



ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING
30 NATIONAL HEROES CIRCLE, KINGSTON 4

ANY REPLY OR SUBSEQUENT REFERENCE
TO THIS COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE
ADDRESSED TO THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL
AND NOT TO ANY OFFICER BY NAME AND THE
FOLLOWING REFERENCE NUMBER QUOTED

Telephone No.: 876-922-8320-7
Email: info@treasury.gov.jm
Website: www.treasury.gov.jm

October 14, 2021

Georgia Love
Senior Researcher
Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal
7 Lady Musgrave Road,
Kingston 5,
Jamaica

Re: ATI Request from the Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal

Reference is made to your request for information under the Access to Information Act regarding documentation to substantiate actions taken by the Accountant General's Department to correct points 3.2.63 and 3.2.64 noted in the Auditor General's Department Annual Report for the 2019/2020 financial year.

The referenced excerpts from the above mentioned report reads:

3.2.63. The process of checking to ensure that pensioners are alive before continuing disbursing pension payments and removing deceased pensioners from the payroll remains ineffective. We found instances in which AcGD paid a total of \$1.8 million to 25 pensioners, for periods up to seven months, after the expiration of their life certificates and acknowledgement of their deaths.... In addition, we found that AcGD made pension payments of more than \$609 million to pensioners living overseas between 2012 and 2018, without verifying that the pensioners are alive. We found seven instances in which pensioners did not submit any life certificate for periods up to 17 years.

3.2.64. The Jamaican Missions made payments to pensioners living overseas, and AcGD reimbursed these payments monthly. However, we found that the AcGD routinely reimbursed the Missions without any verification to confirm the legitimacy of the payments. The matter was further exacerbated by the absence of formal procedural policies between the AcGD and the Missions to ensure the necessary verification that pensioners are alive.

The Accountant General takes this opportunity to formally respond and provide documentation to the Jamaica Accountability Meter Portal (JAMP) to substantiate the following:

The steps the AcGD has taken to routinely confirm the legitimacy of payments before providing reimbursements.

Effective May 2019, the Missions are required to submit physical Life Certificates along with reimbursement schedules to support their claim for a reimbursement of pension payments. These schedules are then matched to the Life Certificates by AGD Officers prior to the approval of reimbursements to the Missions. Samples of these Life Certificates along with reimbursement schedules were made available to the Auditor General's Department for inspection.

That a formal procedural policy between AcGD and Jamaican Missions has been instituted to verify pensioners' life status or steps have been taken to establish such a system.

Discussions are ongoing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MoFAFT) with respect to formalising an agreement between both parties for the payment of overseas pensioners by the MoFAFT on behalf of the AGD. The AGD has commenced plans to conduct an onsite process review of the pension payment mechanism at a Mission, with the aim of gathering information pertinent to our efforts to formalise an efficient system. The MoFAFT's New York (NY) Mission has been selected for this review, as the NY Mission serves approximately 70% of GOJ pensioners across the diaspora. This visit has, however, been delayed as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic; we however, continue to dialogue with officers at the Mission with a view to complete this activity.

Please see attached supporting documents.

For clarification on this matter or any other related matter, you may contact:

Ms. Kelsea Chambers

Actg. Director, Communication and Customer Relations

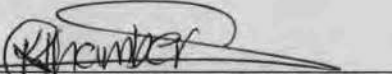
Email: kelsea.chambers@treasury.gov.jm

Contact: (876) 922-8320 Ext. 2283/CUG: (876) 832-0880

Other Email Contact:

- corporatecommunications@treasury.gov.jm

We regret the delay in providing you with a response and we thank you for your patience in this matter.


For Accountant General

ACCOUNTANT GENERAL DEPARTMENT