

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

The January Consumer Price Index Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica reveals that the All Jamaica "All Group" Consumer Price index for January 2004 was 1798.2 showing an increase of 0.6 percent over the index recorded for December 2003. The rate of inflation for the month of December was 0.8 percent and 0.9 percent for the month of November. The rate of inflation for the fiscal year to date is 15.3 percent, 9.0 percentage points above the 6.3 percent for the corresponding period last year.

A look at the regional indices shows increases for three regions 'Kingston Metropolitan Area' 0.6 percent, 'Other Towns' 0.5 percent and 'Rural Areas' 0.8 percent.

For the month of January all groups recorded higher indices than in December. There was a 0.4 percent 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 1.4 percent movement, "Meat, Poultry and Fish" (0.7 percent), "Dairy Products, Oils and Fats' (0.7percent),'Baked Products Cereals and Breakfast drink' (0.5 percent) contributed to the rise in the index for this group. However the index for the sub-group, 'Starchy Foods' declined by 2.0 percent.

The index for the group 'Fuels and Other Household Supplies' and the group 'Housing and Other Housing Expenses' increased by 1.9 percent and 1.2 percent respectively.

The Consumer Price Index Bulletin -January 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.