

**PRESS RELEASE - CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
February 2004**

The February Consumer Price Index Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica reveals that the All Jamaica "All Group" Consumer Price index for February 2004 was 1808.4 showing an increase of 0.6 per cent over the index recorded for January 2004. The rate of inflation for the month of January was 0.6 per cent and 0.8 per cent for the month of December. The rate of inflation for the fiscal year to date is 16.0 per cent. The rate of inflation for the calendar year to date was 1.2 per cent.

A look at the three regions 'Kingston Metropolitan Area' 0.7 per cent, 'Other Towns' 0.6 per cent and 'Rural Areas' 0.3 per cent.

For the month of February all groups recorded higher indices than in January. There was a 0.2 per cent increase in the index for the group "Food and Drink. Increases in the index for the sub-groups 'Meals Away from Home' which recorded a 0.9 per cent movement, "Meat, Poultry and Fish" (0.7 per cent), "Dairy Products, Oils and Fats" (0.9 per cent) contributed to the increase in the index for 'Food and Drink'. However this increase was contained by declines of 1.8 per cent in the index for the sub-group, 'Starchy Foods' and 0.8 per cent for the sub-group, 'Vegetables and Fruits'.

The index for the group 'Housing and Other Housing Expenses' increased by 3.4 per cent the main contributor to the increase in the index for the group was a 4.3 per cent increase in index for the sub-group 'Other Housing Expenses.'

The Consumer Price Index Bulletin -February 2004 further outlines additional information and may be obtained from our Distribution Office of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica located at 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10.