

## STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION POLICY

### 1. Policy Introduction

The Board of Directors of the Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) recognises the importance of maintaining a transparent, proactive and open process of engagement with all stakeholders. Effective communication is key to building the support, confidence and trust necessary for the PAJ to carry out its business. The Board firmly believes that trust between the PAJ and its stakeholders are a fundamental pillar of the organisation’s operations and this trust is built on effective communication and the willingness to engage in dialogue.

The PAJ has therefore developed a stakeholder communications policy that will provide structure and consistency to the dissemination of external information for the organisation while ensuring that management provides detailed procedures and strategies for addressing stakeholders’ concerns on a continual basis.<sup>1</sup> The Board, in accordance with its commitment to transparently communicate with all stakeholders, will communicate and interact with all stakeholders with integrity and responsibility. Stakeholders’ engagement is recognized as an essential tool for the practice of good corporate governance and this Stakeholder Communication *Policy*, (hereinafter referred to as “this Policy”) shall detail these communication principles.

### 2. Purpose

The PAJ is aware of its responsibility to engage all stakeholders by conveying appropriate and accurate information in a timely manner. Through the implementation of this Policy, the Board demonstrates the organisation’s commitment to engage in open, constructive and continuous dialogue with its external stakeholders ensuring equitable treatment and mutual respect for all. The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline a framework that will facilitate the provision and exchange of information and instructions, while allowing all stakeholders to be properly informed of developments and so enable the organization to function effectively.

### 3. Scope

The provisions of this Policy shall apply to all directors, officers and employees of the PAJ and its subsidiaries. The PAJ will take all reasonable steps to inform all its subsidiaries of the object of this Policy and will work with them to achieve full compliance with its provisions. Management is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy and other related guidelines and procedures.

#### 4. Definition of Stakeholders<sup>1</sup>

The PAJ has adopted the Consultation Code of Practice for the Public Sector definition of stakeholders.

They are defined as those persons who:

- Are to benefit from a proposed policy, plan or programme;
- Will be directly or indirectly affected by a proposed policy, plan or programme;
- Have interests that may be negatively affected by a particular policy, plan or programme; and
- Possess information, resources and expertise needed for strategy formulation and implementation related to a policy, programme or plan.

#### 5. Objectives of the Policy

The PAJ shall:

- a) Seek to keep dissemination of information from PAJ as centralised as possible;
- b) Ensure that each level of authority; that is, the Board and executive management is clear on their respective communication process and requirements;
- c) Allow the President/CEO (who holds overall responsibility for the consequences of all operational activities and performance) to be informed about the precise details of what is released to the media and, by extension, the public;
- d) Allow the PAJ's management, staff and partners with which it interacts to speak with one voice on all issues; and
- e) Maintain an appropriate relationship with all stakeholders

#### 6. Commitment and Approach

All directors, officers and employees of the PAJ and its subsidiaries will strive to adopt the communication principles outlined in this Policy and management will ensure these are incorporated into the organisation's daily activities. The Board will lead by example and will endeavour to integrate these principles into their decision-making process. This Policy is built on principles that reflect existing and emerging communication practices.

**The key principles supporting this policy are detailed below:**

##### A. Communicating with Stakeholders

The PAJ is intent on maintaining a good, professional working relationship with all its stakeholders, including the media, to facilitate public awareness and understanding of PAJ programmes and initiatives while delivering prompt, courteous and responsive communication services. The Board shall, therefore, ensure that clear established guidelines are in place to facilitate open, responsive and factual communication to all stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> Consultation Code of Practice for the Public Sector, January 2005

## **B. Promoting Good Stakeholder Relations**

The organisation will maintain timely and meaningful dialogue with all employees, stakeholders, customers and governmental agencies. The organisation will continue to build strong relations with its stakeholders by providing them with a range of opportunities and mediums through which they can express their interests and concerns. All parties will be dealt with honestly and fairly and the organisation will endeavour to maintain transparency and accountability in all its relations.

## **C. Promoting Effective Communication Practices**

The PAJ, in its communication, shall seek to be inclusive and promote equality while depicting the diversity of the Jamaican society. Information being disseminated shall be accurate, reliable and objective so as to maintain the integrity of the organisation. In support of this the PAJ shall:

- I. Establish specific guidelines and procedures for effective management of communication ensuring that good governance is a priority and effective outcomes are achieved. These shall be constantly improved and updated as required;
- II. Develop an **Annual Strategic Communication Plan** for Board approval. This plan will take into consideration the organizational reputational risk areas and required crisis and emergency responses;
- III. Effectively and timely communicate through multiple channels including maintaining a current website and social media presence to advance PAJ's position. Social media can provide real time to deliver messages directly and receive and answer questions and so forms a part of the PAJ's communication strategy. Management will develop clear guidelines and monitoring mechanisms for this medium to ensure structured and professional use of social media and no improper use. This will include the identification of a responsible Officer to monitor these activities;
- IV. Ensure that a responsible Officer has been identified to address all request received from the public under the Access to Information Act (2002). The PAJ will comply with these provisions and provide open, courteous, continuous on-going communication with the public;
- V. Routinely monitor and evaluate the degree to which operational practices comply with the policy and report to the Board quarterly in this regard; and
- VI. Educate, train and motivate our employees to conduct their activities in accordance with this policy.

## **7. PAJ Spokesperson**

The President/CEO is the primary chief spokesperson for all PAJ operational matters and will communicate with stakeholders as required and as prescribed by the Government of Jamaica Communications Policy (2015). The process of communicating with stakeholders is also detailed in the

Government of Jamaica Code of Consultation (2005). No other employee is allowed to speak with the media or other stakeholders about PAJ matters unless expressly approved by the President/CEO or his/her designate.

The Board will appoint the specific Board member to speak on PAJ strategic issues as required.

## **8. Review of Policy**

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every two years by the Corporate Governance Committee, or as regularly as is required, for the purpose of updating the Policy to reflect changes in best practices in the public sector and to enhance its effectiveness. Any amendments to the provisions of this Policy must be submitted to the Board for its consideration and approval.

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<sup>i</sup> Corporate Governance Framework for Public Bodies; Principle 18