



CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS)
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Fighting COVID-19 in Prisons: CARICOM IMPACS and the United Kingdom Partner to Support Dominica Prison

PRESS RELEASE
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Roseau, 29 May 2020 – COVID-19 poses an extraordinary risk to prison populations. Efforts to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 in the Caribbean are likely to fail if strong prevention and control measures are not carried out in prisons.

In Dominica, there have been no confirmed COVID-19 cases in prisons. However, with an outbreak of COVID-19 at the Dominica Prison Service, the lives of approximately 204 prisoners, 68 prison staff, and the general public will be at risk: potentially placing tremendous strain on the public health system.

On Friday, 29 May, 2020 the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM IMPACS) with the generous support of the British High Commission, Port of Spain, delivered much needed sanitation supplies and other COVID related supplies to Dominica Prison Service to help prevent and minimise the risk of infection and transmission of COVID-19 in the Dominica Prison Service.

An air shipment of the basic sanitation supplies arrived at the Douglas-Charles Airport, Commonwealth of Dominica, today. The supplies included infrared thermometers, as well as cleaning products such as disinfectant, liquid soap, bleach, hand sanitizers and other necessary supplies. The Regional Security System (RSS) airlifted the supplies to the Douglas-Charles Airport, Dominica, Roseau.

Speaking at the airport tarmac, Mr. Kenrick Jean-Jacque, Superintendent of Prisons, Dominica expressed his *“gratitude for this timely gesture of the donation of supplies which would assist the prison population, staff and the wider community in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic”*.

Lt. Col. Michael Jones, Executive Director (Ag), CARICOM IMPACS, who was at the airport to witness the delivery said that *“a transmission of COVID-19 within the prison will have an amplifying effect not just in the prison but also within the general public. We need to ensure that this vulnerable prison population as well as prison staff are not forgotten during the Pandemic”*.

The supplies provided are in accordance with guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the prevention and control of the pandemic in prisons (WHO, 2020).

Over the past two weeks CARICOM IMPACS and the RSS has successfully donated the supplies to the prisons and correctional services in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname. Within the next week, approximately Six (6) other CARICOM Members will receive similar assistance.

In addition to the items provided to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in prisons, on 7 May 2020, CARICOM IMPACS collaborated with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to provide a virtual training session to more than 500 frontline officers on measures to protect themselves in the line of duty. This effort strengthened the capacity of prison staff to better manage their operations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and also complements the ongoing efforts by CARICOM IMPACS, the British High Commission and the RSS to provide basic sanitation support to CARICOM Member States.

The donation of these supplies will encourage and assist with the accelerated adoption of WHO guidelines for prisons and other places of detention, as well as help mitigate the spread of the pandemic and reinforce security within CARICOM.



About CARICOM IMPACS

CARICOM IMPACS is the coordinating and implementation arm of the region's multilateral crime and security management architecture, specifically designed to administer a collective response to the crime and security priorities of its Member States. Its members comprise fifteen (15) CARICOM Member States and five (5) Associate Members. IMPACS comprises the Headquarters which is in Trinidad and Tobago and two sub-Agencies, the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC) and the Regional Intelligence Fusion Centre (RIFC). The Agency is responsible for the coordination of the Standing Committee of Correctional Services and Prisons in CARICOM. Learn more at <https://www.caricomimpacs.org>