

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday October 07, 2011

“OUR initiates global harmonization of emergency numbers”

Jamaica is set to be the first country in the English-speaking Caribbean to activate the new Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) spearheaded International Telecommunications Union (ITU) recommendation towards the global harmonization of emergency numbers.

The recommendation means that effective mid-November, the numbers to dial for calls to emergency services in Jamaica will be **112** and **911**. These numbers will replace the current **110** emergency number which is used to reach fire, police and ambulance services.

It is important to note that the current police direct emergency number **119** will remain and is not affected by this change.

Jamaica will have a permissive dialling period of one year in order to phase out the **110** code. While both the old and new numbers may be dialled to reach the emergency services during this period, the OUR is encouraging callers to use only the new numbers, to become familiar with them early.

Following its acceptance of the OUR’s proposal, the ITU has recommended that countries planning to introduce an emergency number use either **112** or **911**. Those countries planning to introduce a second or alternative number should also use one of these two codes or both.

The OUR, had placed before the ITU, issues relating to increased international travel, the concomitant concerns for the safety and well-being of persons travelling to a foreign country, and the consequential need for an internationally harmonized emergency number solution for easy dialling access to local emergency services.

The move by Jamaica, through the OUR, to spearhead this initiative arose out of an incident in the UK some years ago involving a Jamaican family which suffered a dire consequence because the visiting family members did not immediately know the number to reach the emergency services.

The full determination outlining the harmonization of emergency numbers is available on the OUR's website at www.our.org.jm

- 30 -

CONTACT: Michael A. Bryce
Director - Consumer & Public Affairs
968 6053-4