



Southern Regional Health Authority

Compassion | Accountability | Respect | Efficiency

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PRESS RELEASE

June 17, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Health Minister Lauds Innovative Retrofitted Ambulances Saving Millions

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tufton is lauding the innovative initiative of the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) to convert and customize three new mini-buses into ambulances, resulting in savings of J \$ 10.5 million.

The three ambulances are valued at more than J \$ 30 million, with each unit costing more than J \$ 10 million. A new ambulance would cost \$14 million and a delivery time of six months; however, the retrofitted ambulances have a shortened delivery time of eight weeks.

Each retrofitted ambulance is equipped with: a heart monitor, a dash cam, stainless hand wash sink with soap dispenser, suction machines, ECG machine, stainless steel dustbin, fog lamps, emergency lights, double nurses seats, fire extinguisher, oxygen, bench, stretcher, storage area, non-stick flooring, inverter, in addition to cupboards to store vital medical equipment.

The dash cam, which is a new feature, acts as a rear view mirror, a camera for the front of the vehicle as well as a monitoring camera to track the vehicle. The specifications were added following consultation with the primary users of the ambulances and are expected to give at least 10 years of good service.

"I want to recognize the region (SRHA) for the initiative in the retrofitting of these buses into ambulances and the savings that have been recognized. These ambulances are saving up to J \$ 4 million per unit and that is good because we live in a country where resources are short and therefore we have to apply our intelligent capacity to be creative. In that regard, the region (SRHA) through its stakeholder consultation partnership has demonstrated that leadership and we need more of it" Minister Tufton said.

(more)

Chairman: Wayne Chen; **Vice Chairman:** Michael Stern; **Board Members:** Marcus Greenwood, Stafford Haughton, Lorraine Green Mason, Lennox Powell, Dr Lloyd Reynolds, Winston Maragh, Dr St Aubyn Bartlett, Albert Williams, **Permanent Secretary's Nominee:** Dr Naydene Williams, **Directors: Regional Director and Secretary:** Michael Bent; **Regional Technical Director (Ag.):** Dr Vitillius Holder; **CEO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Alwyn Miller; **SMO, Mandeville Regional Hospital:** Dr Everton McIntosh



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Turning to the importance of the ambulance service in the delivery of public health care, Minister Tufton said: "When it comes to saving lives, the mobility, the logistics of the process, separate and apart from the expertise of the doctors and nurses, is very very critical. Sometimes we ignore the importance of our support staff, they may not be clinical in terms of their training and capacity, but absolutely fundamental in terms of saving lives and there is no greater manifestation of that than the ambulance driver and when it comes to someone suffering from trauma."

In 2016, the SRHA retrofitted two new mini-buses into ambulances, resulting in savings of \$7.6 m and also a shortened delivery time from 6 months to 2 months. The customization was done without breaching or compromising the Government of Jamaica Procurement Guidelines and the international specifications for ambulances.

The three ambulances were handed over yesterday, Thursday, June 13, 2019 on the grounds of the Percy Junor Hospital (PJH) in North East Manchester and will be stationed at the Black River Hospital in St. Elizabeth, the May Pen Hospital in Clarendon and the PJH in North East Manchester.

(more)

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Picture 1



Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tuffon (2nd right) and Acting Regional Director of the SRHA, Herschel Ismail (2nd left) cut the ribbon for the retrofitted ambulances. Sharing in the moment are: Vice Chairman of the SRHA Board, Michael Stern (right) and Special Assistant Dimitri South, who represented Member of Parliament for North East Manchester, Hon. Audley Shaw.

(more)

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Picture 2



The interior of one of the retrofitted ambulances.

(more)

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Picture 3



Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. Christopher Tuffon (right) examines the oxygen stored in one of the new retrofitted ambulances while Vice Chairman of the SRHA Board, Michael Stern (centre) and Special Assistant Dimitri South, who represented Hon. Audley Shaw, look on.

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For more information contact:
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