TAX ADMINISTRATION REFORM
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
What is the current status of the legislation to reform the Tax Administration?
The amendments to the Revenue Administration Act (RAA) were passed by the House of Representatives on March 28 and by the Senate on April 1, 2011.

What are the effects of the amendments?
The dissolution of three (3) Tax Departments:
1. Taxpayer Audit and Assessment Department (TAAD)
2. Inland Revenue Department (IRD)
3. Tax Administration Services Department (TASD)
The Creation of a unified department called Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ).

What will be the management structure of the unified TAJ?
The amendment to the RAA establishes the positions of:
- Commissioner General
- Deputy Commissioner General, Operations
- Deputy Commissioner General, Management Services
- Deputy Commissioner General, Legal Support.

When will the amendments take effect?
The amendments will be implemented on the Appointed Day of May 1, 2011.

How long is the transition to semi-autonomy expected to last?
Based on the planned strategy, it is anticipated that the transition will take place over a twelve (12) month period, during which time TAJ will operate under central government.

How can I get more information about the transition to TAJ?
You may contact Meris Haughton, Director Communications at 577-9417 (CUG), or send an email to communications@taj.gov.jm. We will continue to engage our stakeholders in discussions and provide regular updates.

With the Amendments to the RAA and the announced May 1, 2011 “Appointed Day”, the establishment of the unified department Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ), is now a reality.

This signals a new way of operating, as business processes are also being re-engineered as part of the reform of the Tax Administration.

New Concepts of Operations have been developed in relation to:
- Customer Centric Business Model
- Risk Management Methodologies
- Technology Driven (promoting self-service operation)
- HR and Budget Flexibility
- New Governance Structure

The new concepts of operation will see TAJ operating in a different way.

Customer Centric Approach:
The unified TAJ will focus on customer service. Customers can look forward to:
- Improvement in service delivery
- Expansion of our Customer Care Centre services (1-888-TAX-HELP)
- Simplified tax forms
- Expansion of service channels
  - E-banking
  - Telephone banking
  - Third party collections
  - E-registration
- Same day processing of the following documents
  - GCT Certificates
  - TCC
  - TRN Cards
  - Motor Vehicle Titles
- Improvement in support for e-services
- Improvement in functionality of website (www.jamaicatax.gov.jm)
- Accurate taxpayer accounts
- Improvement in taxpayer outreach/education

- Sectors/associations will be targeted for taxpayer education and outreach action.
- Sectors and individuals will be selected for audit and/or compliance action.

It should be noted that TAJ will publish it’s compliance programme annually.

Technological Approach:
Major emphasis will be placed on advancing the ICT capacity and infrastructure of TAJ by installing:
- a new software system to replace ICTAS.
- internet kiosks for filing returns.
- a case management tracking system
- a data mining software
- returns processing software

Infrastructure and Facilities Approach:
Under the Reform, major improvements and upgrades have been planned for the physical facilities to make it more comfortable for customers and staff. New business processes have dictated these planned changes:
The reform of the Tax Administration became necessary following critical assessments carried out by the International Monetary Fund/Caribbean Technical Assistance Centre (IMF/CARTAC), at the request of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) in 2006 and 2008.

The reports highlighted significant weaknesses and recommended comprehensive reforms, which were accepted by the GOJ. It was recommended that domestic (internal) and international (customs) taxes be separated, as is the practice in many other tax jurisdictions. The establishment of TAJ as a unified department, Customs as an Executive Agency and the Taxpayer Appeals Department as a Division within the MoFPS subsequently became:

- Conditions of IMF Stand-by Agreement -2010
- Descriptions in the Aide Memoires of April 2010 & March 2011

The main objectives for consolidating the operations of Taxpayer Audit Assessment Department (TAAD), Inland Revenue Department (IRD) and Tax Administration Services Department (TASD) to form a single Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ) are to:

- improve service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness;
- simplify administrative & business processes;
- enhance information and communications technology channels;
- improve voluntary compliance;
- increase collections.

**NOTE:** The Transitional period for the reform is scheduled for approximately twelve (12) months, which will see most of the issues being settled by April 1, 2012.

On May 1, 2011, the head of TAJ will be Commissioner General (CG), Viralee Latibeaudiere. All the authority for the various Tax Acts will be vested in the Commissioner General.

On May 1, 2011, the CG will be supported by:

- Deputy Commissioner General, Management Services - Dr. Terence Frater;
- Deputy Commissioner General, Operations - Rosalee Brown;
- Deputy Commissioner General, Legal Support - Grace Rookwood.

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On May 1, 2011, the assets of the former IRD, TAAD and TASD will be transferred to the new Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ).

On May 1, 2011, the official domain for email addresses will convert to firstname.surname@taj.gov.jm. The website address will remain www.jamaicatax.gov.jm, while the Facebook account will be www.facebook.com/jamaicatax. The toll-free numbers for our Customer Care Centre remains 1-888-TAX-HELP (829-4357); 1-888-GO-JA-TAX (465-2829) for callers from the USA.

On May 1, 2011, calls to any tax location will be answered identifying Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ).

On May 1, 2011, Transitional Managers will be responsible for leading the scheduled 12 months transitional process.

Please bear with us as we change to improve our operations.
Although the reform is now at the stage of unifying three (3) tax departments, the reform process began in 2009 and has already recorded several successes.

Early deliverables:
2009
- Established a Large Taxpayer Office (LTO)
- Established a Customer Care Centre (CCC)
- Established a Forensic Data Mining Unit (FDMU)
- Established a Special Enforcement Team (SET)
2010
- Established Reform Project Plan and Office
- Established Concept of Operations document
- Established Head Quarters and selected top four (4) executives

The transition process will continue through to April 1, 2012.

- Expansion of the Customer Care Centre.
- Expansion of e-filing/payment options.
- Introduction of a Single Employer’s Annual Return (SO2).
- Revision and increased functionality of website.
- Revision in registration process, facilitation “one-stop” access at Companies Office of Jamaica.
- Expansion of TAX REM - SMS Text message reminders on cell phones.
- Expansion of education and outreach programmes.
- Same day service for processing documents.
- Revision of tax forms for simplification.
- Revision of Tax Laws for ease of understanding and better application.
- Establishment of additional Revenue Service Centres and upgrade of tax offices.

Implementation Plan

**PRE-APRIL 1**
- Table RAA Bill
- Hold staff meetings
- Continue communications strategy
- Name Transition Team
- ID positions where single Mgr required eg. RSCs

**MAY 1, 2011**
- Send assignment letters to staff
- Transfer staff to MoFP
- Put in new banking arrangements
- Finalise transition plan

**TRANSITIONS**
- Complete TAJ Organisation Structure
- Develop JDs
- Select Mgmt positions
- Confirm all staffing
- Review processes
- Promote new Vision, Mission & Core Values

**APRIL 1, 2012**
- TAJ launches integrated process
- All staff confirmed in TAJ positions, retired, transferred or redundant positions abolished
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ) would be pleased to provide you with more information about our projects, time lines, community investments, and contract opportunities. If you are interested, please contact:

Meris Haughton
Director, Communications
PCI Building, 36 Trafalgar Road,
New Kingston, Jamaica, W.I.,
CUG: 577-9417, Tel.: 908-3363, Fax: 754-9593, email: communications@taj.gov.jm

We will continue to engage our stakeholders in discussions and provide regular updates.

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Essentials
Poet: St. Clair Adams
Roll up your sleeves, lad, and begin;
Disarm misfortune with a grin;
Let discontent not wag your chin-
Let gratitude.

Don’t try to find things all askew;
Don’t be afraid of what is new;
Nor banish as unsound, untrue,
A platitude.

If folks don’t act as you would choose
Remember life is varied; use
Your common sense; don’t get the
blues;
Show latitude.

Sing though in quavering sharps and
flats,
Love though the folk you love are cats,
Work though you’re worn and weary-
that’s the attitude

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CHANGE
Change is the rolling stone...
Continuous and driven by cause,
Desiring a change is not enough...
Molding oneself with the change
is the game.

Change your dressing style,
change your ways...
Cut your hairs or change your name,
Get a makeover or change with trends...
The soul remains the same.

We cry with change,
we grow with change...
Longing for change
still unprepared for change,
Sometimes surprised
sometimes disheartened ...

We move on with the change.

Life has a call to make
to the phenomenal change...
A change to meet the azure high,
Smile back to the setbacks and
walk on the miles ahead...
Standing falling all these way
I am a better me each day