



**PRESS RELEASE
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More Correctional Officers for the DCS

“Be honest, hold yourselves accountable, be transparent, be agents of change” is the charge by Courtney Williams, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, to the 107 new Correctional Officers who graduated from the Carl Rattray Staff College in St. Ann today (January 28).

The Permanent Secretary was speaking at the Passing Out Parade of the 80th intake of Correctional Officers for the Department of Correctional Services where 107 participants consisting of 10 females and 97 males graduated.

“You have successfully surpassed the obstacles of this highly physical training, which forms part of our efforts to build capacity among our security forces”, the Permanent Secretary said.

“This profession you have chosen”, he continued, **“is honourable and must be executed with alacrity, respect, honesty and dignity. These traits must be exuded in your interactions with everyone you meet, in both your personal and professional life as a correctional officer”**, the Permanent Secretary concluded.

In acknowledging the work the DCS has been doing to stem recidivism, he also pointed out that the Corrections (Amendment) Act, which was passed in December 2021, will aid to improve the operations of the Department, by creating a modern legal framework under which it will operate.

“It [the legislation] will update and strengthen existing operations and allow the implementation of modern technological advances”, he said. The amendments include the introduction of provisions, which prohibit access, use etc of electronic communication devices and computers by inmates, coupled with an increase in the fines and custodial sentences for breaching these provisions. The introduction of a regime for the confiscation, destruction and disposal of prohibited articles will be introduced soon, Mr. Williams said.

“The Ministry is working tirelessly to combat crime and violence through the implementation of new polices, legislation and mechanisms that are aimed at ridding the country of unwanted sources of violent behaviour in our society”, Mr. Williams explained.

He further pointed out that the DCS is in the final stages of procuring a state-of-the-art surveillance system that will allow full video coverage of its institutions.

“These technological equipment, will certainly enhance the work of the Department as it journeys to become the Caribbean’s centre of excellence in correctional management”, he added.

In his charge to the cohort, the Permanent Secretary emphasised the importance of their role in the rehabilitation process for wards and inmates.

“You will be tasked with helping to reform the lives of these individuals by helping with the process of reintegrating them into society as refined citizens” he added.

The Department of Correctional Services is a department of the Ministry of National Security and is responsible for securing inmates and wards of the state and facilitating their rehabilitation and reintegration in society as law-abiding citizens.

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