

MINISTRY PAPER No.: _____

**PERFORMANCE OF THE ELECTRICITY DIVISION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR
2005/2006 AND FOCUS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/2007**

1.0 Purpose of Ministry Paper

The purpose of this document is to inform Parliament and the public about the performance of the Electricity Division for the 2005/2006 Financial Year and its focus for the 2006/2007 Financial Year.

2.0 Mission

The mission of the Electricity Division is:

- (a) to ensure that electrical installations island-wide are safe and are consistent with the Jamaica Electricity Regulations; and
- (b) to educate the public on the importance of having its electrical installations inspected and certified and to monitor electrical installation practices with the aim of preventing loss of life and property as a result of electrical accidents.

3.0 Background

Established in 1956, the Electricity Division is responsible for the electrical inspection of electrical installations throughout the island in accordance with the Electric Lighting Law.

The Electricity Division operates four (4) offices across the island to ensure maximum and timely access to customers. The offices are located in Kingston (head office), St. Ann, St. James and Manchester.

4.0 Objectives

The main objective of the Division is to ensure the practical safeguarding of persons and property (buildings and their contents) from hazards arising from the use of electricity. The objectives of the Division are accomplished by an orderly system of inspections, tests, and certification of electrical installations, thereby ensuring that the essential provisions considered necessary for safety are satisfied in accordance with the regulations and the Electric Lighting Law. When these criteria are met, certificates

of fitness are issued to the supplying authority (Jamaica Public Service Co.) by the Electricity Division, also called the Government Electrical Inspectorate (G.E.I.) attesting to the safety of the installation and its adherence to the governing standards. The Chief Electrical Inspector is the sole arbiter on all electrical matters on which the regulations are silent.

Only installations for which certification has been issued by the GEI may be connected to the (JPSCO.) grid.

5.0 Functions

- (i) to ensure that all electrical installations constructed in Jamaica comply with the Electric Lighting Law and the related Regulations so that electrical systems can provide light and power without hazard to life and property;
- (ii) to physically inspect all new installations (industrial, commercial, and domestic) and certify them before they are connected to the JPSCO.'s grid;
- (iii) to carry out periodic checks of old installations, including transmission and distribution lines, and substations, and recommend modifications and necessary improvements;
- (iv) to inspect and to certify new installations of the JPSCO.'s electrical system (transmission and distribution) and the Rural Electrification Programme (REP);
- (v) to process, comment on, and approve all electrical designs that are submitted by consultants, contractors, developers and consumers;
- (vi) to investigate accidents relating to electricity and to prepare reports to improve the safety of installations involved;
- (vii) to provide technical information to consultants, architects, electrical engineers, local and foreign contractors, police officials and the general public;
- (viii) to monitor the performance of all Licensed Electricians and advise the Board of Examiners accordingly; and
- (ix) to meet with members of Technical Committees of the Board of Examiners and Bureau of Standards, Jamaica, to discuss, materials, equipment and the preparation of new specifications.

6.0 Achievements for Financial Year 2005/2006

6.1 Main Achievements

During the period under review, a total of twenty eight thousand (28,000) applications were received, of which twenty five thousand four hundred and thirty (25,430) were inspected. Twenty thousand eight hundred and fifteen (20,815) or 81.86% were granted certification and four thousand six hundred and fifteen (4,615) or 18.14% were rejected.

6.2 Approved Budget

A total of \$36.945 M was approved for the Division's budget for the 2005/2006 Financial Year. Of this amount \$21.61M was for emoluments. The balance of approximately \$15.335M was to cover all other costs, including travelling and subsistence allowances and rental of offices at the four (4) locations island-wide.

6.3 Service Fees

The Division earned \$12.14 M in service fees during the 2005/2006 Financial Year.

7.0 Main Programmes for 2006/2007 Financial Year

The target is thirty thousand (30,000) inspections for the Financial Year.

The overall aim for the 2006/2007 Financial Year is to continue to create a better public image for the Division, price service on a cost-recovery basis, provide quality customer service and generally operate in a more efficient and effective manner. To achieve this, there are a number of programmes which the Division plans to implement over the course of the year. The main ones are as follows:

- ❑ Increase in number of inspections
- ❑ Networking of the Division
- ❑ Developing the human resources in the industry through training
- ❑ Influencing a change in the legislation to introduce a re-inspection policy
- ❑ Price user fee for service based on cost-recovery principle
- ❑ Implement a public awareness programme

(a) Increase in Number of Inspections

This will be achieved by increasing efficiency and ensure that all posts are filled so that waiting time can be kept within acceptable limits.

(b) Networking of Offices

The Financial Year 2006/2007 should mark the beginning of a new era for the Electricity Division. The objective is to network the offices of the Division so that a single database exists to facilitate the submission of requests from any office of the Division, irrespective of the location of the installation island-wide. This will enable improved management of personnel and streamlining of operation.

(c) Development of the Human Resources of the Industry

Emphasis will be on developing the human resources of the industry, both internal and external. A number of training courses have been identified and the Division intends to participate in some. Additionally, the Division will explore the feasibility of supporting the training of technicians to increase the pool of expertise available in the market. By increasing the number of technicians in the market, it is envisaged that more competitive rates will be available to the public. Also, processing time should reduce and general quality of service should improve.

(d) Legislative Changes

All electrical installations deteriorate with the passage of time, with the consequence of becoming hazardous. In order to restore these installations to their initial safe condition, re-inspection is first necessary. Thus the Division recommends mandatory re-inspection of these installations on their seventh (7th) anniversary. In order to enforce this, a change will have to be made in the legislation to allow for such actions to be taken. This matter will be pursued.

(e) Rate increase

Inspection fees have not been increased for approximately thirteen (13) years and the fees currently charged are significantly below the cost of providing the service. A review has been done and this matter will be pursued during the financial year. The Ministry is also exploring the feasibility of removing the Division from the budget and for it to be funded from service fees. This will relieve the pressure on the Consolidated Fund and will enable the Division to improve its quality of service to the public.

(f) Public Awareness

Stimulating public awareness on the safe use of electricity and also the role that the Division plays in ensuring safe installations will also be high on the Division's agenda for the 2006/2007 Financial Year. The usual meetings with licensed electricians throughout the island should continue to afford the Division the opportunity to highlight the governing electrical code/law and also to impress upon practicing electricians, the importance of adhering to safety measures. The printed and electronic media will be utilized more this Financial Year.

The Division has been reasonably effective in carrying out its mandate of protecting life and property from hazards associated with misuse in the transmission/distribution of electrical energy. The Division needs to modernize its instruments and improve its public awareness. In celebrating its fiftieth (50th) anniversary this year, the Electricity Division will seek to address its public awareness campaign regarding electricity safety.

8.0 Budget for Financial Year 2006/2007

The revised estimate for the 2005/2006 Financial Year was \$39.4 M while the proposed budget for the 2006/2007 Financial Year is \$48.3M

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