

# E – NEWS

## Access to Information

Winter Edition

Volume 5



THE  
CARTER CENTER



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### ACCESS TO INFORMATION, THE ARCHIVES AND RECORD KEEPING

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Welcome to Volume 5 of the Access to Information E-News with focus on Access to Information, the Jamaica Archives and Record-Keeping. The objective of *E-NEWS* is to create a forum for the exchange of information and ideas about Jamaica's Access to Information Act and to provide an opportunity to focus on specific issues, themes, and news relating to the public's "Right to Know." We hope that through the distribution of *E-NEWS* we can raise awareness of the Access to Information Act in Jamaica and encourage people to use this new right.

The Jamaica Archives and Records Department, Office of the Prime Minister has assisted in the preparation of Volume 5 of this *E-NEWS*. In this volume, there is a discussion of the important role of record keeping in the fulfilment of the objectives of the Access to Information Act and the importance of the Jamaica Archives.

#### In this edition you will find articles on:

- The Archives and Access to Information Act in Jamaica
- The Archives Act: - Is it time for amendment?
- The impact of the Access to Information Act on Records Management in Jamaica
- The Changing Landscape of Records and Information Management in Jamaica
- Recent and upcoming events
- Quote of the month on the right to know

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## The Archives and Access to Information Act in Jamaica

By John Aarons, Government Archivist, Jamaica Archives and Records Department.

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What is the connection you may ask between the Jamaica Archives, which preserves materials of historical value for posterity, and the access to information programme which is concerned with making available to the general public documents of current value? The connection is very close, so much so that in 2002 when the Access to Information Unit was established, it was placed within the Jamaica Archives & Records Department, a department of the Office of the Prime Minister.

There is of course an obvious connection between the two, in that records produced today become the archives of tomorrow, so the Archives would have an interest in any developments affecting government records or “documents” as they are defined in the ATI Act. However the connection goes deeper than mere ‘interest’, as the Jamaica Archives has been involved in the process since the beginning. The Government Archivist was in fact a member of the Wells Committee, which was established in 1995 to consider the components of a freedom of information law. When the decision was taken to proceed with the legislation, the Jamaica Archives in Ministry Paper # 43 of November 1998 Proposals for Access to Information Act was given responsibility to guide ministries and departments in preparing for the Act.

Why was the Jamaica Archives so heavily involved? The answer is simple, as the Government recognized very early that the effectiveness of the legislation depended on the availability and accessibility of records. Under the Archives Act of 1982, the Jamaica Archives and Records Department is responsible for advising government entities on the organization and protection of their records, so the Department had a vital stake in the legislation. At the time the Department through the Government Records Centre was promoting the concept of records management and it quickly realized that the pending new law could provide the necessary incentive for government entities to treat the subject of records management seriously. The Archives therefore under Ms Elizabeth Williams, the then Government Archivist, seized the opportunity it was given.

The Department began organizing workshops in records management and in freedom of information as the law was then called. The first workshop was held in 1996 at the Ministry of Finance and interestingly enough, I was one of the presenters in my then capacity as Director of the National Library of Jamaica. The Department through the Archives Advisory Committee, made representations to the Government for the appointment of records and information managers in government entities as part of a career path for records management personnel. The success of this ‘campaign’ can be seen from the fact that in 1996 there was only one (1) Records Manager (at the Ministry of Finance) and now all sixteen ministries (including the Cabinet Office) have records and information managers.

The Access to Information programme has been of great benefit to the Archives, as it has focused attention on the value and importance of records. In the area of records management the Department has made great strides in the past three (3) years chiefly as a result of the realization by government entities that they were woefully unprepared for the Act as far as the organization of their records were concerned. The growth in attendance at meetings of the Government Records and Information Managers Network, (G-RIM) which the Department initiated in 1997 to assist in the development of proper records and information management practices throughout the public sector attests to this growing emphasis on records management. From an attendance of fewer than 10 persons in the late 1990’s, over 30 persons now attend the monthly meetings of this voluntary network, which comprises records and information managers from ministries, departments and other entities in the public sector,

The challenge for the Archives now that the ‘novelty’ of the ATI Act has passed and the number of requests in some government entities is less than anticipated, is to try and ensure that the high level of commitment many government entities made to records management continues and that the unglamorous work of evaluating and listing the files etc.

continues. It is hoped that through these exercises, records of no further value will be identified for disposal and those of long term historic value will be identified for transfer to the Archives Unit of the Department in Spanish Town for permanent preservation.

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### The Archives Act:- Is it time for amendment?

By Carole Excell , The Carter Center and Hazel Edwards Carter Center, Legal Intern

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The need to create a unified legal framework within which the public has a right to information is still a challenge within Jamaica today. Existing legislation has to be reconciled with the new regime provided under the Access to Information Act which creates a right for members of the public to access official documents held by Government Authorities. Legislation governing archiving is a critical piece of the framework that governs the right to information. Without proper defined processes for records creation and management, there will be no records to release under access to information regimes. Archive legislation often predates concepts of a general right of access to official records of the States subject to limited qualified exemptions. Archive legislation often regulates access to documents of historical importance and governs the preservation of the history of a country and its decision-making. Archive legislation also may create rules on the culture and practice governing retention and release of documents to the public over time. It is important that the dual regimes complement each other to ensure a unified approach to openness.

An Archive may be defined as a place or collection containing records, documents, or other materials of historical interest. The functions of archives are to create a framework for preservation of historical documentation and promote access to a wide cross section of documentation in bulk in a manner that allows broad access to documents held within. Archives are usually characterized by their pro-active approach to the grant of information and their allowance for a wide range of browsing for information with the help of staff and research assistance. The essence of the creation of Archives is that there should be provided access to the public record without restrictions to access by way of cost or expansive determinations on exempt material. Archives should provide a multiplicity of approaches to obtain access to a variety of different types of documentation and there should be clear guidance given on the types and forms of such documentation held, in an environment, which promotes and facilitates the use of the information. Restricted records have to be clearly defined and methods employed to ensure there is not destruction, alteration or removal of documentation while still preserving means for reproduction in accordance with legal requirements.

The structure of Archive legislation may vary, but experience has demonstrated that countries should consider the following issues in ensuring a more unified approach to Archive and Access to Information Legislation: -

- a. Whether to retain two different regimes, a special access regime for historical records and another for all other Government records?
- b. How to preserve the public's right to information of historical value?
- c. How the Archives should release previously exempt records and the time period by which records should be released (both subject to exemptions and without exemptions)?
- d. Whether to include a right of appeal of a decision not to release historical documents within Archive Legislation.
- e. How to incorporate within Archive Legislation the new role of any department responsible for archiving once an Access to Information Act has been promulgated?

The Archives Act establishes a “special access regime” in that it regulates and manages access to a narrow class of

materials. All official records no longer in current use and which have been adjudged by the Archives Advisory Committee as being worthy of permanent preservation for reference or historical purposes are preserved in the Jamaica Archives. Additionally, the Minister may, by order, direct that official records deposited in any place or custody shall be under the charge and control of the Archivist. Access to documents in the Jamaica Archives is determined by reference to a centralized existing archival database, rather than in response to a particular request. Public reading rooms are provided and, unlike under the ATI where request must target particular documents, research may be undertaken at a general level by “browsing” or “fishing”. Further, public access is a core function supported with dedicated research tools, staffing and provision of information, which has reached a pre-determined age.

There are some incompatibilities within the Jamaican Access to Information Act and the Archives Act, which should be considered, for amendment. The general rule under the Archives Act is that official records in the Jamaica Archives are not available for public inspection until thirty years after the date of their creation: Archives Act, s. 10(1). Section 6 (2) of the ATI states “The exemption of an official document or part thereof from disclosure *shall not apply after the document has been in existence for twenty years, or such shorter or longer period as the Minister may specify by order, subject to affirmative resolution*”. In light of the foregoing, there needs to be some consideration of amendment of the Archives Act to instead speak to a twenty-year period. While it is acknowledged that the Archives Act grants discretion to the relevant authority to authorize disclosure in respect of a specified document (or class of documents), prior to this period, effort should be made to limit reliance on the exercise of discretion. Governmental authorities are “trustees” of a nation’s official records as they generate these records for the use and benefit of the nation. Without this amendment, the “thirty year closed period” may operate so as to restrict access to documents that would otherwise have been accessible.

The Archives Act is also not consistent with the spirit of the Access to Information Act as it provides that where official records have been selected for preservation in the Jamaica Archives and it appears to the person in charge of such records that disclosure would amount to a breach of good faith on the part of the Government or person who acquired the record, then the record may be exempted from disclosure or disclosed on specified conditions. Presumably, this provision would apply in cases where no exemption under the ATI or any other enactments are applicable. However, the legislature has provided no guidance as to what would amount to a “breach of good faith” for the purposes of the Act. Additionally, in light of the exemptions under the ATI relating to confidential communications, this additional basis for restricting public access to documents is, at best, repetitive, or at worst, an unacceptable loophole.

Another important issue that is not defined in the Archives Act is the right of appeal of a decision to refuse access to any historical record. Currently the Archives Advisory Committee may make a decision whether a document may be accessible to the public in respect of any particular class of official records or any particular record in its care in a defined time period. It is suggested that the Archives Act needs to include a review procedure of decisions to refuse access and provision to govern the unjustified denial of access to public records akin to the right of internal review and appeal within the Access to Information Act. A right to information is not a right unless it can be enforced. Amendment of the Archives Act to allow a provision of appeal will ensure a right to Archival records.

In general, these recommendations allow for the reconciliation of inconsistencies between the **Archives Act** and the ATI, while facilitating the distinct object and purpose of the National Archives to provide the public with access to documents of historical significance. It is hoped that the legal regime governing access to official documents developed in Jamaica will firmly establish and secure to Jamaican citizens the right to access official records generated by their government agencies no matter the age of the document but on consistent provisions that balance competing interests of the preservation of the nation’s history and the right of the public to view historical decisions of Governments long past.

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## The Impact of the Access to Information Act on Records Management in Jamaica

by Helen Rumbolt, President Access to Information Association of Administrators

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The success of access to information (ATI) legislation is premised not only on a government's commitment towards disclosure but fundamentally on an effective records and information management programme. In bureaucratic cultures, a culture synonymous with the Jamaican government's, records are viewed to be the sole property of the organization and are privy only to a select group of civil servants who contribute to the transactions recorded on each file, or by virtue of their position, have access to the files on demand. These official records were not authorized to be used freely across the public authority. When the need arose for these recorded documents to cross the floor permission had to be granted. Prior to the passage of the Access To Information Act government records were deemed to be sacred, secret, confidential and territorial. There has been a gradual yet positive cultural change towards openness since the implementation of the Act in 2004.

The ATI Act legitimises the public's right to access official documents created and maintained by all government authorities. It is one of the boldest initiatives adopted by the Jamaican government to make government more transparent, publicly accountable and accessible to its populace and has created an environment to encourage and foster public participation. The Act has directly impacted records management in Government entities as demands on record-keeping practices have increased dramatically as a result of the ATI Act.

The Act itself relies heavily on a comprehensive records management programme in government along with the requisite professionals. This group of "access administrators" has come to realize and accept their role not only as the custodians for documented government information but also their obligation to guarantee and facilitate the public's right to know what government is doing or has done. As such the tenets of the Act have been willingly embraced and the administrative machinery powered to deliver good on the objectives of the Act. Administratively, the Act highlighted the need for changes in government's records keeping practices as it was recognized from the start that to become proficient at delivering ATI services to the public a good records management programme must be in place. A comprehensive and well-executed Records Management Programme is a strategic necessity in all government institutions. It is necessary in order to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to support core functions and provide the basis for effective and accountable administration.

### State of records management in government prior to ATI Act

Prior to the implementation of the ATI Act an over arching institutionalised records management programme was lacking within government. Records Centers (often referred to as registries) were disorganized. The incidences of files not being located in a timely manner occurred frequently. The practice of retaining all contributed to the congestion in the system. Dormant and obsolete records were shelved with current files, which further compounded the problem of timely retrieval. Procedural manuals were not revised to reflect the ongoing changes as they occurred. Policies, guidelines and systems changed to reflect the needs of the public authorities' records keeping efforts however, these invariably went undocumented thus leaving the public authorities to heavily rely on verbal/oral transfer of knowledge. Overtime these verbal instructions became distorted causing a breakdown of the established standards and procedures.

There was also a lot of distrust in the competence of the records officers to locate files on demand. Management of documented corporate activities was lacking or in most cases reduced to a clerical activity with no accountability of their stewardship. This gave rise to multiple storage locations throughout the organization and the proliferation of mini registries. Invariable the files kept in these locations were all not accounted for in the official system. Only the specific division or Unit to which these files relate were aware of their existence. The absence of an overarching records management policy assisted in perpetuating this practice. No sanctions were placed on officers' negligence with regards

to the loss or careless destruction of official records.

Other problems that plagued the records management activity in government were ignorance about the value of records management hence the low priority given to records. The lack of an overarching records management policy and standard for government, low visibility of the Jamaica Archives in this records management landscape, records systems within organizations were open and unsecured and the continued recruitment of untrained records officers all impacted smooth implementation of the Act.

### **Challenges to the implementation of the Act**

With the passage of the Act public authorities were mandated to institute effective records management programmes to ensure that information is retained as long as required and is readily accessible but also that the right information is being created in the first place in order to document accurately the decisions being made or transactions undertaken. The challenges posed were varied. The lack of qualified staff, adequate funding, poor physical infrastructures and the absence of a culture of good records keeping had impacted negatively on the development of good records management practices overtime and made implementation of the act that more challenging. The ATI Act which highlighting the inadequacies within the system, was also the catalysis that reenergized good records management practices in government. Its positive impact was reflected through the increased accountability of official records. It not only placed the emphasis on ensuring that information is retained as long as required and is readily accessible, but also that the right information is being created in the first place in order to document accurately the decisions being made or transactions undertaken.

The Act gave rise to a more structured and unified programme in government. The logical organization of records, standardization of systems and procedures, recognition and acceptance of the discipline of records management coupled with better records keeping practices became the main priority. This was not to say that no management controls did not existed in the past - far from it. But what had been lacking until now was a sense of a consistent, institutional wide approach to best practices not confined to individual departments, but spread across government. This leads us back to the issue of cultural change, which can only become entrenched through organizational wide involvement. Records committees were formed where senior officers were integrally a part of the planned changes to be undertaken in the organizations records keeping practices. ATI has significantly impacted organizational communication and its resultant outflow to the public. Sine ATI, publishing in government has been on the rise. Non-exempted official documents are posted on their Internet sites for the public to again access without the use of the Act. Improved interactions between records management staff and officers in the public authorities have also facilitated the sharing of documents that were hoarded to facilitate the process of disclosure and openness by participating in the discovery activities to satisfy information requests.

The ATI Act has also initiated and built stronger links within government records management community. The Government Records and Information Managers (G-RIM) Group and Access to Information Association of Administrators (ATIAA) were formed out of the response to the perceived demands on records management and the Act. The groups have used the combined strength and expertise of their members to promulgate best practices in the administration and deliver of documents under the Act.

### **Positive impact**

Administratively the Act has elevated record management to the importance and status it truly deserves within the organization and professionally. The recognition that ATI regime has brought with it can only be as good as the quality of the information to which it relates. Put simply, if there is no recorded information a government entity cannot provide access and without such documented evidence there can be no transparency, no accountability and therefore no participatory democratic governance. The more visible impact of the Act has been increased accountability for records.

The incidences of misplaced or lost documents have been minimized with structured records management programmes. The logical organization of records within the organization's holding, improved records keeping practices and standardization of systems and procedures have all contributed to the recognition and acceptance of the discipline of records management. ATI has significantly raised the level of awareness towards the importance of records management.

Capacity strengthening of records management programme in public authorities is as a result of the Act. Training needs have been identified and training conducted to equip staff with the requisite skills needed to administer the Act. In some instances records keeping activities have been computerized to increase efficiency in service delivery and the prospect of introducing compatible electronic systems for information resource sharing is closer becoming a reality. Other areas of capacity strengthening has been achieved through networking within the professional community and through the monitoring and advisory Unit established to ensure full implementation of the Act.

Other positive impacts have been changes to the organizational structure of the records department to reflect the work being undertaken and to attract more qualified staff. Through business process reengineering there has been an alignment with other information functions such as information technology and public relations. The Act has forced public authorities to make clear distinctions between official and unofficial records for access. Official documents are no longer territorial but freely shared as a corporate resource and a document for public perusal once non-exempt. Greater reliance on the dissemination of documents via the corporate Internet is fast becoming the preferred route to disclosure to lessen the workload brought on by the Act when information is not readily available in the public's domain. On the administrative side better storage facilities have been provided for records, there is greater emphasis on records retention and the assured longevity of archival records. There is greater compliance with legal retention requirements, faster retrieval of information in response to access requests, fewer lost or misfiled records and benchmarked service standards set for document delivery. Additionally more resources are being allocated to the information and documentation functions in government and it is now an established line item in the government's published budget.

### **Way Forward for RM in Jamaica**

The commitment of government to the entrenchment of the ATI Act is genuine and recognising that this cannot be accomplished without good records keeping practices has ensured the continued strengthening of the programme to fulfil their mandate to its citizenry.

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## **The Changing Landscape of Records and Information Management in Jamaica**

**By Rohan McCalla , Information Resources Manager - OPM**

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The implementation of the Access to Information Act 2002 in January 2004, continues to strengthen Records and Information Management programmes in government and quasi- government organizations in Jamaica. Even though the obvious deficiencies were noticeable before the passing and implementation of the Act, this legislation was the catalyst for a number of changes to the records management landscape.

Prior to the implementation of this piece of legislation, it was obvious that in order to be able to deal adequately with any request, finding the records would have been critical to the process. Being cognizant of this fact, the Jamaica Archives and Records Department (JARD), a department of the Office of the Prime Minister, was instrumental in stepping up assistance to Ministries, Agencies and Departments in streamlining the records management programmes in preparation for this critical piece of legislation.

Thanks to the staff of JARD, who have up until today, continued to ensure the improvement of Records Management systems across government organizations, through the giving of their expert guidance. This effort to strengthen the records management programmes is also strongly supported by the Government Records and Information

Management (G-RIM) Network. This Network comprises Records Management practitioners across government. The G-RIM Network serves as a forum where issues relating to Records and Information Management are discussed, experiences shared and solutions sought with the aim of implementing these measures throughout government entities to ensure standardization of procedures and reduction of costs.

In addition to the Access to Information Act, there have also been some other developments which have caused and will further caused significant changes in the Jamaican records management environment. One such development is the introduction of the world's first *International Records Management Standard, ISO 15489*. The International Organization for Standardization, a worldwide federation of national standards bodies based in Geneva has issued *ISO 15489-1 Information and Documentation-Records Management. Part 1: General* and the accompanying *Technical Report, ISO/PDTR 15489-2: Information and Documentation-Records Management. Part 2: Guidelines*. Part 1 of the standards prescribes technical guidelines for records keeping in all organizational settings and therefore provides guidelines for records practitioners throughout the world. Part 2 provides additional practice guidelines to the standards. So far, Jamaica has formed a Records Management Technical Committee and has adopted Part 1 of the standard. Part 2 will be adapted and introduced at a later time.

One other critical development in records management in Jamaica is the creation of competency standards for selected groups of Records Management practitioners. The National Council of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) is currently working on competency standards, which are aimed at certifying certain levels of persons working in the discipline of records management. The NCTVET is the body authorized to award the National Vocational Qualification of Jamaica (NVQ-J) Certificate of Competence. This move is intended to award certification to persons who have met national standards in records management and have successfully completed all the components of the examinations.

Also worthy to note, is that each year, the first week in the month of April is celebrated across the world as *International Records Management Week*. This year, Jamaican records management practitioners again observe this week with an number of activities; so look and listen out for some of these activities and help to change the landscape of Records Management in Jamaica and across the world.

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### Recent and Upcoming Events

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**Launch of Gleaner ATI Schools Competition:-** The Gleaner in association with the Access to Information Stakeholders Committee launched a competition on ATI within schools on September 29, 2005. Schools were invited to participate at the launch at Jamaica House. Senator the Honourable Burchell Whiteman, Minister of Information in the Office of the Prime Minister opened the competition and announced Governments commitment to the access to information regime. There were participants from schools form all over Jamaica and the teams are to be highlighted in editions of the Gleaners Youth link alongside their requests and the information they received from Government Agencies. For more information contact: [Terry.Wilson@gleanerjm.com](mailto:Terry.Wilson@gleanerjm.com)

**Atlanta Project Review Meeting:** - The Carter Center held a project review meeting from October 17-20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Atlanta at the Carter Center. The project review included three countries Jamaica, Nicaragua and Bolivia. The review meeting had as its objectives to: (1) Consider the design and effects of the Carter Center Access to Information Project as it serves to support government and civil society efforts (2) Consider the efforts of Government and civil society to establish an effective access to information regime, with a focus on methodologies used, measurement of impact and sustainability; and (3) To determine next steps. A Workshop Report is being produced and will be available from the Jamaica Field Office. Participants from Jamaica were: Mr. John Aarons, Government Archivist, Mrs. Joanne Archibald, Legal Officer Office of the Prime Minister, Dr. Carolyn Gomes, Executive Director Jamaicans for Justice and Mrs. Carole Excell, Carter Center Field Representative. It was a very successful meeting and ended with commitments from

both civil society and the government to continue to work together towards effective implementation of an access to information regime.

**Presentation on ATI to Northern Caribbean University:** A presentation was made to students at the Northern Caribbean University Communications Department on Access to Information and Investigative Journalism on October 13, 2005. Materials were produced and shared with each student on the use of the Access to Information Act and the basics of starting an investigative journalism project. The Access to Information Student Investigative Journalism Award was introduced to the students who were encouraged to participate.

**Access to Information Appeals:** The Access to Information Appeals Tribunal heard two appeals on October 10 & 11, 2005. Decisions were handed down for both cases on December 1, 2005.

### 1. **Susan Goffe v. Bank of Jamaica (BOJ).**

This Appeal was made in relation to a refusal of the following requests to BOJ:

(1) Copy of the Minutes of the Bank of Jamaica at which the decision was taken to purchase the Governor of the Bank of Jamaica's house at Bracknell Avenue and (2) copy of contracts entered into by BOJ in relation to the house at Bracknell. BOJ provided access to the contracts prior to the hearing and the only issue left was the grant of access to the Minutes.

The Tribunal decided that the Bank must deliver a copy of the relevant minutes to the applicant however the Bank is permitted to delete all the discussion and decisions relating to matters other than related to the section of the minutes on Administrative matters.

### 2. **Susan Goffe v. Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)**

This Appeal was made in relation to the refusal of the following request that was transferred to the OPM: To the Ministry of Finance and Planning for a copy of the accounts of final cost of government delegation to non-aligned conference in Malaysia 2003. The Tribunal found in favour of the Appellant and required that the OPM transfer portions of the request to other Government Ministries for them to fulfil. They found that the OPM could not argue that as there was no one document that fulfilled the request that they were not required to collate the documents relating to the request that were held by the Ministry.

The first 2 hearings of the Access to Information Tribunal were cases in which the Volunteer Attorney Panel Attorneys were involved.. The attorneys who appeared in these matters were Dr. Lloyd Barnett and Mr. Norman Davis (BOJ case) and Ms. Hilary Phillips Q.C. and Ms. Debbie Ann Gordon in (OPM case). The decisions and transcripts for these case are available from Mr. Damion Cox, ATI Tribunal Secretariat at the Office of the Prime Minister.

**Review of the ATI Act:** The ATI Act, at Section 38, requires that a Parliamentary Committee be appointed for the purposes of reviewing the Act not later than two years after the Appointed Day (Jan. 5, 2004). The Review commenced at the start of January and civil society; members of the public and public authorities have been allowed to prepare submissions to the Parliamentary Committee. It is critical that there is a body of experience created to support the review of the Act and that civil society participates in this review process. For more information on preparations for the Review please contact Jamaicans for Justice at 1 Grants Pen Road, Kingston 8, Telephone: 755-4524-6.

**Workshop with the Association of Local Government Authorities:** A workshop was held on January 31, 2006 with the Association of Local Government Authorities in conjunction with the Access to Information Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister to discuss access to information at the local level and the role of parish councils in the promotion of the right to information. A workshop report can be available from the Carter Center Offices at 1 Grants Pen Road, Kingston 8 in March 2006.

**Meeting of Civil Society and Access to Information Officers:-** A meeting was held with Access to Information officers and civil society on January 30, 2006 with civil society organisations and Access officers from Government Ministries and Agencies to discuss some of the issues that have arisen in implementation of the Act and suggestions for dialogue and communication on issues to ensure a better working relationship.

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### Quote of the month on the Right to Know

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"The archival records of Edinburgh are many things; unique, irreplaceable, trivial, priceless, fascinating, boring, copious, dirty, delicate, robust, leather bound, centuries old, yesterdays, published, unknown, significant and voluminous. Above all they are a hugely significant memory and resource of inestimable worth to Edinburgh, its inhabitants and its visitors". *Edinburgh City Archives*

"Any freedom of information legislation is only as good as the quality of the records to which it provides a right of access. Such rights are of limited use if reliable records are not created in the first place, if they cannot be found when needed, or if the arrangements for their eventual archiving or destruction are inadequate" s.61 Code of Practice on Records Management, Scotland.

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### ABOUT THE E-NEWSLETTER

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Volume 6 of the Access to Information Newsletter will focus on Enforcement of the Right to Know and we are happy to announce that the Independent Jamaica Council for Human Rights and the Jamaican Bar Association will assist in its production. We are looking for persons or groups interested in working on Volume 7. Please tell us if you want the newsletter to focus on a specific theme for the month, or if you wish to submit information or articles. We welcome your input, and any information you care to share with us about your special interests.

Jamaicans for Justice is considering the possibility of setting up a list serve for this E-newsletter please give us your views on this and whether you believe this would be beneficial to the work to create this.

If you do not want to receive this e-newsletter please e-mail Carole Excell at [cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com](mailto:cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com) or call her at 755-3641. Again, we apologize for any cross postings, and are currently working on a database of e-mails to avoid future duplications.

NOTE: Please note that the Carter Center reserve the right to edit the newsletter or articles or information submitted. The materials contained in this newsletter are provided for general information purposes only and are not necessarily the views of the Carter Center.

