

**Security Checks of Cells a Problem at Area 3 Lock-ups**

A recent inspection conducted at 9 lock-ups within Area 3 revealed gaps in compliance to Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) policies pertaining to cell searches and physical cell checks.

Out of the 9 facilities inspected, only four adhered to JCF policies regarding the required frequency of cell searches, while only five maintained compliance with physical check requirements.

The inspection covered facilities across three divisions that comprise Area 3 - St. Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon. The low rate of compliance in these two areas was compounded by the fact that only four of inspected lock-ups held prisoners below their gazetted capacity, while the majority were operating above the gazetted cell capacity, elevating security risks. Further investigation indicated that the majority of the prison-



PCOA Team member, Norville Davy (right) with police personnel inspecting records at the Christiana lock-up in the Manchester Division.

ers in custody were remandees held by the court. However, standard operating procedures dictate that these individuals should be under the remit of Correctional Services.

Additionally, the majority of facilities (six) either had no fire extinguishers or they were not serviced.

On the matter of disease outbreaks, there was no evidence of this at all facilities during the period under review. However, four of the 9 lock-ups had roach/pest infestation.

Meanwhile, most facilities maintained records in good

order, with the exception of the Charge and Prisoners' Property Books, where the majority (six) did not comply with JCF policies.

The main objective of these inspections is to assess the various administrative practices at PIC stations with the highest prisoner population within all the divisions in the Area as well as, the ones that house women. This will identify any weaknesses and deficiencies that may prevail and allow the authority to propose recommendations to address the same.

The scope of this inspection included looking at the extent to which the division was complying with JCF policies and procedures as it relates to the maintenance of various PIC records, lock-up management and adherence to safety and security measures and resources among other areas.

PCOA Team Undertakes Thematic Inspection of CISOCA

The PCOA Team commenced a thematic inspection of the Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse (CISOCA) in March. The team is expected to carry out an examination of nine CISOCA centres across the island, covering all geographical Areas in 8 days.

The centres inspected are as follows: St. James and Trelawny divisions (Area 1); St. Mary and Portland divisions (Area 2); Manchester and Clarendon divisions (Area 3); Kingston and St. Andrew divisions (Area 4) and St. Catherine North and

St. Catherine South divisions (Area 5).

"These centres were chosen based on the highest volume of reported sexual offences," Senior Director of Inspections and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont



PCOA CEO Otarah Byfield Nugent (left) greets DSP Julian Stephens-Reid (right), Administration Officer for CISOCA Kingston & St. Andrew. Looking on are: Andrew Beaumont (second left), Senior Director, Inspections and Monitoring and Supt. Kerry-Ann Bailey, CISOCA Commanding Officer.

disclosed.

The inspection will seek to determine whether the records at each centre are being maintained and administered in accordance with JCF policies.

In addition, the inspection will

seek to ascertain if the centres are properly equipped with the necessary resources to carry out CISOCA's mandate and

functions.

"We also want to know if the centres are properly outfitted to achieve CISOCA's mandate," the Senior Director disclosed.

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PCOA Team Sensitizes Hundreds of JCF Recruits on Civilian Oversight During the Quarter

The PCOA Team successfully engaged and sensitized 438 recruits from the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), along with 30 police personnel from the Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau (IPROB), during the quarter. The sensitization sessions took place at the National Police College and its Harmon Barracks campus as well as the IPROB headquarters.

The initiative focused heavily on educating the upcoming and current officers about the critical role of civilian oversight of law enforcement, as well as the specific work, functions, and statutory boundaries of the



PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield Nugent having some fun with a JCF recruit at lecture at the Harman Barracks Campus of the National Police College.

units like IPROB, the PCOA is an external, audit and monitor-focused body established under the PCOA Act of 2005.

The recruits and police personnel were briefed on how the PCOA operates as a creature of statute, utilizing the broad language of its founding Act to monitor any operation of the police, measure standards of performance, and ensure the implementation of JCF policies. In the meantime, the PCOA CEO said that, “The outreach with the recruits although a long time in coming, has been a goal of the PCOA in terms of sensitizing JCF recruits about civilian oversight before they become police officers”.



Senior Director, Inspection and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont addressing 300 recruits at the National Police College in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine.

Authority.

Speaking to the participants, the PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent emphasized the operational necessity of this knowledge for modern policing.

“Knowing about civilian oversight of law enforcement is critical to your career as a police officer,” Byfield-Nugent stated at the three separate sessions.

As part of the sessions, the PCOA Team provided essential context on where the Authority fits within Jamaica’s current police oversight governance map. Unlike investigation-focused bodies like the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM), or internal accountability



PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent addressing police personnel at Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau (IPROB).

One Tuberculosis Case Confirmed Following Inspection of Three Lock-ups

Findings from inspections of three lock-up facilities reveal that only one person in custody had a confirmed tuberculosis (TB) case.

The inspections were conducted on February 10 and 27 following media reports on February 6, 2026, regarding potential tuberculosis (TB) outbreaks at three lock-ups - Half Way Tree (St. Andrew Central Division); Hunts Bay (St. Andrew North Division) and Greater Portmore (St. Catherine South Division).

The investigation confirmed that the Hunts Bay Station had a TB case. Evidence of this was found in the Medical Journal at the station, which indicated that a physician had already administered treatment and collected samples from 5 other prisoners in custody for TB testing. Lock-up staff, however informed the team that an additional 10 prisoners in custody were suspected of being infected.



PCOA Team inspecting records at Half Way Tree Station

As for the Half Way Tree Station, there was no evidence of a TB outbreak. A review of the Medical Journal showed no TB-related doctor’s visit or prisoner transfers to external medical facilities for respiratory symptoms.

In response to unconfirmed reports, an inspection was conducted at the Greater Portmore Station on February 27. While no evidence of TB cases were found, records showed one individual was treated for TB-like symptoms, which was pending confir-

mation. Notably, the PCOA Team discovered that five individuals were being treated for scabies, which causes intense itching and a pimple like skin rash. Meanwhile, an audit of protective measures for staff was conducted.

“We verified that officers at the Hunt’s Bay facility were equipped with adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), which includes masks, gloves and sanitizers,” he disclosed.

In the meantime, at the time of inspections, it was documented that two (Hunts Bay and Greater Portmore) of the three lock-ups held prisoners above their gazetted capacity, the majority of which were remandees.

“We recommended that the Station Commanders put measures in place to address this issue as well as report and follow-up with the Area Commander and Detention and Courts regarding the relocation of excess prisoners in custody,” Mr. Beaumont stressed.

The Police Civilian Oversight Authority (PCOA) recently celebrated more than a decade of impactful partnership with the Detention and Courts Division (DCD) of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), hosting a special appreciation ceremony during a DCD Tasking Meeting at their downtown Kingston offices.

The DCD is tasked with the critical responsibility of managing and adminis-



PCOA Team pose with Detention and Courts staff after presenting certifications of appreciation.



Senior Director, Inspection and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont (left) presents appreciation plaque to Head of Detention and Courts, Supt. Arlene Palmer.

tering police lock-ups across the island, playing a vital role in maintaining safety, order, and professionalism within the JCF.

"This appreciation ceremony grew out of a need to highlight the significant role the division played in our recent Area 5 'Transforming Our Police Service' (TOPS) Competition last year. Various personnel from the division accompanied us during our lock-up inspections across Area 5," revealed Andrew Beaumont, Senior Director of Inspection and Monitoring. He noted that the PCOA has long valued its sustained partnership with the division.

More than 40 DCD staff members were recognized and awarded for their dedication

and commitment to excellence, including the Commanding Officer of the division, Superintendent Arlene Palmer.

The robust partnership between the PCOA and the Detention and Courts Division dates back to 2013.

"We began by sharing our inspection reports with them, but formal collaboration on actual inspections didn't materialize until 2016, under the leadership of the late Superintendent Leon Clunie, starting with a joint visit to Trelawny," Senior Director Beaumont recalled.

He further noted that after a brief lull starting in February 2020, momentum was revitalized.

"A few years ago, we wrote to Superintendent Narda Simms, then-Commanding Officer of Detention and Courts, about resuming joint inspections and information sharing. The rest is history. Upon her transfer, her Administration Officer, Superintendent Arlene Palmer, took over the reins and seamlessly continued the partnership, steadfastly collaborating with us across multiple areas," he further explained.

For Supt. Arlene Palmer, her division deeply values its alliance with the PCOA and, by extension, the citizens of Jamaica. Speaking in an interview with the **PCOA Monitor**, Supt. Palmer expressed her desire to see these professional bonds grow even stronger to make Jamaica a safer place to live, work, and raise families.

"The Detention and Courts Division is an active participant in the transformation of the JCF," Supt. Palmer stated. "Our Police Commissioner, Dr. Kevin Blake, has indicated that we will be strengthening bonds for 2026. All personnel at Detention and Courts will be a part of that effort—working closely with oversight teams and directly with the people of Jamaica," she added. The partnership between the PCOA and the DCD continues to strengthen.

PCOA representatives regularly attend DCD annual conferences, conduct specialized training, and participate in joint lock-up inspections, including the recent assessment of nine lock-ups across Area 3 and currently, the Area 5 TOPS Re-inspection. "True police transformation isn't done in isolation. It is partnerships like the one we have with DCD that reflects mutual respect, shared accountability and joint commitment, which allows transformation to thrive," said Senior Director Beaumont.

PCOA CEO Attains NACOLE Certification

PCOA CEO Otarah Byfield-Nugent was officially awarded the Certified Practitioner of Oversight (CPO) designation by the US based National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) during the quarter.

Byfield-Nugent became the first PCOA CEO in history to earn this designation. This also brings the total to four - Nichelle Duncan, Manager, Inspection and Monitoring (IM); Sheldon Clarke, Legal Counsel, and Toni-Ann Baker, IM Officer - the number of staff successfully completing the requirements for the designation. According to the PCOA CEO, the attainment of the CPO designation by multiple team members underscored the PCOA's commitment to ensuring that its monitoring and investigative processes meet international bench-



A proud PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent poses with her NACOLE designation certificate.

marks.

"By investing in specialized training, the Authority continues to strengthen its capacity to provide robust, independent oversight of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)," she said. She further added, "The expansion of certified practitioners within our team ensures that we are not just observing, but leading with expertise."

The requirements for the CPO Credential programme falls within a three year period and includes

earning a minimum of 45 credit hours, attending two annual NACOLE conferences and completing assigned readings. The PCOA has the distinction of producing the first person outside the United States to earn the CPO designation in 2011, as well as the first woman outside the U.S. to do so. NACOLE was established in 1995.

PCOA Team Undertakes Refresher Course in Records Management

In preparation for an upcoming thematic inspection of the Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse (CISOCA), the Inspection and Monitoring Unit of the PCOA has successfully completed intensive training in records management.

The targeted training was specifically designed to sharpen the team's capacity to audit records with emphasis on the Exhibit Register, which is linked to the preservation of physical evidence in a case.

Speaking with the **PCOA Monitor**, Senior Director, Inspection and Monitoring, underscored the strategic necessity of the training, noting that the sensitive nature of CISOCA's work demanded the highest standards of accountability. "Although we had the policies in regards to the case management system, I felt that the team needed to brush up on the Exhibit Register because a lot of what CISOCA does involves using the Exhibit Register, especially biological exhibits,"



Canine Division Head, DSP Iver Calder (clockwise second left) facilitated a refresher course in records management for the Inspection and Monitoring Unit at PCOA Offices.

Mr. Beaumont explained. "I felt it necessary that the team should be updated and trained and have further knowledge on how exhibits should be kept and how the information should be recorded."

To ensure the highest calibre of instruction, the PCOA engaged DSP Iver Calder, Head of the Canine Division and a veteran law enforcement officer with extensive experience in auditing having served at the JCF's Inspectorate and Professional Standards Oversight Bureau. (IPROB).

"DSP Calder worked at IPROB for a number of years, which does auditing just like we do, so she has a vast amount of knowledge in this area that she was able to share with us. We are very thankful that she came and conducted this training," he added.



Inspection and Monitoring Manager, Nichelle Duncan (left) presents a token of appreciation to DSP Iver Calder, facilitator for the record management training.

PCOA Checks on Linstead Station

The PCOA Team paid a visit to the Linstead Station in the St. Catherine North Division. The objective of the visit was to verify the implementation of a specific record storage recommendation arising from an inspection for Area 5 TOPS Competition in 2025.

The team found that the recommendation was successfully implemented and the records stored properly and securely.

The team also used the opportunity to inspect the temporary accommodations currently being used by police personnel. The Linstead Station has been undergoing extensive renovations since 2024 and the PCOA was pleased to note that the physical infrastructure upgrades were at least 85% completed.



PCOA CEO, Otarah Byfield-Nugent (right) and Senior Director, Inspection and Monitoring, Andrew Beaumont (second left) in conversation with Zone 2 Commander for St. Catherine North Division DSP. Marcia Blake (left) and Cpl. Devon Jackson at the Linstead Station in the St. Catherine North Division.

PHOTO OF THE QUARTER



To the victors go the spoils! A team from Brown's Hall Police Station, winners of the Area 5 Top Station title, enjoyed a celebratory trip to the Worthy Park Rum Tour on March 8 as part of their many prizes. The station outperformed 38 station in the 2025 Area 5 Transforming Our Police Service (TOPS) Competition. Special thanks to our sponsor, Worthy Park Estate, for making this event happen.

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