



File Ref. no.: C2077

ATI Ref. #: 30/19

September 16, 2020

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Dear Jeanette Calder,

The Auditor General's Performance Report of 2019 outlined a few operational inefficiencies on procurement breaches and concerns at the MoEYI. The Ministry in its effort to address the matters has taken the following decisive actions:

Response to Question 1:

MoEYI's Effective Systems for the Management and Monitoring of Textbooks.

The MoEYI has improved its monitoring systems:

1. Training of Education Officers

The MoEYI through the Media Services Unit has commenced the training of Education Officers in the management and administration of educational resources at the school level. The Education Officers closely monitor the operations of schools including the utilization of educational resources. They function as Trainer of Trainers' for the Educational Resources Administrators' (ERAs) workshops.

The objectives of the workshops are:

- To sensitize participants about the various documents that are used in the management and administration of educational resources.
- To develop awareness among participants on the importance of maintaining accurate records for educational resources.

The workshop was divided into three sections:

- An Overview of the National Textbook Loan Scheme and the Roles and Responsibilities of stakeholders.

- Managing and Administering Educational Resources Part I.
- Managing and Administering Educational Resources Part II.

All Regions were represented at the workshops and all participants received an Educational Resources Management and Administration Quick Reference Handbook.

Kindly view separate attachment.

2. Development of the MoEYI Asset Management System

The Ministry has developed an Assets/Inventory Management System. This system will provide timely and accurate information to support management in decision making. The Database will track assets/resources from acquisition to retirement. The Asset/Inventory Management System supports and improves evidence-based and data-driven decision making.

Inventory management devices, such as barcode scanners and other similar technological devices along with the system, help to significantly improve efficiency and productivity. These devices also eliminate lengthy manual processes and improve the accuracy of inventory orders by keeping track of the resources that are currently available or ordered. It eliminates the need to do an inventory recount and help track and keep accurate records of the number of resources in stock.

Distribution

All textbooks that are purchased by the Ministry are delivered to the schools by the designated suppliers. These Suppliers return the delivery slips to the Ministry which are then used to make payments. The stamped delivery slips received from the schools are returned to the Ministry by the Suppliers confirming that the books have been distributed.

Following the delivery of textbooks, the schools are responsible for the distribution and use of the textbooks. The Media Services Unit has a protocol in place for the monitoring of all textbooks being used in the schools. This protocol involves visiting the schools to determine the use of the books that are provided by the Ministry. In instances where the books are not being used and are not needed, they are collected by the Ministry and sent to other schools.

Monitoring

The monitoring of instructional materials in schools is evidenced by:

- The auditing of schools' textbook management and administration system in a deliberate and focused manner. Schools which express critical shortages or those reflecting inflated requests, as well as non-reporting schools, are prioritized.



- Schools not within the named categories are audited systematically by Regions. Regional Offices assist in providing monitoring support and will alert for more technical inspection whenever necessary.
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Response to Question 2:

MoEYI's Compliance with the Procurement Handbook and Procurement Act regarding Contractors.

The MoEYI has ensured the following:

✓ **Meetings with Municipal Corporations**

Six meetings were led by the Permanent Secretary with the following municipal corporations:

- Kingston and St. Andrew
- Trelawny
- St. Ann
- St. Catherine
- St. Elizabeth
- Manchester

The purpose of the meetings was for clarity on how to acquire building permits for proposed and existing construction projects. An agreed Memorandum of Understanding was drafted solidifying partnership and compliance regarding the approval processes.

Meetings were held with other stakeholders such as the National Environmental Protection Agency, National Land Agency and the Jamaica Fire Brigade. These stakeholders guided the regulatory and approval processes for acquiring building permits.

Effective June 10, 2020, the MoEYI decentralized the management of all infrastructure projects and established seven (7) Regional Infrastructure Committees.

✓ **Establishment of Seven (7) Regional Infrastructural Committees**

The Role of the Regional Infrastructure Committees is to monitor the implementation of the infrastructure projects in the Regions. It is chaired by the Regional Directors whereby each Region has its own Infrastructural Committee.

The Committees will ensure that the budgetary allocations under the Capital and Recurrent Budgets are spent within the provision of the Procurement Act. The scope of the activities include:



Comprises the construction and expansion of classrooms and amenities, major electrical upgrading and construction of security fence under the Capital C Budget, as well as critical repairs and maintenance work. These may cover electrical systems, canteens, sanitary facilities, roofs, defective and replacement of doors and windows, as well as to carry out termite treatment under the Recurrent Budget.

Technical support will be provided by the Building Unit to the school project monitoring committee, ensuring that the projects are managed under the Service Level Agreement.

The Committee will be responsible for prioritizing the list of schools for financial support based on dire needs or emergency. The lists are then submitted to the office of the Director of Technical Services.

The Committee will also ensure that the budgetary allocation disbursed to each Region for capital and recurrent projects, is utilised as per the project plan and in adherence to the Procurement Act.

Members of the Infrastructural Committee include the following:

1. Regional Director (Chairman)
2. Regional Building Officer (Co-chairman)
3. Project Manager
4. Financial Controller
5. Budget Officer
6. Senior Education Officer (Secondary)
7. Senior Education Officer (Primary)

Note, the Project Manager is contracted by the National Education Trust and will provide comprehensive reports on the management of the Capital C Projects.

The Committee will be audited by the official MoEYI audit committee.

✓ **Development of a Quick Reference Guide for Building Construction and Maintenance**

The Quick Reference Guide provides a summary of the most crucial procurement procedures that must be executed in steps. It will quickly and easily provide team members with the vital information needed to perform the various tasks or to address any concerns they may have. The Quick Reference Guide articulates the following:

- ✓ Procurement under emergency and single-source works.
- ✓ Municipal corporation approval process to acquire building permits for proposed and existing buildings.
- ✓ Guidelines for developing project planning.

Kindly see Quick Reference Guide in a separate attachment.



Approval of Variation

Variation related or unrelated must be approved by a variation order before the work is executed.

- Project Managers shall approve 5% of the contract sum.
- The Regional Infrastructural Committee shall approve 5-10% of the contract sum.
- The Permanent Secretary shall approve 10-25% of the contract sum.

Submission of Quarterly Contract Awards (QCA) and Annual Public Sector Cost Overruns Variation Reports (APSCOVR) to the Integrity Commission.

The Regional Directors must submit within the specified timeline the QCA and APSCOVR to the MoEYI Procurement Director. They are collated, checked and submitted to the Permanent Secretary's Office for signing and submission to the Integrity Commission.

Best regards.