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1 December 2010

### JAM103641.E

Jamaica: Structure and hierarchy of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Both a Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) community police services manual and a study on Jamaica's security sector conducted by the Latin American School of Social Sciences (La Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, FLACSO), in Chile, indicate that the JCF has a hierarchical structure composed of eleven ranks ranging in order from top to bottom as follows: commissioner, deputy commissioner, assistant commissioner, senior superintendent, superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendent, inspector, sergeant, corporal and constable (Jamaica Jan. 2008, iv; FLACSO 2006, 16-17). *The Constabulary Force Act*, which outlines the structure and duties of the JCF, lists the same ranks but adds "acting corporal" between corporal and constable (Jamaica 2003, Art. 3, s2(b)). Article 3 of the Act states that the JCF "shall be partially under Military Organization and Discipline" and shall be composed of the following positions:

- a. a Commissioner who shall have the sole operational command and superintendence of the Force;
- b. such number of Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, Senior Superintendents, Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Inspectors, Sergeants, Corporals, Acting Corporals and Police Constables as the Minister may from time to time determine,

and the order of rank and command of the members of the Force shall, subject as aforesaid, be the order in which they are set forth. (Jamaica 2003, Art. 3, s2(a--b))

Several sources provide information on the structure of the JCF (US 11Mar. 2010, Sec. 1d ; Jamaica n.d.; JFJ 2007, 7). For example, the Jamaica Information Service (JIS), an agency of the Jamaican government, reports that specialized units of the JCF include the Homicide Squad, Fingerprint Bureau, Criminal Intelligence Division, Organised Crime Unit and Vice Unit, Fraud Squad, Flying Squad, Fatal Shooting Unit, National Firearm and Drug Intelligence Branch, Stolen Motor Vehicle Investigation Unit, Photographic Unit, Crime Statistics Unit, and Five Area Crime Officers (Jamaica n.d.). These units are reportedly supervised by area commanders or other officers (ibid.). The United States (US) Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009* indicates that the JCF has specialized divisions focusing on "community policing, special response, intelligence, and internal affairs" as well as an anti-corruption branch (US 11 Mar. 2010, Sec. 1d). According to the regional non-governmental

organization (NGO) Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ), the JCF's Professional Standards Branch, which is administered by an assistant commissioner, includes six divisions: Internal Affairs - Anti-Corruption; Internal Affairs - Complaints; Internal Affairs - Bureau of Special Investigations; Performance Auditing and Monitoring Bureau; Legal Affairs Department; and Corporate Planning, Research and Development (JFJ 2007, 7).

Sources report that the JCF falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Security (US 11 Mar. 2010, Sec. 1d; Jamaica n.d.), and that the minister provides direction to the commissioner (FLACSO 2006, 16). The commissioner, in turn, leads the JCF (US 11 Mar. 2010, Sec. 1d; FLACSO 2006, 16). A report by a panel of experts who undertook a strategic review of the JCF, at the request of the Ministry of National Security, explains that leadership in the police force centres on the commissioner of police and the "High Command," which is traditionally composed of the deputy and assistant commissioners (Jamaica 2008, 51). According to the strategic review panel, the commissioner and High Command lead by "giving orders" (ibid.). The panel describes the power structure of the JCF as "highly militaristic and hierarchical" (ibid., 53) and explains that the police force follows a "chain of command" whereby "the responsibility to maintain discipline follows the rank structure" (Jamaica 2007, 36).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

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#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International (AI), Europa World Plus, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Global Integrity, Human Rights Watch, Interpol, Office of the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Refworld, UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

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