

*Speech by Mr. Ernest W. Smith Managing Director, Spectrum Management Authority,
Session Sponsors at the 18th Annual National Conference on Science and Technology*

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The Spectrum Management Authority is pleased to be associated with the 18th Annual National Conference on Science and Technology. We congratulate the Board, Management and Staff of the Scientific Research Council for their tireless effort in promoting Science and Technology in Jamaica. The theme for the Conference, “Science and Technology for Economic Development: Transforming Research Results and Traditional Knowledge into Viable Businesses” is indeed very timely and appropriate.

The Information and Communication Technology sector has been identified as one of the main drivers of economic growth. The Spectrum Management Authority is one of the primary institutions committed to fostering and facilitating growth in this sector, particularly in the area of wireless communication.

Established by the Telecommunications Act of 2000, the Authority has as its mandate “to ensure the effective management of the radio frequency spectrum, in keeping with international best practices and in the interest of economic, social and technological development”. The spectrum is the medium which facilitates wireless communication. Our client base includes cellular operators, lottery companies, companies involved in transportation (trucking and taxis), education and health, entities involved in the maritime and aeronautical fields, emergency and security agencies, as well as hobbyist such as Amateur Radio and Citizen Band Operators. The Authority plays a vital role in the following areas:

- As an advisory body to the Minister with portfolio responsibility for the ICT sector.
- The SMA is the agency which collects fees on behalf of the Government for the use of this valuable national resource, the spectrum. To date, the Government has garnered US\$98.5M for cellular licences and J\$20M for spectrum licence fees since 2000.
- The SMA ensures the efficient management and use of the spectrum, through band planning and licensing exercises, frequent monitoring of spectrum use and enforcement against illegal activities.

Communication is vital, both as a business in itself and as a facilitator of businesses. Though Jamaica at this time uses rather than develops wireless technology, there is scope for increased use of these technologies in various types of businesses. Here, the SMA has been playing an important role in ensuring that Jamaica does not lag too far behind in this new and dynamic global communication industry. We need to be mindful of the evolving technologies in the world and how these can help to create viable and competitive Jamaican businesses.

At this time, we will share with you a short video presentation which depicts a vision of the future of wireless communication as seen by NTT DoCoMo (a Japanese developer of wireless technology with over 49 million subscribers). You will their vision of how wireless technology may be applied in everyday life as well as across a wide range of businesses, thereby enhancing the process of sustainable economic growth and development.