



Statistics

**International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 1999
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JAMAICA

I. Summary

Jamaica is a major transit point for South American cocaine en route to the U.S. as well as the largest Caribbean producer and exporter of marijuana. During 1999, the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) made progress towards meeting the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Drug Convention. At regional meetings, GOJ officials actively supported counternarcotics initiatives. Bilateral counternarcotics cooperation is good and improving. In the area of maritime law enforcement, Jamaican forces continued to participate in combined operations under the Jamaica-U.S. bilateral maritime agreement.

In March 1999, Jamaica took an important step in its effort to create an anti-money laundering regime which meets international standards by amending the 1996 Money Laundering Act to require the reporting of suspicious transactions. However, further amendment to the law is required to address the critical issue of money laundering in relation to the proceeds of other serious crime. The GOJ has stated that, as a first step, it has drafted amendments to the money laundering act that will add fraud and firearms offenses as predicate offenses. The GOJ is in the process of establishing a financial analysis unit to identify money-laundering activities, but has not yet provided staff for the unit. Jamaica's current asset forfeiture regime does not permit the GOJ to take full advantage of the forfeiture mechanism to augment the resources of its anti-drug agencies and deprive criminals of the proceeds of their crime. Current Jamaican law requires the conviction of a criminal drug defendant prior to commencing a forfeiture action. In 1999, Parliament passed legislation permitting the GOJ to enter into agreements with other governments to share assets confiscated from drug traffickers and other criminals. The GOJ enacted a Precursor Chemicals Act and has budgeted for implementation of chemical controls. The USG has already provided training to Jamaican precursor chemical control personnel. In late 1999, the GOJ introduced a bill in Parliament establishing drug courts, which passed both houses and now awaits the signature of the Governor General.

Transparency International and other organizations have reported that corruption is viewed as a grave problem in Jamaica; drug trafficking adds to the problem. The GOJ's anti-corruption legislation, introduced in Parliament in 1998, passed the House and Senate in different versions; a compromise bill is currently being crafted by a joint select committee of Parliament. The GOJ's position is that passage of the Anti-Corruption Act must occur before it can ratify the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, which Jamaica signed in March 1996. The GOJ has a policy of investigating credible reports of police corruption, including those related to drugs, but more needs to be done to root out corruption in the public sector.

The GOJ extradited four people to the U.S. in 1999; there are sixteen active pending extradition requests. In 1999, the GOJ developed, with USG assistance, a special fugitive apprehension team to target and apprehend fugitives from justice. The team has thus far located three fugitives and provided information for several U.S.-based investigations. The GOJ arrested 6,718 drug offenders in 1999. Nevertheless, no major drug traffickers were arrested or convicted during 1999 and continue to operate with apparent impunity. The GOJ agreed in 1998 to develop a vetted special investigative unit to target drug kingpins, but the unit is not yet in existence. While the GOJ has stated its intention to enact wiretap legislation, the proposal for such legislation is still under discussion in the Cabinet.

The GOJ met the marijuana eradication goal of 800 hectares set out in the FY 98 Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the USG. In addition, the GOJ agreed in the LOA to pay a share of the marijuana eradication teams' salaries, currently funded by the USG, beginning in June 2000. While the GOJ made some progress in implementing the recommendations contained in a 1997 port security assessment, security at Jamaica's ports remains a concern. The GOJ needs to take steps to improve security at its ports, including implementation of the remaining recommendations from the 1997 assessment. Additionally, the GOJ

should consider providing the means to admit evidence obtained by ionscan technology in Jamaican courts. The GOJ has in place a national drug control strategy that covers both supply and demand reduction; the GOJ should add to its strategy specific goals and objectives and measures of effectiveness. Jamaica is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

II. Status of Country

Jamaica, the foremost producer and exporter of marijuana in the Caribbean, is also a major transit country for cocaine destined for the U.S. and other international markets. Jamaica-based traffickers use couriers who board commercial airlines attempting to smuggle cocaine that they have ingested or concealed in their clothing or luggage. U.S. Customs reports that more than 63% of all arrests at U.S. airports for cocaine possession involved flights originating in Jamaica. Multi-ton shipments of marijuana leave Jamaican ports for the U.S. in commercial cargo. Jamaica is not an offshore banking center, and local criminals distrust Jamaican financial institutions. Locally laundered money is used to acquire real assets, such as houses or cars, rather than financial instruments. The USG and OAS/CICAD share a growing concern over the vulnerability of Caribbean ports, including those in Jamaica, to illegal diversion of precursor and essential chemicals. In Jamaica, illicitly obtained isopropyl alcohol is used to distill hash oil.

III. Country Actions Against Drugs in 1999

Jamaica's counternarcotics efforts have taken place against a backdrop of severe resource constraints caused by a continuing recession; 1999 could be Jamaica's fourth straight year of negative economic growth.

Policy Initiatives. Parliament passed legislation in 1999 enabling the GOJ to enter into agreements with other governments to share assets confiscated from drug traffickers and other criminals, the proceeds from which can be shared by the Ministries of National Security and Justice, Health, and Education and Culture. In late 1999, the GOJ presented in Parliament legislation to create drug courts, which passed both houses in December and now awaits signature by the Governor General.

Accomplishments. In September 1999, Jamaica signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the U.S. that supports projects designed to preclude the exploitation of Jamaican territory by drug producers and traffickers and other international criminals. In March 1999, the Jamaican Parliament passed amendments to the 1996 Money Laundering Act which raised the threshold for mandatory transaction reporting from \$10,000 (equiv.) to \$50,000 (equiv.) and added mandatory reporting of suspicious transactions of any amount. Further GOJ action is required, however, to bring its anti-money laundering law in line with international standards, especially extending the law to cover laundering of the proceeds of all serious crime. The GOJ has stated that, as a first step, it has drafted amendments to its money laundering law to add fraud and firearms offenses as predicate offenses. Although the GOJ has taken steps to establish a financial analysis unit, it has not yet provided staff for the unit. Jamaica's air and seaports continue to be utilized by traffickers of illegal drugs. The Jamaica Customs Service took some measures to improve security at Kingston's seaport and international airport, including participating in USG-supported training and acquiring some x-ray machines, which unfortunately cannot scan the larger 500-pound barrels commonly used to import goods into the country. In addition, the GOJ took action on some of the recommendations contained in the 1997 port security assessment conducted by the USG at Jamaican request. The Jamaican Coast Guard continued to participate regularly in combined maritime interdiction operations with the U.S. and, to augment its maritime resources, the GOJ purchased a former U.S. Navy tugboat.

Asset Seizure. Jamaica's current asset forfeiture regime does not permit the GOJ to take full advantage of the forfeiture mechanism to augment the resources of its anti-drug agencies and deprive criminals of the proceeds of their crime. The 1994 Drug Offenses (Forfeiture of Proceeds) Act requires a criminal drug-trafficking conviction as a prerequisite to the forfeiture of assets associated with drug trafficking. Jamaica does not have a civil forfeiture statute. During 1999, Jamaican authorities detained 20 vessels suspected of involvement in drug smuggling, two of which were auctioned with the proceeds going to the Treasury.

Precursor Chemical Control. Jamaica is not a source of precursor or essential chemicals used in the production of illicit narcotics. A Precursor Chemicals Act was enacted in December 1999. The GOJ has budgeted for implementation of chemical controls, and the USG has already provided training to Jamaican precursor chemical control personnel. (See also Chemical Chapter.)

Law Enforcement. DEA reports that counternarcotics cooperation with the Jamaican Constabulary

Force (JCF) is very good and improving. During FY 99, joint DEA/JCF investigations resulted in 194 arrests compared with 73 in FY 98. Drug-related arrests in 1999 numbered 6,718; however, none of those was a major drug trafficker. DEA has been working closely with the JCF to improve targeting of Jamaican drug kingpins and their organizations. The GOJ agreed in 1998 to develop a vetted special investigative unit to target drug kingpins, but the unit is not yet in existence. While the GOJ has stated its intention to enact wiretap legislation, the proposal for such legislation is still under discussion in the Cabinet. Both the Jamaican Defense Force (JDF) and the JCF assign a high priority to counternarcotics missions. This has resulted, with U.S. funding support, in a continuous marijuana eradication effort and the elimination of a number of hash oil processing labs. In addition to the cannabis manually eradicated by JDF and JCF personnel, GOJ authorities in 1999 seized and destroyed 56.2 metric tons of marijuana compared with (revised) 35.9 metric tons in 1998. In 1999, hash oil seizures totaled 371.5 kilograms; hashish seizures totaled 61 kilograms; and cocaine seizures totaled 2,455.3 kilograms, 1,066 kilograms of which were seized as the result of an interdiction in international waters by the U.S. Coast Guard of a Jamaican-registered go-fast boat.

Corruption. The GOJ does not encourage or facilitate the illicit production or distribution of narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances, or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions. The GOJ has not prosecuted any senior Jamaican government official for facilitating the illicit production or distribution of such drugs or substances, or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions. As a matter of policy, the GOJ prosecutes individuals who by reliable evidence are linked to drug-related activity. The GOJ presented an anti-corruption bill in Parliament in 1998 that requires financial disclosures from senior civil servants and elected officials. In 1999, the House and Senate passed different versions of the legislation; a joint selected committee of Parliament is currently crafting a compromise bill. Upon enactment of its anti-corruption bill, the GOJ has said it will ratify the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.

The GOJ likewise has a policy of investigating credible reports of police corruption, including those related to drugs, but more needs to be done to root out corruption in the public sector. During 1999, 32 police officers were arrested for criminal violations, seven of whom were charged with drug-related offenses. In 1998, 63 police officers were arrested for criminal offenses. In September 1999, the police commissioner transferred the entire 91-member special anti-crime task force because of allegations that some members were involved in unprofessional and possibly criminal conduct. With respect to drug use policies, the JCF instituted a program of random drug testing for police officers in 1998, and the Jamaica Defense Force (JDF) has a "zero tolerance" policy on drug involvement by its members.

Agreements and Treaties. Jamaica has a mutual legal assistance treaty (MLAT) and an extradition treaty with the U.S. Both countries utilize the MLAT in combating illegal narcotics trafficking and other crimes. Jamaica is also a party to the MLAT among the Commonwealth states. During 1999, four persons were extradited to the U.S., compared to three by extradition and one under a waiver of extradition in 1998. The GOJ and USG consulted on the list of pending extradition requests and removed from it all non-active cases, leaving 16 active pending requests; three of these criminals are currently in custody. Jamaican authorities are generally receptive to and cooperative with U.S. requests for extradition. Extended delays result from the numerous appeals available to Jamaican criminal defendants. Combined with an overburdened court system, this means that contested extradition requests can take from four to five years (and possibly longer) to fully litigate. With the creation of the GOJ's fugitive apprehension team, the number of fugitive apprehensions should increase. The team has been successful in locating three fugitives in addition to providing information for several U.S.-based investigations. The USG is supporting the team with operational assistance and training. A U.S.-Jamaica maritime counternarcotics cooperation agreement came into force in February 1998.

Illicit Cultivation/Production. Jamaica is the largest Caribbean producer and exporter of marijuana. The consumption of marijuana is illegal in Jamaica, and the GOJ has consistently rejected calls for its legalization. In 1999, however, the upper house of Parliament established a commission to review the "decriminalization" of personal usage of marijuana, and the ruling People's National Party, despite the plea of the Minister of National Security and Justice, adopted a resolution unanimously calling for a commission to investigate the legalization of personal usage of small amounts of marijuana.

There is no accurate estimate of the amount of marijuana under cultivation or on the number of harvests per year. Crops are usually concealed in swamps and other remote areas that have limited road access. At Jamaica's request, the USG continues to provide assistance in conducting an aerial survey to target more precisely areas under cannabis cultivation. To date, the USG has been unable to complete its analysis of

the survey results. The JDF and JCF continued to cooperate on U.S.-funded marijuana eradication operations utilizing their limited resources. In November 1999, the marijuana eradication program was placed under JDF management and, in the FY 99 Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the USG, the GOJ agreed to begin paying half of the marijuana cutter teams' salaries, which the USG currently funds, beginning June 2000 and their full salaries beginning June 2001. The FY 98 LOA set a tentative cannabis eradication goal of 800 hectares (2000 acres), which the GOJ met in 1999. Eradication data are analyzed and compiled in each parish (district) by the JDF and JCF field officers into a monthly report. As a matter of policy, Jamaica does not use herbicide to eradicate cannabis. Manual cutting is the method utilized.

Demand Reduction. Jamaica has several active demand reduction projects in place. The UNDCP is active in Jamaica and works directly with the GOJ and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to improve demand reduction efforts. The European Union has agreed to fund a large three-year demand reduction project beginning in December 1999. Two of the most highly visible projects are those of the National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA) and the NGO Addiction Alert. The UNDCP has funded an integrated demand reduction program managed by the NCDA. In 1999, Addiction Alert received U.S. funding for its adolescent drug prevention program. The GOJ makes extensive use of the audiovisual, print media and other materials produced by U.S. Military Information Support Teams (MIST) deployed in country. The MIST teams have worked closely with national demand reduction agencies to develop and distribute materials reinforcing an anti-drug message.

IV. U.S. Policy Initiatives and Programs

Bilateral Cooperation. The GOJ publicly states its commitment to combating illegal drugs. Jamaica, however, operates under severe resource constraints, with half of its national budget going for debt servicing alone. The USG has provided funding for GOJ counternarcotics efforts continuously since 1987 and has provided more counternarcotics assistance to Jamaica than to any other Caribbean country. Despite limited resources, 1999 saw some improvement in GOJ counternarcotics activity, including Jamaican Coast Guard participation in U.S./Jamaican maritime interdiction operations under the bilateral maritime counternarcotics agreement, and commitments made by the GOJ in the LOAs with the USG. In addition, the GOJ spends substantial amounts to maintain an interdiction capability consisting of helicopters and patrol vessels. In 1999, the USG refurbished several boats for the JDF Coast Guard and is providing in FY 2000 two 82' cutters to augment the GOJ's maritime resources. The USG also provided the JCF narcotics division with three mobile homes to be used as temporary office space at strategic points around the island. The JCF in 1999 formed a fugitive apprehension team that will, inter alia, locate fugitives wanted for extradition to the U.S. The GOJ continued to fund the operating expenses for the Caribbean Regional Drug Law Enforcement Training Center following the expiration of UNDCP funding in 1998. The training center, built with U.S. funds under a UNDCP project, has provided specialized training for hundreds of regional law enforcement officers since its inception in 1996. At the police operational level, Jamaican cooperation with DEA and FBI remained positive. Nevertheless, the GOJ has experienced difficulties in making cases against major drug traffickers, and Jamaican borders continue to be vulnerable to traffickers moving contraband, especially drugs and firearms.

In June 1999, a U.S. Customs team conducted an assessment of the effectiveness of the Jamaica Customs Contraband Enforcement Team (CET) at the Port of Kingston, following which six Jamaican Customs CET officers traveled in July to Port Everglades, Florida, to observe U.S. Customs CET operations. In October, U.S. Customs conducted an INL-funded Airport Narcotics Interdiction Course and Train-the-Trainer Workshop in Jamaica for 45 customs, police, immigration, and port security officials, presented an INL-funded Air Carrier Initiative Seminar to 70 airline security officers, and conducted eight site surveys of airline facilities at the Kingston and Montego Bay airports.

Road Ahead. The general challenge for any Caribbean state is to avoid becoming a "weak link" in the fight against transnational organized crime. Jamaica has taken some steps to protect itself against drug trafficking and other types of organized crime, but the GOJ needs to act aggressively if it is to achieve the goal of a fully integrated and coordinated institutional structure capable of investigating and prosecuting cases against major drug and crime figures. While the GOJ has a national drug strategy covering both supply and demand reduction, the GOJ should add specific goals and measures of effectiveness to its plan. The GOJ also needs to strengthen its money laundering and asset forfeiture laws and enact legislation that will permit law enforcement to utilize modern crime control tools such as wiretaps in building cases against organized crime. The GOJ should take steps to produce a more secure passport and strengthen its emigration controls in an effort to inhibit the free movement of drug traffickers and other criminals. Upon passage and implementation of its Anti-Corruption Act, the GOJ should proceed to ratify the Inter-American

Convention Against Corruption. Additionally, the GOJ should consider providing the means to admit evidence obtained by ionscan technology in Jamaican courts. The USG will seek ways to assist the GOJ to improve its drug interdiction and marijuana eradication capabilities in an effort to make further progress against drug trafficking. The USG will continue to provide training and to work closely with the police and public prosecutors to enhance their abilities to investigate, successfully prosecute, and forfeit the assets of major drug traffickers operating in Jamaica.

Jamaica Statistics

(1991-1999)

	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991
Cannabis									
Potential Harvest (ha)	unk	unk	317	527	305	308	744	389	950
Eradication(1) (ha)	894	705	743	473	695	692	456	811	833
Cultivation (ha)	unk	unk	1,060	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,200	1,200	1,783
Potential Yield(2) (mt)	unk	unk	214	356	206	208	502	263	641
Seizures									
Cocaine(3) (mt)	2.460	1.160	0.414	0.236	0.571	0.179	0.160	0.49	0.06
Cannabis (mt)	56.22	35.91	24.00	52.99	37.20	46.00	75.00	35.00	43.00
Hashish Oil (kg)	371.49	144.05	383.00	263.41	278.00	47.00	235.00	165.00	171.00
Heroin (mt)	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	-	0.001	0.001	0.002	-
Hashish (mt)	0.061	0.041	0.068	-	-	-	-	-	-
Labs Destroyed									
Hashish Oil	1								
Arrests									
Nationals	6,385	7,093	3,143	2,996	3,325	788	899	785	4,353
Foreigners	333	259	221	267	380	98	517	364	674
Total Arrests	6,718	7,352	3,364	3,263	3,705	886	1,416	1,149	5,027

(1)Figures revised according to information received from Jamaican authorities.

(2)Yield is based on an estimate of 675 kilograms per hectare.

(3)A seizure of 1,066 kilograms of HCl in 1999 was a result of USCG interdiction of a Jamaican-registered vessel.