

# Report

## Physical Condition of Retrofitted Children's Detention Facilities Islandwide

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### *Overview*

The Building Projects and Equipment Branch of the Ministry of National Security (MNS) was tasked to carry out an islandwide inspection of the children detention facilities, and to make recommendations where necessary.

The facilities were inspected and an assessment of each building was done. The defects were similar in all the facilities: faded painting, doors covered with metal sheet and leaking roofs.

The preliminary estimates to carry out the repairs is approximately Seventeen Million Dollars (\$17.0M) and can be effected in approximately four (4) weeks, provided that the works are carried out concurrently at each facility.

There are three cells in each facility; two of the three cells are fitted with two bunk beds while the third cell has accommodation for a single bed. The beds are constructed of concrete and some are without mattresses.

### *Background*

An Inter-Ministerial Working Group was established in September 2012 by the then Ministry of Youth and Culture. The primary purpose of the Working Group was to examine the issues and challenges that affect children within the care of the State.

A significant focus of the Committee was to provide a solution for the separation of juveniles who come in conflict with the law from adults in police lock-ups. In this regard a programme was developed to establish self-contained child friendly holding units to accommodate such children. Thirteen (13) units were to be established in strategic locations across the fourteen parishes with Kingston and St. Andrew operating as one facility. The Jamaica Emergency Employment Programme (JEEP) was identified as the source of funding and the facilities were constructed by the National Works Agency (NWA).

The plan was to retrofit/construct the units in phases. Four (4) were to be completed in the first phase namely Bridgeport in St. Catherine, Barrett Town in St. James, Moneague in St. Ann and Nain in St. Elizabeth. By 2015 all facilities were handed over to the Jamaica Constabulary Force except for Nain.

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Following the handing over of the facilities, a walk through was conducted which revealed that the buildings were not as safe and secure as they appeared. Several defects were observed that were described as "potential" safety hazards as well as unfinished works.

Discussions were held with the contractors (NWA and JEEP) who gave assurance that the matters would have been addressed in short order. However, as at September 27, 2017, only one station (Bridgeport) toilet facility was reconfigured, the others have not been addressed and the newly constructed structures were left to deteriorate.

### *Update*

#### *Inspection of Facilities*

During the inspection, the MNS representative was accompanied by JCF personnel. Several defects were identified with the physical structure as well as the amenities of the facilities. There were discussions regarding the faults; and recommendations were made as to how to address same so that the facilities could be operationalized. During the inspection, no children were seen occupying the facilities.

#### *Locations*

The facilities are located accordingly;

- i. Barrett Town – St. James
- ii. Nain – St. Elizabeth
- iii. Moneague – St. Ann
- iv. Bridgeport – St. Catherine

#### *Condition of Facilities*

The general conditions of the four (4) facilities are similar. They were constructed from a prototype plan; hence the defects are the same (See photographs showing defects at Annex A). Defects observed with the physical structure and amenities of the facilities are as follows:

##### **Physical Structure**

- i. There were signs of paint flaking from the walls
- ii. The roofs leak profusely, especially at Moneague
- iii. Ventilation openings are too small
- iv. Doors are covered by steel plate
- v. Fire hose reel is inappropriately placed in the space allotted for the children
- vi. Some top bunk beds are without rails
- vii. Sharp edges observed throughout the facilities

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### (a) Amenities

- i. Each cell has the penal institution lavatory basin and water closet (combo toilet) facility
- ii. The combo toilet does not work in any of the stations visited
- iii. Some smoke detectors seen but the numbers are inadequate
- iv. Installed fire extinguishers are not regularly serviced
- v. Some mattresses were seen without covers and others were in poor condition
- vi. All are equipped with CCTV camera
- vii. Recreation areas lack lighting

In light of the above defects, the facilities are not being used as they are not suitable for accommodation.

### *Scope of Work*

- a. Remove sheet metal on doors
- b. Construct meeting room for privacy
- c. Repair leaking roofs
- d. Install awning over expanding metal
- e. Repaint all walls
- f. Install additional lighting
- g. Install covering to lighting
- h. Repair damage solar panel

### *Estimated Cost*

The estimated cost of the repairs is approximately \$17.0m.

### *Duration*

The project should take approximately four (4) weeks to be completed if done concurrently in each facility.

### *Recommendations*

Based on the scope of works to be effected the following recommendations are necessary in addition to those recommended for specialized defects as outlined at Annex B.

- That the repairs be done as a matter of urgency
- The existing bathroom fixtures be replaced with standard residential type
- That representatives from the JCF's Property Management and Detention and Courts Divisions visit the sites on a regular basis while the repairs are being carried out
- The MNS to assist in the monitoring of the repairs.

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### ***Conclusion***

The detention facilities for children can be repaired at a cost of approximately **\$17.0m**, and will take approximately four (4) weeks if work is carried out concurrently at all facilities.

The repairs, when completed will enhance living conditions for the children and will also enhance working condition for members of the JCF working with the children.

The Ministry of National Security having acknowledged the need for remedial works to the existing facilities has made provisions for same to be conducted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 2017/2018 Financial Year.

It is also the intention of the Ministry to assist with the monitoring and supervision of the repairs upon commencement of the work. It is noteworthy that the non-operationalization of these facilities has resulted in children being housed in non-designated child friendly spaces across the island.