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MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE CONTRACTOR-GENERAL REPORTS SUCCESS IN APPLICATION OF ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY – 7 DELINQUENT PUBLIC BODIES REPORTED TO DPP

Kingston, November 27, 2007 – The Office of the Contractor General (OCG) is today announcing success in the application of its Zero Tolerance Policy.

The Policy, which was implemented one year ago to combat the refusal by Public Bodies to comply with the requisitions of the OCG, has produced an unprecedented compliance rate of 96% in terms of Public Bodies which now submit their Quarterly Contract Award (QCA) Reports to the OCG on time. The compliance rate which existed before the Policy was introduced was 13%.

Of the 191 Public Bodies which were requisitioned by the OCG in 2006 to submit a 2006 3rd Quarter QCA Report on or before the prescribed deadline date of October 31, 2006, as many as 166 ignored the requisition. However, in respect of the same quarter in 2007, the number of delinquent Public Bodies has fallen dramatically to seven (7).

“This proves that even where there is a systemic refusal to conform with the law, discipline can still be restored once there is a willingness to enforce the Rule of Law”, Contractor General, Greg Christie, said.

Since the introduction of its Zero Tolerance Policy in November 2006, the OCG has strictly enforced the provisions of Section 29 of the 1983 Contractor General Act which makes it a criminal offence for a person to fail to comply with a lawful requisition of a Contractor General.



The OCG has so far, during 2007, made 95 formal referrals to the Director of Public Prosecutions, covering 68 delinquent Public Bodies who have breached the law.

The names of the seven (7) most recent delinquent Public Bodies which have failed to submit their 2007 3rd Quarter QCA Reports, to the OCG, on or before the October 31, 2007 deadline, are listed below. They were formally referred today, by the OCG, to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

1. College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE)
2. G.C. Foster College of Physical Education (REPEAT DELINQUENT OFFENDER)
3. Golden Age Home
4. Hanover Parish Council
5. Ministry of National Security
6. National Environmental and Planning Agency (NEPA)
7. National Road Operating and Construction Company (NROCC)

QCA Reports are required to be filed with the OCG, in arrears, within one month after the ending of each quarter. The QCA Report regime was conceived and initiated in May 2006 by the Contractor General to assure probity and transparency in the Government contract award process. QCA Reports are specially structured to force the disclosure of the material particulars of certain contracts which have been awarded by Public Bodies. They are also designed to disclose whether and to what extent a Procuring Public Body has breached the Government's Procurement Procedures and Guidelines.

Because QCA Reports are required to be filed after, and not before, the contracts are awarded, the QCA Regime does not create a 'bottle-neck' in the procurement process nor does it extend the time which it would otherwise take for a Public Body to award a Government contract.

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