the most improved station during the Re-inspection. The award was named in honour of the late founding member, Dr. the Hon. Marshall Hall, who was a big supporter of the TOPS programme, donating the prize money for the Area Top Station award for three years.

Last year, the TOPS Poster Competition for Secondary Schools in the Area Command was created, targeting the youth as part of the TOPS programme. In addition to this new development, sponsors were courted to make the awards more attractive.

This time around, Area 2 will be the beneficiary of all these add-ons to the competition/programme.

In the meantime, two more awards will be added to the competition this year, one of which for the Top Outpost in the Marine Division and the other, will be disclosed at a later date.

## PSTEB to Publicize Names of Motorists with Outstanding Arrest Warrants - says ACP McKenzie

Head of The Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement Branch (PSTEB), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Gary McKenzie says his unit will begin to publicize the names of motorists with outstanding arrest warrants this year. He made this disclosure on the upcoming episode of the *Citizen Corner Podcast*, hosted recently by the PCOA Team. ACP McKenzie said that with all the traffic tickets being electronically regulated it meant that the police was “very certain about its accuracy”. Therefore, he added that his unit would commence publishing traffic offenders before the year was out. Unlike the JCF’s “Wanted Wednesday” social media campaign with an accompanying photo of the individual, only a list of the offenders will be published on the outset.

As to why the PSTEB was escalating efforts to deal with delinquent motorist in such a public way, ACP McKenzie was at pains to note that a warrant was a warrant no matter the type of warrant. “What it means is that it is an instruction from the courts to the police to take in...someone, who is supposed to be in court and is not,” he stressed, adding that albeit the police tended to have issues with traffic on a much lower level than say, other criminal offences, a warrant was still a warrant.



JCF Head of Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement, ACP Gary McKenzie (third left) and Corporal Wright (third right) posing with the PCOA Team (left to right) Senior Director, Inspections and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont; Communication and PR Manager, Karen Cadien; PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield Nugent; and Legal Counsel, Sheldon Clarke.

He further stated that a warrant also meant that, “you are wanted, so when you are used to saying that a man is wanted for murder, you could be wanted for dangerous driving or disobeying traffic lights”.

There are two types of warrants that may

be issued to a traffic offender. A Warrant of Disobedience of Summons is issued when the offender fails to appear in court. There is also a Bench Warrant, which is issued by a judge after an offender is arrested and bailed but, fails to go to court for an appearance, hearing or trial.

ACP McKenzie elaborated that warrants were now electronically generated, so the process worked more smoothly. This new initiative was among several topics, which included the new speed limit for the Edward Seaga Highway and the meaning of the amber on traffic lights, explored in Episode 3 of the podcast. The podcast also marked the conclusion of a three-part series on the New Road Traffic Act as well as road rules.

The podcast will air on May 30, on the Police Civilian Oversight Authority YouTube Channel.



In the nearby DVConcepts studio are from left to right: Senior Director, Inspections and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont; JCF Head of Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement, ACP Gary McKenzie; PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield Nugent; Communications and PR Manager, Karen Cadien; and, Legal Counsel, Sheldon Clarke.

## Malfunctioning Ablution Facilities Plague Area 5 Lock-ups

An inspection of the most populated Area 5 lock-up facilities revealed a widespread issue of malfunctioning bathroom fixtures. In some instances, the condition of these fixtures were deplorable.

The lock-ups inspected in Area 5 were: Morant Bay and Bath (St. Thomas Division); Constant Spring and Lawrence Tavern (St. Andrew North); Portmore and Central Village (St. Catherine South); and, Spanish Town and Linstead (St. Catherine North).

With the exception of two lock-ups, all the other lock-ups has issues relating to showers, some of which were out of service, requiring repair and in one instance, in a deplorable state.

As for the toilets, the PCOA Team found in 7 of eight lock-ups that some were either clogged or in a poor condition.

There was also one instance, where the



The PCOA Team as well as a representative from the Detention and Courts Division in action at the Linstead lock-up in St. Catherine North Division.

drainage system in the toilet and shower was clogged and stagnant water was seen coming from the lock-up.

At another lock-up, the washbasin, shower area and toilet were clogged and in a deplorable condition. In addition, there was stagnant water in the cells.

There were at least two cases of defective and leaking faucets at the lock-ups inspected, one of which was running constantly.

As for other issues, there were no reports or evidence of disease outbreaks in the lock-ups at the time of inspection. However, at three lock-ups, the staff informed the PCOA Team that they had a rat infestation. In fact, at one of the three lock-ups, rats and roaches still infested the cells after it was recently fumigated.

The PCOA Team last inspected all of the Area 5 stations including the ones with lock-ups in 2021, when conducting the Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Re-inspection, which is the fourth phase of the TOPS Programme. Of note, the Portmore Station won the award for the Top Prisoners in Custody (PIC) Station in Area 5 in the 2020 TOPS Competition.

## PCOA CEO Highlights Importance of Oversight to Course Participants at NPC

Improving the quality of policing processes were among the benefits of having oversight of law enforcement says PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent.

The PCOA CEO was speaking to 14 participants in a Special Junior Command Course hosted by the Faculty of Leadership and Professional Development at the National Police College in Twickenham Park in St. Catherine.



Quiz winner, Cambridge Station Commander Inspector Carl Bryan receives a token from PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent. Inspector Bryan won Top Station in St. James Division in the Area 1 Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition.

“The quality will improve when we ensure that you adhere to your own policies and procedures,” she told the participants. The PCOA CEO further cited other benefits of oversight of the law enforcement, including that of increased accountability by promoting



PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent unveils the revamped PCOA logo to participants in a special Junior Command Course at the National Police College.

procedures,” she added, noting that oversight could also help to improve community relations by fostering communication between the community and police. Mrs. Byfield-Nugent also took time out to unveil the newly revamped PCOA logo, which has a new shape, size, design and a word added to the motto. “We added the word *populi*, which means people in Latin. So it is ‘*Quis custodiet Ipsos custodes?...Populi*’ which is, ‘Who will watch the watcher?...The People,’” she explained.

fair and professional policing and increased public trust and confidence in the police because of independent reviews.

“It can also help to increase the public’s understanding of law enforcement policies and

“We thought we should include the people to get them more involved in the oversight process,” she added.

In the meantime, for participant Inspector Tony-Ann Fearon, the presentation was very informative, especially about the role and functions of the PCOA and how it can assist in the carrying out the work of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

“It [PCOA] can assist members of the JCF in keeping in line with our vision and to give us guidance. It also reminds us about our standard operating procedures as to carrying out our daily functions and meeting the needs of our customers,” she said.



PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent (left) presents a prize to Quiz Winner, Inspector Tony-Ann Fearon at the National Police College.

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## PHOTO OP FOR THE QUARTER



The PCOA Team always start the year right by entering the 5ks. Here we are participating in the the second staging of the European Union (EU) Jamaica 5k/10k in downtown Kingston. From left to right were: Legal Counsel, Sheldon Clarke; Communications and PR Manager, Karen Cadien; Inspection and Monitoring Officer (IMO), Adin Grant; Director, Human Resource Management and Administration; PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent; Inspections and Monitoring Manager, Nichelle Duncan; and IMO Norville Davy (hidden).