



To: All News Editors

May 8, 2009

IMPORTANT NWC STATEMENT

NWC AWAITING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS

In view of recent media statements and mis-statements, it is necessary to clearly outline the present industrial relations situation at the National Water Commission with respect to the implementation of the 7% adjustment effective April 1, 2009.

The following points are worth noting:

- NWC is not immune to the prevailing global and national economic conditions. This has been communicated to employees and was to have been the subject of discussions with Union Representatives at meetings requested from as far back as March 9.
- Notwithstanding the above, the management of the NWC had been making all efforts to implement the terms of the existing Heads of Agreement for Supervisory and Pre-Supervisory Employees for a 7% increase effective April 1, 2009.
- Prior to the implementation of the 7% increases however, the Address to the Nation by the Honourable Prime Minister on April 5 announced a wage freeze for employees in the public sector, including agencies and government-owned entities.
- A hold was therefore placed on the implementation and this was communicated and explained to Employees and Union Delegates while the NWC sought clarification and instruction from the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service.
- Furthermore, NWC has since received formal correspondence from the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service instructing that **no action should be taken to implement increases to salaries until further advised and pending further discussions** between the Government of Jamaica and the Joint Confederation of Trade Unions.

- The above decisions and instructions have been communicated to Union Heads verbally and in writing and, to our knowledge, have been discussed among members.
- NWC is also aware of scheduled discussions between the Government of Jamaica and the Joint Confederation of Trade Unions and therefore awaits further instructions.
- Despite a meeting held yesterday by one of 5 Unions representing employees, and several media reports, NWC has received no formal communication of a dispute or restiveness on the matter.

In a somewhat related matter, employees are also advised that further to the delivery of pants and shirts in December and January, delivery of remaining items of uniform for some employees started yesterday, May 7 and will be completed by next week.

It should be very clear that the NWC has acted prudently, properly and in good faith. In view of all the above, the NWC urges all employees to continue to discharge their responsibilities in providing service across the country even in these challenging times and to await the outcome of these discussions.

The NWC continues to communicate with its employees and their Unions and hopes and expects that normality will be maintained throughout its operations islandwide.

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CONTACTS: **Corporate Public Relations Department**
929-1128