

Office of the Director of Public Affairs &
Communication
Email:
ministryofnationalecurity@mns.gov.jm
Phone: (876)754-0030 | (876)564-5925



Ministry of National
Security
NCB North Tower
2 Oxford Road
Kingston 5
Jamaica

**PRESS RELEASE
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Forensic Institute Eyes International Accreditation

The Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine (IFSLM) says its working to attain the ISO 17205 certification to promote confidence in its work locally and abroad and demonstrate to the public that it operates competently in generating valid results and analyses.

“The strategic investments being made by the government to improve the lab’s value proposition in the fight against crime plays a critical role in meeting international standards”, explained Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Zavia Mayne, who was speaking during his first tour of the Institute earlier today.

Minister Mayne, an attorney-at-law who also holds a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry, said **“during the course of the next 18 months, we will be working to execute an action plan that details a phased approach to improving the efficiency of IFSLM, which will gradually take us closer to international accreditation”**.

He noted that in January and at a cost of approximately \$20 million, the Ministry renovated the Ballistics Unit at the Kingston-based facility, to improve efficiency and meet international standards.

Meanwhile, head of the IFSLM, Dr. Judith Mowatt, said the Institute has been in consultation with National Accreditation Focal Point of Jamaica, which shared the 20 milestones that must be achieved in order for the Institute to be accredited.

Dr. Mowatt further explained that with a spend of \$29 million, the facility’s electrical system was also upgraded to include a new high capacity generator.

“These modifications fall under the category of Environment in the accreditation process and we will continue to work on all the milestones until we’ve checked off every last one”, vouched the Executive Director. She added that the Institute has been making significant progress in improving staff competence, equipment and methods.

With the Disabilities Act coming into effect on February 14, Dr. Mowatt pointed out that at a cost of approximately \$9 million, the Institute installed an elevator to accommodate disabled persons who need to access the upper floor of the Annex building.

In 2020, the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency received the ISO 9001 certification, which is also being pursued by the Jamaica Constabulary Force to improve its services management.

The ISO 17025 accreditation is specific to testing and calibration laboratories, and facilitates cooperation between laboratories and other bodies by fostering wider acceptance of results across countries. With this accreditation, test reports and certificates can be accepted from one country to another without the need for further testing, which, in turn, improves international trade and cross border investigations.

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