



MONTHLY ECONOMIC BULLETIN

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The CEO'S Remarks

As the economic reform programme continues, the economy is benefitting from increased consumer and business confidence, which continues to show record highs. Throughout 2017 business and consumer confidence remained strong, and the World Bank had indicated that the institutional reforms and efforts to improve Jamaica's investment climate had started to bear fruit. With the stabilization in the dollar and an improvement in the country's corruption index, a stable environment exist to promote growth especially in the area of investments.

One of the primary reasons for the increased business confidence and the willingness to invest is the fact that greater certainty has returned to the market. This is a very important ingredient for investors to risk their capital.

As the economic reform programme continues to emphasize greater fiscal discipline, and the economy continues to benefit from lower oil prices, Jamaicans and businesses are seeing the benefits from a more robust economy.

The country, however, faces several threats to the Government's primary goals to achieve sustainable high levels of economic growth, and the target is 5 percent in now three years. If this were to happen,

then we would see significant opportunities open up for Jamaicans and provide us with the opportunity to increase our GDP per capita.

Severe weather patterns have impacted the country significantly especially in agriculture industry which is a main contributor to our growth numbers.

A notable deterrent to growth is the country's crime problem. Creating a favourable macroeconomic environment is vital. However social issues cannot be neglected. Without doubt economic development is linked to the crime. Crime and theft were listed as the number one most problematic factor for doing business in the World Bank's Global Competitiveness Report 2017/2018.

National security is increasingly becoming a factor of high importance and proper management of the 66 billion given to the Ministry of National Security for recurrent expenditure is vital. The problem sometimes is not the amount of money, which is allocated, but it's the management of the funds. There is a call for a change of not only individuals but also a change in the structure; the laws which govern the force. Extensive searches need to be conducted to remove illegal guns from the community and individuals trust need to be gained by Jamaica Constabulary Force.

Economic Highlights January 2018

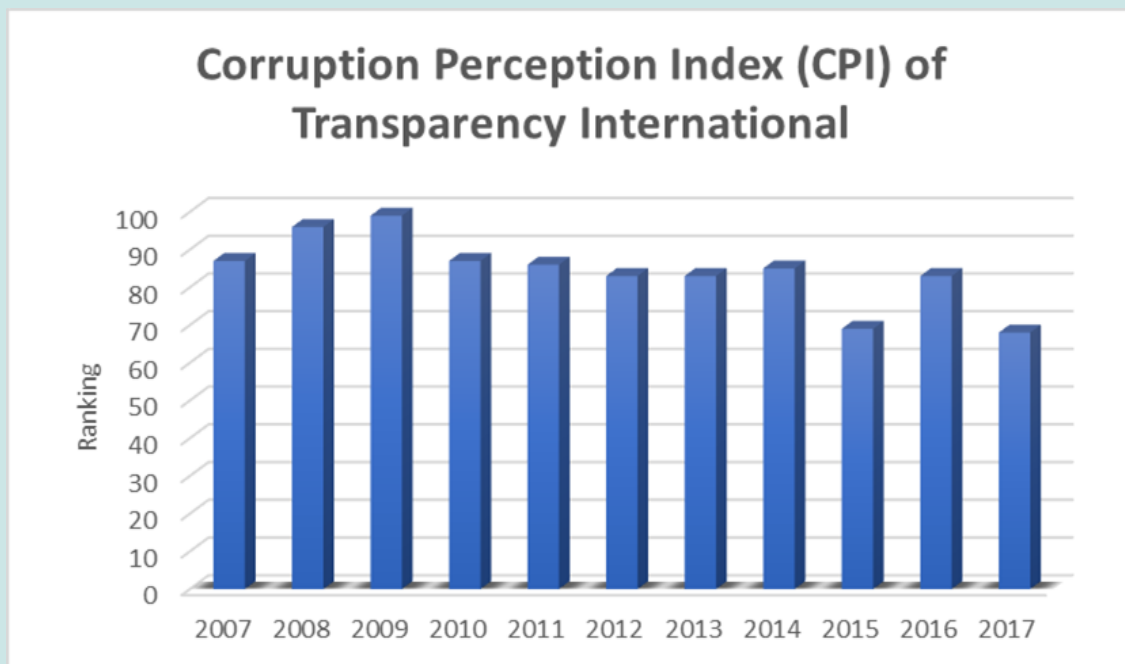
- At the end of January 2018, the monthly average value of the Jamaican Dollar appreciated against the US Dollar while the Dollar depreciated against the Canadian Dollar and the Great Britain Pound. The Dollar appreciated against the US\$ by \$0.62 or 0.4938% to end at J\$124.93=US\$1.00. The value dollar depreciated by J\$3.09 or 3.146% against the Canadian Dollar to end at CAD\$1.00=J\$101.31. The value of the Great Britain Pound depreciated by J\$3.91 or 2.330% to end at GBP1.00=J\$171.67.
- Inflation, measured by the All Jamaica “All Divisions” Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the period January 2018 over December 2017 recorded a negligible movement according to the January 2018 Consumer Price Index (CPI) Bulletin. Inflation for the fiscal year to date was 4.2% and the point-to-point movement was 4.8%.
- Data for the month ending January 2018 revealed that the stock of Net International Reserves (NIR) at the Bank of Jamaica was J\$408.65 billion (US\$3,203.36 million).
- The monetary base decreased by J\$10.211 billion to end month of January at J\$160.180 billion.
- For the month of January 2018 yields on the Government of Jamaica 91-day, 182-day and 273-day were bills 3.99bps, 4.16bps and 4.79bps respectively.
- Stopover tourist arrivals for December 2017 were 251,800. Total stopovers for the calendar year 2017 was 2,352,915, representing an increase of 7.8% compared to 2,181,684 for the corresponding period last year. A total of 208,212 cruise passengers visited Jamaica in December 2017. Total cruise passenger arrivals for 2017 was 1,923,274. This a 16.2% or 267,712 increase in comparison to the corresponding period last year.
- There were price reductions observed in 15% (3) of the commodities monitored for January 2018. Both the price of Brent and the WTI increased for the period January 2018 relative to December 2017. The Brent increased by 7.44% and the WTI increased by 9.89%. Natural gas price increased by 28.26% for the corresponding period.

Highlights

Corruption Perception Index

Jamaica has improved on the latest Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International. The country moved from 83 in 2016 to 68 in 2017 with a score of 44 out of 100.

The graph below reflects the ranking of Jamaica in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) over the period 2007-2017. As seen in the graph this year's rank was the lowest in the last ten years. Corruption was listed as the third most problematic factor for doing business in the World Bank's Global Competitiveness Report 2017.



Of the Caribbean islands who participated in the survey, the country was ranked 8th following Cuba in the 62nd position. The top three listed island were Barbados in 25, the Bahamas in 28 and St Vincent and the Grenadines in 40.

In a documentary produced by the National Integrity Action (NIA), the following was outlined as the cost of corruption.

Limited the development of the educational system and a contributed to the beginnings of Jamaica's debt. – Towards the end of the 1960's Jamaica received a loan, which was the largest loan to a developing country at that point, for the

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Highlights

development of the education system. The loan did not achieve its purposes due to favoritism displayed by the government while handing out construction contracts which lead to inefficiencies. This resulted in the start of Jamaica's debt. (The 1966 world bank loan (US\$9.5 million) was to facilitate the building of schools islandwide of which some mysteriously disappeared.)

- Contributed to the poor productive labour force in the country which is a product of inadequate educational facilities and loss of confidence in the government.
- According to Professor Anthony Clayton from the Institute of Sustainable Development (UWI), 90% of our public debt is equal to the cost of crime and corruption for over the last 40 years as at 2013.
- Limited housing development – in 1994 the government sought to tackle the problem of illegal settlements through an operation known as Jamaica pride. Billions of dollars of Jamaica's taxpayer money were invested. The operation, however, was unsuccessful due to numerous

irregularities identified by the contractor general, auditor general as well as a special task force which was centered around the interference of politician in the award beneficiaries.

In addition to the historical cost of corruption, it also continues to contribute to lessening investors' confidence which hinders the growth of the economy. It also provides to increasing crime and violence, a product of the poor productive labour force

Prof Monroe applauded the government in their efforts which had indeed contributed to the improvement in the index.

No doubt the country has much more room for improvement. This calls firstly for increased accountability and transparency in the government. The principle of justice and equality must be enforced in all ranks.

Janell Atkinson

International Commodity Prices

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Crude Oil Prices

For the month ending January 2018, the average price of both the Dated Brent and the West Texas Intermediate (WTI) increased. The Brent ended the month of January at **US\$68.99 per bbl**. This represented a **US\$4.78** or **7.44%** increase from the **US\$64.21 per bbl** recorded for the previous month. The West Texas Intermediate (WTI) ended the month at **US\$63.67**. This represented a **US\$5.73** or **9.89%** increase relative to last month. A one-year comparison of prices revealed that this year's price for the Brent is

25.69% or

US\$14.10 per bbl

higher. When

compared to last

year's price, this

year's WTI price is

21.25% or

US\$11.16 higher.

When compared to

the price level two

years ago, the Brent

is **123.99%** and the WTI is **101.87%** above. The 5-

year average of prices ranging from January 2013

to December 2017 for the Dated Brent and the West

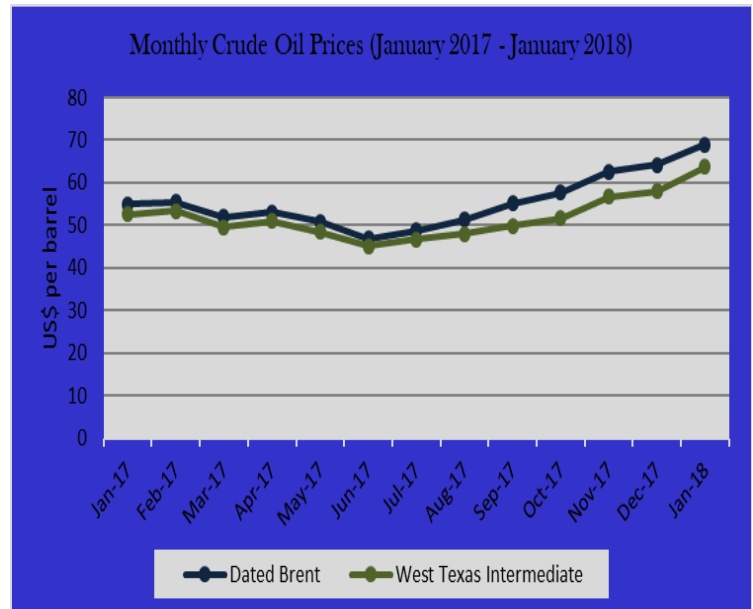
Texas Intermediate are **US\$71.72 per bbl** and

US\$66.77 per bbl respectively. This month's price

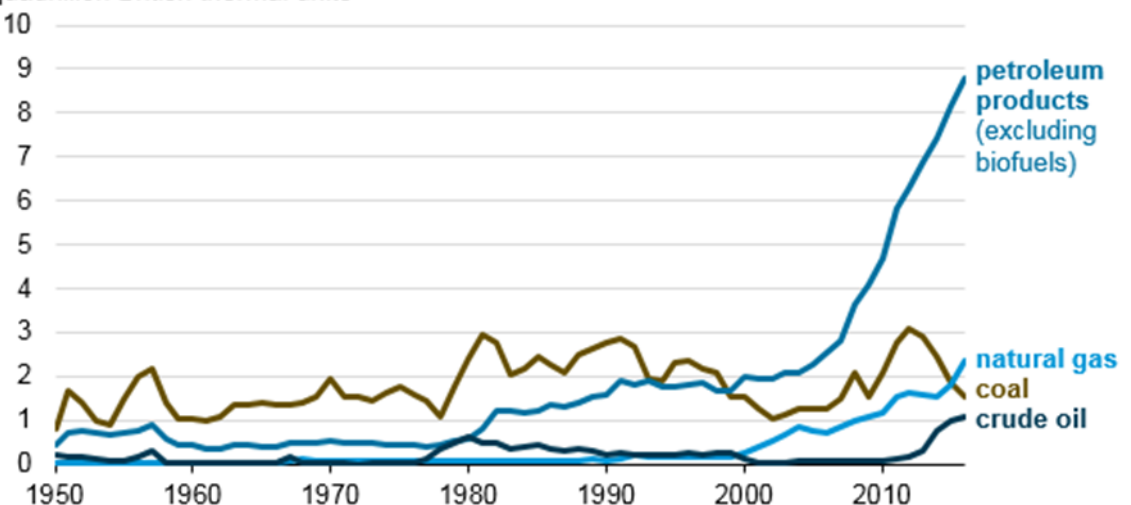
was **4.00%** below the 5-year average of prices for

the Brent and **4.64%** for the WTI.

In January 2018, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported the North Sea Brent crude oil spot prices averaged \$69 per barrel (b) in January, an increase of \$5/b from the December



U.S. gross energy exports of selected fuels (1950-2016)
quadrillion British thermal units



level. Monthly average Brent prices have increased for seven consecutive months and spot prices moved higher than \$70/b for the first time since December 2014. EIA forecasts Brent spot prices will average about \$62/b in both 2018 and 2019 compared with an average of \$54/b in 2017.

EIA expects West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil prices to average \$4/b lower than Brent prices in both 2018 and 2019. NYMEX WTI contract values for May 2018 delivery traded during the five-day period ending

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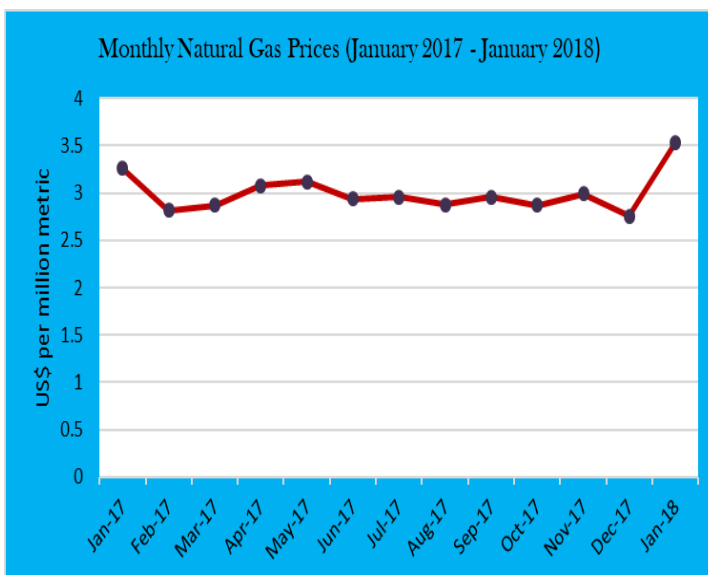
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February 1, 2018, suggest a range of \$55/b to \$77/b encompasses the market expectation for May 2018 WTI prices at the 95% confidence level.

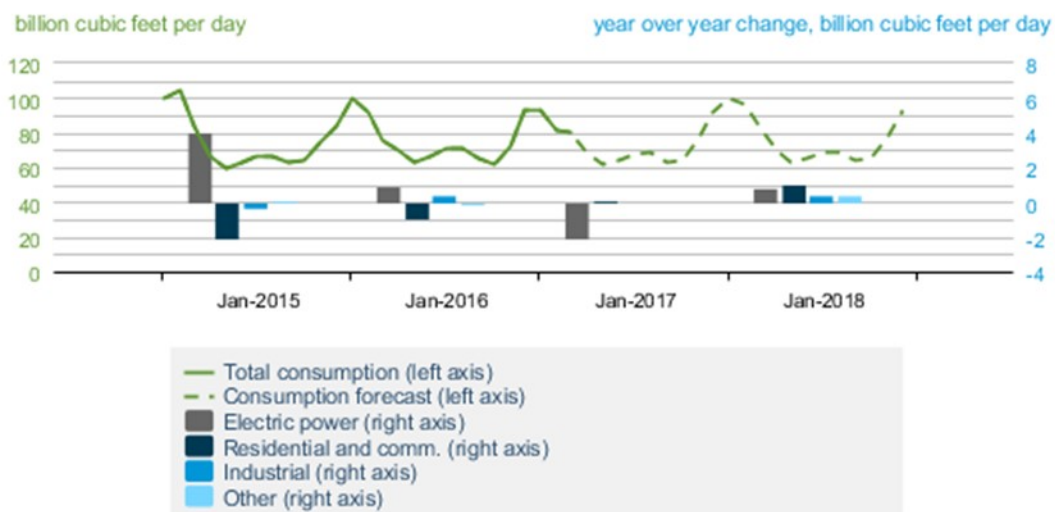
Natural Gas

For the month ending January 2018, natural gas price increased. The price for natural gas ended at **US\$3.54** per million metric which represented an increase of **US\$0.78** or **28.26%**. In January 2017, natural gas per million metric was valued at **US\$3.26** signifying that this year's price is **US\$0.28** or **8.59%** higher. A two-year comparison revealed that natural gas prices have increased by **US\$1.27** or **55.95%** per million metric. The five-year average monthly price for natural gas ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$3.23** per million metric, hence, this year's January price was **US\$0.3082** or **9.53%** below.

In January, the average Henry Hub natural gas spot price averaged \$3.88 per million British thermal units (MMBtu), up \$1.06/MMBtu from December. Cold temperatures east of the Rocky Mountains in early January contributed to high levels of natural gas consumption as well as a reduction in production because of well freeze-offs. This combination resulted



U.S. natural gas consumption



Source: Short-Term Energy Outlook, April 2017

in record-high natural gas inventory withdrawals in mid-January, which contributed to rising prices.

Soybean Prices

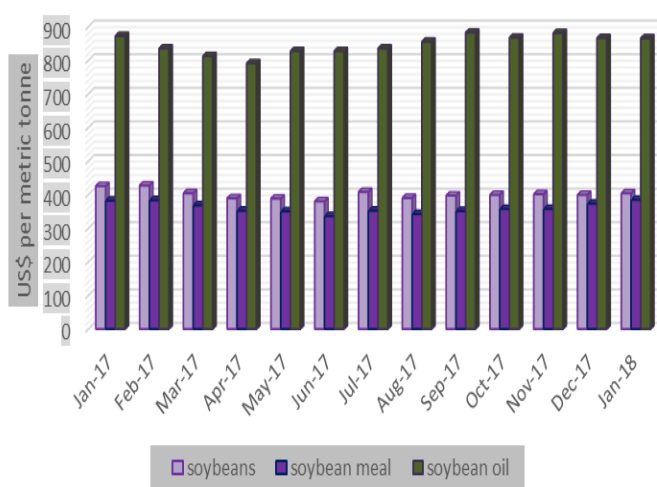
For the month ending January 2018, soybean price per metric tonne was **US\$403.75**. This denoted a **US\$4.75** or **1.19%** increase from December's value of

International Commodity Prices

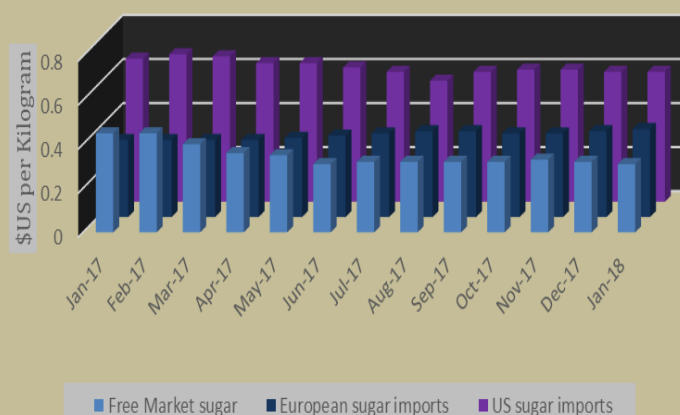
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US\$399.00 per metric tonne. In January, this year, the average price of soybean meal increased while the average price of soybean oil decreased. Soybean meal prices ended the month at **US\$375.67** which was a **US\$11.25** or **3.02%** increase from last month. At the end of January, the price per metric tonne for soybean oil stood at **US\$865.25** per metric tonne representing a **US\$0.75** or **0.09%** decrease compared to the previous month. A one-year comparison revealed that prices for soybean decreased by **1.19%** or **US\$21.50**. This month soybean price was **US\$36.75** or **10.01%** higher than its price two years ago. When compared to the corresponding period last year the soybean meal price was **US\$2.25** or **0.589%** lower. Soybean oil price was below last year's price by **US\$6.75** or **0.7741%**. A two-year comparison of prices for soybean meal revealed that this year's price is above prices two years ago by **US\$51.25** or **15.39%**. When the January 2018 soybean oil price was compared to corresponding period in 2015 this year's price is **US\$138.25** or **19.02%** above. The five-year average monthly price for soybean ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$445.37** per metric tonne, which means that January's price was **US\$41.62** or **9.346%** lower. The five-year average monthly price for soybean meal ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$441.24** per metric tonne, which means that January's price was **US\$56.99** or **12.92%** lower. The five-year average monthly price for soybean oil ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$875.52** per metric tonne, which means that January's price was **US\$10.27** or **1.173%** lower.

Monthly Soybean (January 2017 - January 2018)



Monthly Sugar Prices (January 2017 - January 2018)



Sugar Prices

At the end of January 2018, the average price of the Free Market Sugar ended the month at **US\$0.31** per kg, this was a decrease of **US\$0.0001** or **3.12%** over the previous month. For the US Sugar imports, the average price was **US\$0.59** per kg which was the same as last month. At the end of January 2018, the European Sugar imports ended the month at **US\$0.40** per kg which was an increase of **US\$0.01** or **2.56%** relative to the

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previous month. For the period January 2018 relative to January 2017, the price of Free Market sugar decreased by **US\$0.14** or **31.11%** dollar per kg. A one-year comparison revealed that the price of the US Sugar imports has decreased by **US\$0.06** or **9.23%**, while the European sugar imports price has increased by **US\$0.05** or **14.28%** for the same period. In January 2016, the price for the Free Market sugar was **US\$0.31** per kg, which is the same as this year's January price. The price of the US sugar imports is **US\$0.02** or **3.509%** higher than the 2015 price and the price of the European Sugar imports is **US\$0.05** or **14.28%** higher than the 2015 price. The 5-year average of prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 for the US imports and the European imports are **US\$0.551** per kg and **US\$0.392** per kg respectively. Hence, the price of US imports is above its long-term average by **7.078%** and the European imports is below its average by **2.041%**.

Coffee Prices

For the month ending January 2018 both the average prices of the Coffee of the Other Mild Arabicas and the Robusta coffee increased. The price per kg for coffee of the Other Mild Arabicas category was **US\$3.06** per kg representing an increase of **US\$0.03** or **0.99%**. A one-year comparison revealed that this month's price was **US\$0.66** or **17.74%** lower than last year's January price. Robusta Coffee ended the month at **US\$1.95** per kg. This month's price is above the previous month's price by **US\$0.02** or **1.04%**. A one-year comparison revealed that the



price of coffee in the Robusta category has decreased by **US\$0.44** or **18.41%**. A two-year comparison revealed that prices have decreased by **4.37%** for coffee of the 'Other Mild Arabica's category while prices rose by **18.18%** for coffee in the Robusta category. The five-year average monthly prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 for Arabica and Robusta are **US\$3.59** and **US\$2.08** respectively. This implies that this year's January price for the Arabica was **14.83%** lower than the average price and the Robusta coffee was **6.36%** higher than its average price.

Cocoa Beans

For the month ending January 2018, cocoa bean prices increased relative to the previous month. Prices for the month ending was **US\$1.95** per kg representing a **US\$0.03** or **1.56%** decrease. A one-year comparison revealed that this year's price is lower by **US\$0.24** per kg or **10.96%**. A two-year price comparison showed that the January 2018 price for cocoa beans is lower by

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US\$1.00 per kg or **33.90%** than its price in January 2016. The five-year average of monthly prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 for cocoa bean is **US\$2.71** per kg, this means that this year's January price was **US\$0.76** or **28.08%** lower.

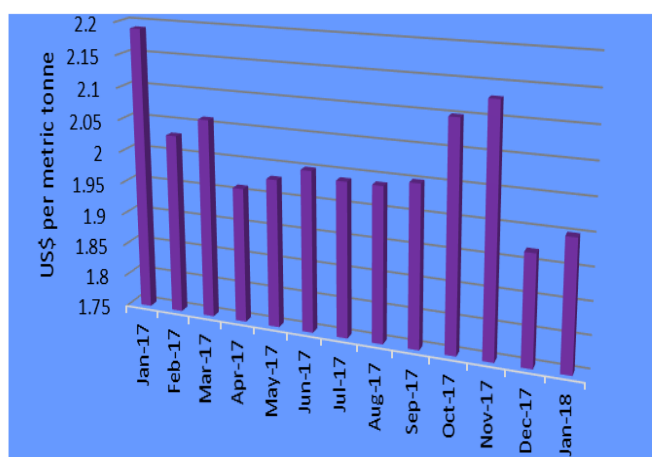
Orange Prices

Orange prices for the month ending January 2018 decreased relative to December. In this regard prices decreased by **1.30%** or **US\$0.01** to end at **US\$0.76** per kg. For January 2018, relative to January 2017, oranges prices decreased by **US\$0.18** or **19.15%** per metric tonne. A two-year comparison revealed that this year's price is **US\$0.07** or **10.14%** more than the January 2016 price. The five-year average monthly prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$0.8255**, this means that this year's price was **US\$0.0655** or **7.934%** below.

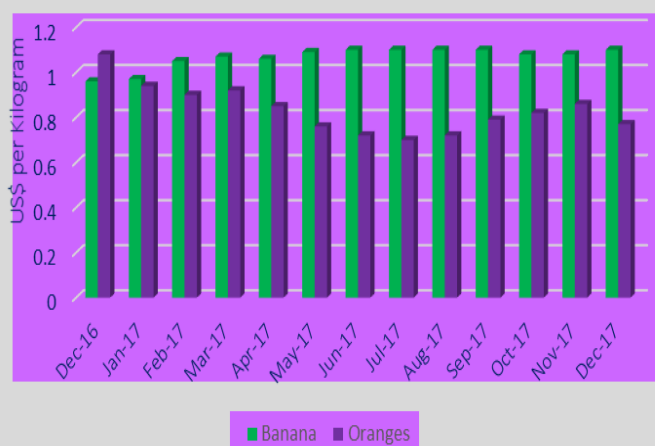
Banana Prices

For the month ending January 2018, banana prices increased to **US\$1.12** per kg relative to December last year. In this regard prices increased by **US\$0.02** or **1.82%**. When compared to the same period in 2017, this year's price was **US\$0.12** or **12.00%** higher. A two-year comparison revealed that prices have risen by **US\$0.08** or **8%**. The five-year average monthly price ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$0.98**, indicating that this month's price was **US\$0.1428** or **14.62%** higher.

Monthly Cocoa Beans Prices (January 2017 - January 2018)



Monthly Banana and Orange Prices (December 2016 - December 2017)



Corn Prices

For the month ending January 2018, corn prices increased. Prices increased by **US\$6.86** or **4.60%** relative to December, to close the month at **US\$155.84** per metric tonne. Between January 2018 and January 2017 prices decreased by **US\$4.15** or **2.594%**. A two-year price comparison showed that this year's price was **US\$5.19** or **3.223%** lower. The five-year monthly average for corn prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$ 187.14** per metric tonne, this

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means that this month's price was **US\$31.30** or **16.73%** lower.

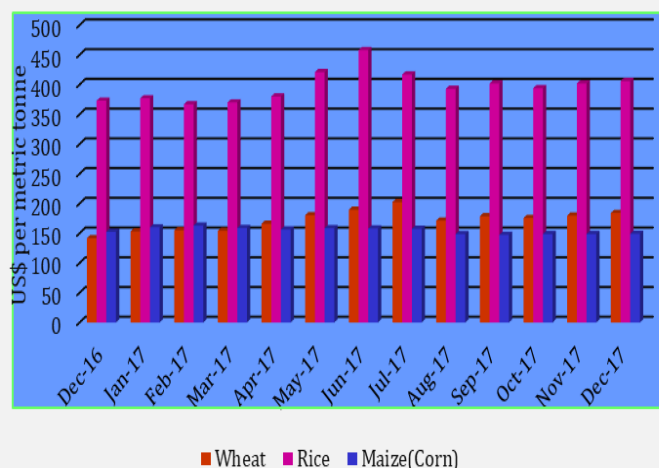
Wheat

For the month ending January 2017 wheat prices increased relative to the previous month. Prices increased by **US\$8.08** or **4.39%** relative to December 2017 to end at **US\$192.17** per metric tonne. Relative to January 2017, prices have increased by **US\$38.95** or **25.42%** per metric tonne. A two-year comparison of wheat prices showed that this year January price was **US\$ 1.1** or **0.5691%** below the January 2016's price. The average five-year monthly prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$228.48** per metric tonne, meaning that this year's January price was **US\$36.31** or **15.89%** below.

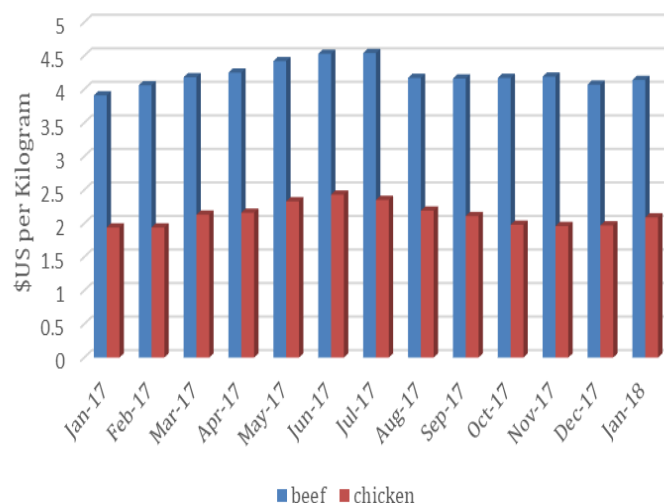
Rice

For the month ending January 2018 the price of the 5 percent rice ended at **US\$442.00** per metric tonne. This value was **US\$36.00** or **8.87%** above the **US\$406.00** in December. This month's price is above the January 2017 price by **US\$65.00** or **17.24%**. A two-year comparison revealed that the commodity's price was **US\$73.00** or **19.78%** higher than its price in 2015. The five-year monthly price average for rice prices ranging from January 2012 to December 2017 is **US\$421.96** per metric tonne, indicating that December's price was **US\$20.04** or **4.749%** above the long term average.

Monthly Cereal Price (December 2016 - December 2017)



Meat Prices for January 2017 - January 2018



Beef Prices

In January 2018, beef prices increased relative to the previous month. Prices increased by **US\$0.07** per kg or **1.72%** when compared to the previous month, to close at **US\$4.14** per kg. When compared to January 2017, prices have risen by **US\$0.23** or **5.88%** per kg. In January 2016 prices were **US\$3.5** cents per pound hence this year's price was **US\$0.64** or **18.28%** above the 2016 price. The five-year average for prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$4.32** cents

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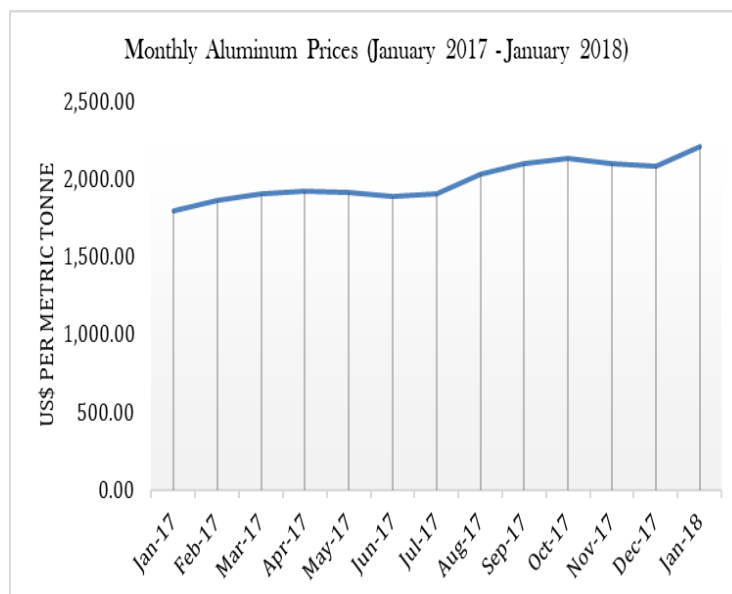
per pound indicating that this month's price was **US\$0.1788** or **4.320%** above.

Chicken Prices

Chicken prices ended at **US\$2.09** per kg at end January 2018. This was approximately **US\$0.0576** or **6.09%** higher in relation to the December 2017 price. A one year comparison showed that this month's price was **US\$0.15** or **7.732%** higher than the January 2017 price. In January 2016, the price for poultry was **US\$0.0185** per kg, indicating that this year's price was **US\$ 0.24** or **12.97%** higher. The average monthly price ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 is **US\$2.09** cents per pound, this means that this year's price was **US\$0.0023** or **0.1115%** more.

Aluminum Prices

The price of aluminum increased in January 2018 relative to December last year. Prices increased by **US\$129.26** or **6.21%** to end the month at **US\$2,209.73** per metric tonne. For January 2018 relative to January 2017, prices increased by **US\$418.49** or **23.36%** per metric tonne. A two-year comparison revealed that this year's price was **US\$728.63** or **49.19%** above the price for the corresponding period in 2016. The five-year average for monthly prices ranging from January 2013 to December 2017 for aluminum is **US\$1,790.12** per metric tonne, this means that this year's January price was **US\$419.61** or **23.44%** higher.



Impact of global prices on Jamaica

There were price reductions observed in **15% (3)** of the commodities monitored for January 2018. Both the price of Brent and the WTI increased for the period January 2018 relative to December 2017. The Brent increased by **7.44%** and the WTI increased by **9.89%**. Natural gas price increased by **28.26%** for the corresponding period.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Food Price Index (FFPI) averaged 169.5 points in January 2018, nearly unchanged from December 2017 but almost 3% below the corresponding period last year. While firmer prices were registered for cereals and vegetable oils in January, dairy and sugar values were generally weaker and meat quotations remained steady. The FAO Cereal Price Index averaged 56.2 points in January, up almost 2.5% (4 points) from December and 6.3 percent from January 2017. Despite large supplies, wheat and maize prices received some support from a weaker US dollar as well as concerns over weather. Over the year, the FAO Sugar Price Index averaged almost 201 points in

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January, down 1.6% (3.2 points) from December and index is 7.4% higher than its January 2017 value and as much as 30.4% below the corresponding month last 19.5% below its all-time high reached in August year. The FAO Meat Price Index averaged 170.6 2014.

points in January, almost unchanged from its slightly revised value for December 2017. At this level, the

Commodity	Unit	December 2017 Price	January 2018 Price	Monthly Change %
Aluminum	Metric tonne	2080.47	2209.73	6.21%
Bananas	Kilogram	1.1	1.12	1.82%
Beef	Kilogram	4.07	4.14	1.72%
Chicken	Kilogram	1.97	2.09	6.09%
Cocoa Beans	Metric tonne	1.92	1.95	1.56%
Coffee-Arabicas	Kilogram	3.03	3.06	0.99%
Coffee-Robusta	Kilogram	1.93	1.95	1.04%
Corn-Maize	Metric tonne	148.98	155.84	4.60%
Natural gas	MMBTU	2.76	3.54	28.26%
Crude Brent	Barrel	64.21	68.99	7.44%
Crude West Texas Intermediate	Barrel	57.94	63.67	9.89%
Oranges	Kilogram	0.77	0.76	-1.30%
Rice	Metric tonne	406	442	8.87%
Soybean	Metric tonne	399	403.75	1.19%
Soybean meal	Metric tonne	373	384.25	3.02%
Soybean oil	Metric tonne	866	865.25	-0.09%
Sugar (free market)	Kilogram	0.32	0.31	-3.13%
Sugar US (Import)	Kilogram	0.39	0.4	2.56%
Sugar European (Import)	Kilogram	0.59	0.59	0.00%
Wheat	Metric tonne	184.09	192.17	4.39%

International Commodity Prices

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Actual prices through
20-Jan-2016Table 1. Near Term Commodity Price Baseline
(In U.S. Dollars)

		Projections															
Commodities	Units	2014Q1	2014Q2	2014Q3	2014Q4	2015Q1	2015Q2	2015Q3	2015Q4	2016Q1	2016Q2	2016Q3	2016Q4	2017Q1	2017Q2	2017Q3	2017Q4
Food																	
Cereals																	
Wheat	\$/MT	248.8	274.3	226.3	220.6	205.0	196.3	178.8	162.3	186.3	174.8	178.4	185.0	188.8	190.7	193.4	198.2
Maize	\$/MT	210.1	213.9	173.9	173.5	174.2	168.4	169.4	167.1	156.6	146.9	149.9	153.7	157.3	159.5	159.9	158.1
Rice	\$/MT	440.7	408.4	435.0	420.8	406.6	381.8	374.0	358.3	356.0	357.6	347.8	345.9	308.9	310.3	301.8	300.2
Barley	\$/MT	162.7	166.9	132.8	122.0	132.2	128.1	127.9	123.2	121.6	124.0	125.4	110.9	134.7	137.4	138.9	122.8
Vegetable oils and protein meals																	
Soybeans	\$/MT	498.3	540.4	421.7	370.9	363.9	354.6	347.6	323.3	321.6	321.4	323.6	324.2	326.5	328.0	328.9	325.7
Soybean meal	\$/MT	493.3	531.9	436.0	406.7	372.7	348.0	369.3	320.8	297.1	300.2	304.9	307.3	310.1	311.5	312.7	312.3
Soybean oil	\$/MT	877.9	899.7	757.1	716.1	696.4	715.4	693.3	638.6	656.3	661.8	668.3	669.9	677.6	683.2	687.2	682.4
Palm oil	\$/MT	813.7	794.7	695.9	653.3	627.9	599.9	514.6	518.0	536.3	559.7	557.2	552.5	556.6	557.3	557.0	556.6
Fish meal	\$/MT	1657.9	1861.6	1973.6	2192.7	2031.9	1744.2	1558.9	1701.9	1704.5	1603.5	1405.2	1363.6	1358.2	1277.8	1119.8	1086.6
Sunflower Oil	\$/MT	1133.1	1121.5	1012.5	1054.2	974.0	1062.3	1010.4	1042.1	1022.1	1013.1	1004.0	995.9	1014.3	1005.3	996.3	988.2
Olive oil	\$/MT	3599.0	3663.5	4122.1	4262.5	4588.3	4855.3	5616.4	4658.4	4190.4	4200.0	4248.3	4290.2	4342.4	4352.4	4402.4	4445.8
Groundnuts	\$/MT	2377.3	2228.8	2046.8	1940.1	2016.8	2023.4	2012.9	1731.8	1656.9	1616.7	1576.3	1535.9	1634.4	1594.7	1554.8	1514.9
Rapeseed oil	\$/MT	980.3	963.1	849.6	824.4	755.1	772.6	772.7	798.2	811.0	784.4	779.0	773.6	799.9	715.7	710.8	705.8
Meat																	
Beef	cts/lb	191.8	195.5	252.9	256.0	216.6	202.9	206.3	176.2	167.1	156.8	152.0	157.3	160.7	150.7	146.1	151.3
Lamb	cts/lb	124.1	135.4	132.8	130.2	122.5	112.4	101.3	95.3	95.5	95.5	96.4	97.6	98.2	98.2	99.1	100.3
Swine Meat	cts/lb	92.8	115.4	112.8	90.3	65.5	71.9	73.8	60.5	53.1	52.2	52.0	49.5	48.2	47.4	47.1	44.9
Poultry	cts/lb	104.7	109.0	113.0	113.9	114.0	115.6	115.5	113.6	113.1	117.5	120.1	118.4	120.6	125.3	128.1	126.3
Seafood																	
Salmon	\$/kg	7.8	6.9	5.9	5.8	5.6	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.0	5.1	4.7	4.7	4.5
Shrimp	\$/lb	17.1	17.8	17.0	14.3	15.7	15.7	15.0	10.0	10.1	9.4	9.3	9.8	9.5	8.8	8.7	9.2
Sugar																	
Free market	cts/lb	16.8	18.2	17.7	15.8	14.1	12.6	11.6	14.7	14.3	13.9	13.7	13.8	14.2	13.9	13.7	13.6
United States	cts/lb	22.4	25.3	26.5	25.3	24.8	24.6	24.5	25.5	25.8	25.9	26.0	26.0	25.5	25.6	25.6	25.5
EU	cts/lb	27.5	28.0	27.8	26.3	25.2	25.5	25.8	25.3	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.2	25.2	25.2	25.2
Bananas	\$/MT	947.1	929.2	939.3	911.9	974.8	978.4	948.9	932.7	932.3	921.3	900.7	891.1	897.7	887.1	867.3	858.0
Oranges	\$/MT	777.4	838.8	774.1	739.8	698.5	616.9	652.1	733.1	770.0	765.3	760.8	758.1	769.9	765.2	760.7	758.0
Beverages																	
Coffee																	
Other milds	cts/lb	175.8	213.7	208.4	213.5	177.0	161.0	153.2	150.8	132.2	113.9	117.0	120.6	123.1	124.6	126.6	128.6
Robusta	cts/lb	102.0	107.9	106.0	106.6	101.4	96.7	90.9	87.9	61.5	63.5	65.6	67.3	68.8	70.2	71.4	72.4
Cocoa Beans	\$/MT	2951.3	3085.0	3229.2	2985.6	2918.5	3068.1	3252.8	3301.5	2991.0	2863.5	2863.8	2833.2	2813.8	2815.6	2811.0	2802.3
Tea	cts/kg	247.9	222.2	233.7	247.6	291.2	320.1	387.2	363.0	343.5	343.5	355.1	364.8	345.9	345.9	357.6	367.4
Agricultural raw materials																	
Timber																	
Hardwood																	
Logs	\$/M3	289.8	291.5	286.5	260.4	249.9	245.4	243.6	245.2	244.6	244.6	244.6	244.6	254.6	254.6	254.6	254.6
Sawnwood	\$/M3	901.9	917.3	910.0	862.6	826.2	834.8	844.9	827.1	816.8	809.3	817.6	853.1	824.6	817.0	825.4	861.2
Softwood																	
Logs	\$/M3	178.4	169.7	167.4	181.5	169.8	159.1	159.8	159.4	159.4	169.1	159.4	160.5	164.0	174.0	164.0	165.2
Sawnwood	\$/M3	306.1	312.6	308.3	302.1	306.8	298.0	310.4	329.0	329.0	321.5	312.1	306.8	322.4	315.1	305.8	300.7
Cotton	cts/lb	94.0	92.6	77.1	68.7	68.8	72.3	71.0	69.5	62.0	62.3	62.6	62.0	63.0	63.3	63.5	63.6
Wool																	
Fine	cts/kg	1114.0	1086.0	1068.1	1029.4	947.8	1079.7	999.7	995.8	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3	1028.3
Coarse	cts/kg	1083.6	1058.7	1025.0	954.3	887.7	962.7	942.0	898.9	909.9	888.9	859.0	809.5	760.3	742.7	717.7	676.4
Rubber	cts/lb	102.1	96.1	83.4	73.5	78.6	81.2	66.1	57.0	57.2	58.9	58.7	60.4	61.0	62.0	62.2	62.0
Hides	cts/lb	107.6	109.8	110.8	112.7	105.8	96.8	76.1	71.7	70.0	71.5	72.2	74.5	77.7	79.3	80.1	82.7
Metals																	
Copper	\$/MT	7080.2	6795.3	6995.8	6692.3	5833.2	6056.6	5267.1	4884.9	4384.1	4357.5	4354.5	4352.0	4351.0	4351.0	4351.0	4351.0
Aluminum	\$/MT	1709.3	1800.2	1989.7	1970.4	1802.1	1770.3	1592.4	1493.9	1468.9	1471.3	1479.5	1487.9	1496.9	1507.8	1518.5	1529.1
Iron Ore	\$/MT	120.4	102.6	90.3	74.0	62.3	57.9	54.4	46.2	39.9	36.3	34.3	33.0	32.2	32.1	32.1	32.1
Tin	\$/MT	22686.3	23146.2	21915.2	19897.9	18370.0	15389.8	15229.5	15077.2	13553.8	13461.7	13480.0	13400.0	13380.0	13370.0	13316.9	13290.3
Nickel	\$/MT	14661.0	18467.8	18394.2	15860.5	14392.8	13055.8	10578.9	9423.0	8520.8	8562.0	8598.0	8691.7	8662.0	8692.0	8721.7	8745.0
Zinc	\$/MT	2026.5	2071.4	2310.7	2235.3	2079.8	2192.2	1842.8	1611.8	1484.4	1486.8	1497.5	1506.3	1514.2	1521.6	1527.8	1533.8
Lead	\$/MT	2101.4	2097.1	2182.4	2000.9	1810.4	1942.2	1717.0	1681.7	1619.9	1612.7	1615.8	1619.8	1624.5	1629.8	1635.1	1641.0
Uranium	\$/lb	35.2	29.8	31.2	37.8	37.9	36.8	36.4	36.0	35.1	30.0	30.9	35.4	35.8	30.5	31.5	36.1
Energy																	
Spot Crude 1/	\$/bbl	103.7	106.3	100.4	74.5	51.7	60.4	48.8	42.2	27.0	28.9	31.0	32.7	34.1	35.4	36.4	37.4
Natural Gas																	
Russian in Germany	\$/MMBTU	10.8	10.7	10.1	10.3	9.4	7.4	6.6	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
Indonesian in Japan (LNG)	\$/MMBTU	17.8	17.6	16.5	16.1	14.4	9.6	9.8	9.8	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
US, domestic market	\$/MMBTU	5.2	4.6	3.9	3.8	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.8
Coal																	
Australian, export markets	\$/MT	82.6	77.9	72.7	67.4	65.6	63.2	61.6	56.1	56.0	52.5	46.7	48.9	56.8	53.2	47.4	49.6

1/ Petroleum price is average of spot prices for U.K. Brent, Dubai and West Texas Intermediate.

International Commodity Prices

January 2018 Issue

Actual prices through
20-Jan-2016

Table 2. Medium Term Commodity Price Baseline
(In U.S. Dollars)

Commodities	Units	2009A1	2010A1	2011A1	2012A1	2013A1	2014A1	2015A1	2016A1	2017A1	2018A1	2019A1	2020A1	2021A1
Actual					Projections									
Food														
Cereals														
Wheat	\$/MT	190.1	194.5	280.0	276.1	265.8	242.5	185.6	181.1	192.8	199.7	202.7	201.0	199.3
Maize	\$/MT	165.5	186.0	291.8	298.4	259.0	192.9	169.8	151.8	158.7	163.0	166.4	166.4	166.4
Rice	\$/MT	589.4	520.6	551.7	580.2	518.8	426.5	380.2	351.8	305.3	305.3	305.3	305.3	305.3
Barley	\$/MT	128.4	158.4	207.2	238.2	206.4	146.1	127.9	120.5	133.4	128.9	128.4	127.7	127.0
Vegetable oils and protein meals														
Soybeans	\$/MT	378.5	384.9	484.2	537.8	517.2	457.8	347.4	322.7	327.3	328.2	328.2	328.2	328.2
Soybean meal	\$/MT	359.3	331.3	378.9	473.3	477.3	467.0	352.7	302.4	311.6	314.9	316.9	316.9	316.9
Soybean oil	\$/MT	787.0	924.8	1215.8	1151.8	1011.1	812.7	672.2	664.1	682.6	681.0	681.0	681.0	681.0
Palm oil	\$/MT	644.1	859.9	1076.5	939.8	764.2	739.4	565.1	551.4	556.9	569.6	529.3	486.8	447.2
Fish meal	\$/MT	1255.9	1739.2	1519.3	1624.3	1710.5	1921.5	1759.2	1519.2	1210.6	1210.6	1210.6	1210.6	1210.6
Sunflower Oil	\$/MT	1041.7	1186.0	1621.8	1489.5	1341.1	1080.3	1022.2	1008.8	1001.0	1001.0	1001.0	1001.0	1001.0
Olive oil	\$/MT	3509.3	3171.3	3070.3	3135.7	3816.7	3911.8	4927.1	4232.2	4385.8	4385.8	4385.8	4385.8	4385.8
Groundnuts	\$/MT	994.6	1239.4	1724.0	1688.2	2314.5	2148.3	1946.2	1596.5	1574.7	1574.7	1574.7	1574.7	1574.7
Rapeseed oil	\$/MT	856.2	1011.7	1366.6	1239.1	1081.2	904.4	774.6	787.0	718.1	719.0	719.0	719.5	719.0
Meat														
Beef	cts/lb	119.6	152.5	183.2	187.9	183.6	224.1	200.5	158.3	152.2	152.2	152.2	152.2	152.2
Lamb	cts/lb	146.9	145.7	149.2	100.9	106.7	130.6	107.9	96.3	99.0	98.4	97.7	97.1	96.2
Swine Meat	cts/lb	55.8	74.4	89.1	82.8	86.5	102.8	67.9	51.7	46.9	47.4	46.9	46.1	45.5
Poultry	cts/lb	85.6	85.8	87.4	94.3	103.8	110.1	114.7	117.3	125.1	125.1	125.1	125.1	125.1
Seafood														
Salmon	\$/kg	4.9	6.1	5.9	4.8	6.8	6.6	5.3	5.4	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
Shrimp	\$/lb	9.5	10.1	11.9	10.1	14.0	16.6	14.1	9.7	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Sugar														
Free market	cts/lb	18.2	20.9	26.2	21.4	17.7	17.1	13.2	13.9	13.9	13.6	14.5	14.5	14.5
United States	cts/lb	24.3	31.1	37.6	28.9	21.2	24.9	24.9	25.9	25.6	25.5	24.8	24.7	23.8
EU	cts/lb	26.0	25.7	26.7	26.4	26.0	27.4	25.4	25.0	25.2	25.2	25.2	25.2	25.2
Bananas	\$/MT	848.0	881.4	975.9	984.3	926.4	931.9	958.7	911.3	877.5	861.2	853.4	845.5	837.2
Oranges	\$/MT	909.0	1033.2	891.1	868.0	967.3	782.5	675.1	763.5	763.4	763.4	763.4	763.4	763.4
Beverages														
Coffee														
Other milds	cts/lb	141.6	194.4	273.2	187.6	141.1	202.8	160.5	120.9	125.7	132.2	137.3	137.3	137.3
Robusta	cts/lb	77.1	84.1	116.0	110.6	100.5	105.6	94.2	64.5	70.7	70.7	70.7	70.7	70.7
Cocoa Beans	\$/MT	2895.0	3130.6	2978.5	2377.1	2439.1	3062.8	3135.2	2872.9	2810.2	2760.0	2660.7	2557.4	2458.1
Tea	cts/kg	314.0	316.7	346.2	348.9	266.0	237.9	340.4	351.7	354.2	354.2	354.2	354.2	354.2
Agricultural raw materials														
Timber														
Hardwood														
Logs	\$/M3	287.2	278.2	390.5	360.5	305.4	282.0	246.0	244.6	254.6	254.6	254.6	254.6	254.6
Sawnwood	\$/M3	805.5	848.3	939.4	876.3	852.8	897.9	833.2	824.2	832.0	830.1	826.3	824.2	821.1
Softwood														
Logs	\$/M3	136.7	141.5	150.0	148.0	164.5	174.3	162.0	162.1	166.8	163.9	161.9	157.8	156.9
Sawnwood	\$/M3	291.0	281.8	280.9	284.7	301.4	307.3	311.0	317.3	311.0	309.0	304.6	301.3	298.3
Cotton	cts/lb	62.8	103.5	154.6	89.2	90.4	83.1	70.4	62.2	63.3	62.9	62.6	54.2	46.3
Wool														
Fine	cts/kg	778.5	1023.2	1638.2	1345.3	1197.7	1074.4	1005.8	1028.3	1028.3	1006.2	877.2	773.7	652.3
Coarse	cts/kg	611.4	820.1	1209.2	1212.6	1128.1	1030.4	922.8	866.8	724.3	608.7	601.8	540.2	485.4
Rubber	cts/lb	87.2	165.7	218.5	153.2	126.8	88.8	70.7	59.1	61.8	54.2	49.4	44.0	39.2
Hides	cts/lb	44.9	72.0	82.0	83.2	94.7	110.2	87.6	72.1	79.9	79.0	78.2	78.6	78.2
Metals														
Copper	\$/MT	5165.3	7538.4	8823.5	7958.9	7331.5	6869.4	5510.5	4362.0	4351.0	4360.8	4377.1	4394.7	4401.0
Aluminum	\$/MT	1669.2	2173.0	2400.6	2022.8	1846.7	1867.4	1664.7	1476.9	1513.1	1562.9	1625.4	1694.3	1751.7
Iron Ore	\$/MT	80.0	146.7	167.8	128.5	135.4	96.8	55.2	35.9	32.1	31.6	35.9	35.9	35.9
Tin	\$/MT	13602.7	20367.2	26051.4	21109.4	22281.6	21898.9	16066.6	13461.4	13339.3	13339.3	13339.3	13339.3	13339.3
Nickel	\$/MT	14672.4	21810.0	22909.1	17541.7	15030.0	16893.4	11862.6	8578.1	8705.2	8810.8	8900.8	8970.8	9017.0
Zinc	\$/MT	1658.4	2160.4	2195.5	1950.0	1910.2	2161.0	1931.7	1493.7	1524.3	1544.6	1553.8	1555.8	1555.8
Lead	\$/MT	1719.4	2148.2	2400.7	2063.6	2139.7	2095.5	1787.8	1617.0	1652.6	1659.3	1697.2	1735.0	1754.5
Uranium	\$/lb	46.7	46.0	56.2	48.9	38.6	33.5	36.8	32.9	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.4	33.5
Energy														
Spot Crude 1/	\$/bbl	61.8	79.0	104.0	105.0	104.1	96.2	50.8	29.9	35.8	39.7	43.1	45.3	46.5
Natural Gas														
Russian in Germany	\$/MMBTU	8.9	8.2	10.6	12.0	11.2	10.5	7.3	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
Indonesian in Japan (LNG)	\$/MMBTU	7.5	9.4	15.6	18.1	17.3	17.0	10.9	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
US, domestic market	\$/MMBTU	3.9	4.4	4.0	2.8	3.7	4.4	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2
Coal														
Australian, export markets	\$/MT	77.0	106.0	130.1	103.2	90.6	75.1	61.6	51.0	51.7	51.7	51.7	51.7	51.7

1/ Petroleum price is average of spot prices for U.K. Brent, Dubai and West Texas Intermediate.

Monthly Inflation Rate and Treasury Bill Rates

Monthly Inflation Rate

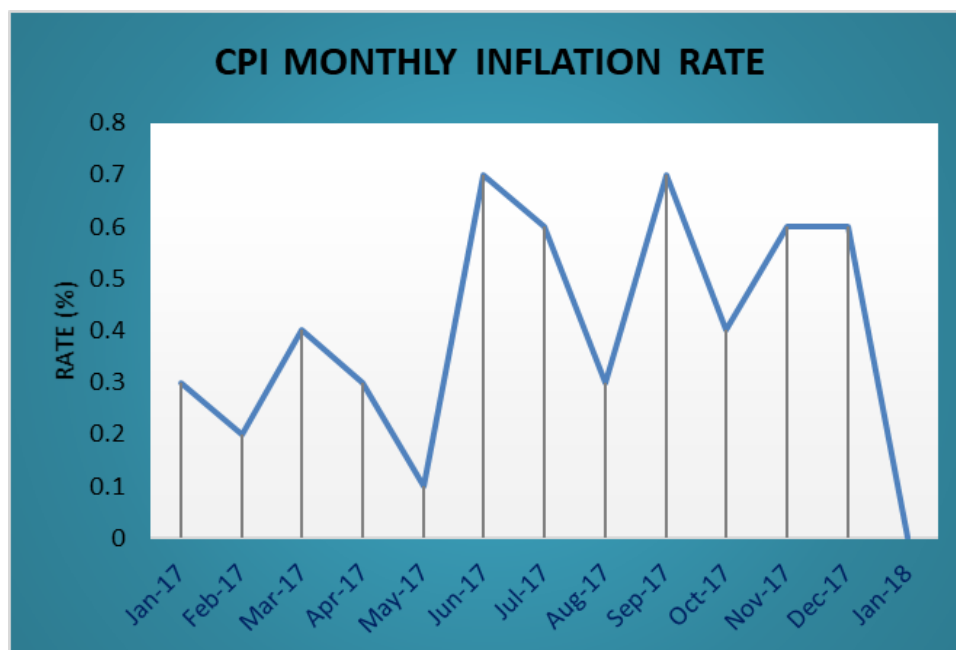
Inflation, measured by the All Jamaica “All Divisions” Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the period January 2018 over December 2017 recorded a negligible movement according to the January 2018 Consumer Price Index (CPI) Bulletin. Inflation for the fiscal year to date was 4.2% and the point-to-point movement was 4.8%.

According to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica fluctuations were seen in the largest weighted division. In the division Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels an upward movement of 0.3% was recorded primarily resulting from higher electricity and water rates. This was due mainly to the class Water Supply and Miscellaneous Services Related to the Dwelling recording a 1.0% rise in its index due to increased water and sewage rates. The division Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels also recorded an increase of 0.2% resulting from higher

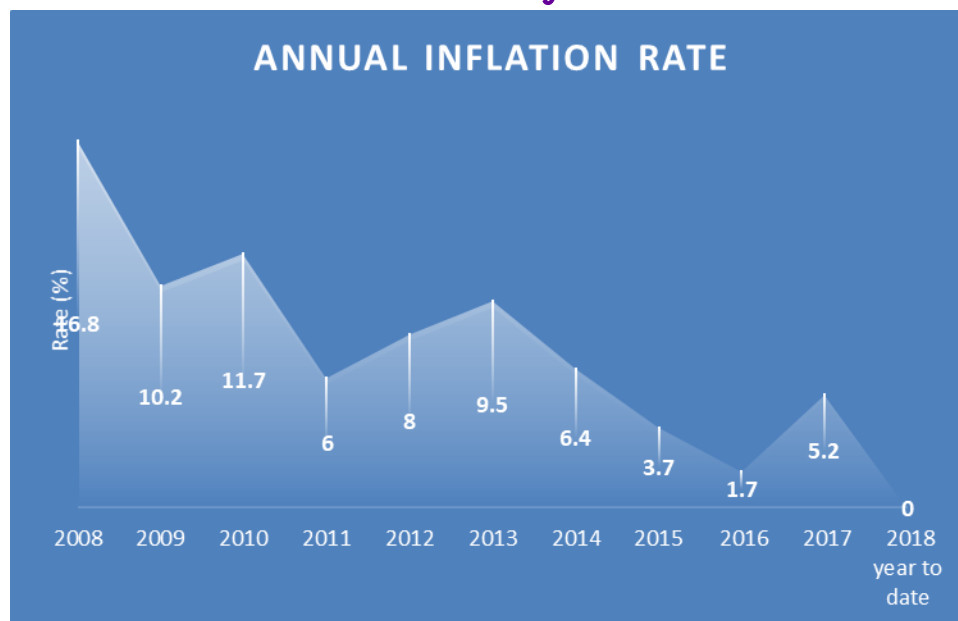
electricity rates. The index for Education rose by 0.5 per cent for the month January 2018. This increase was due to increased tuition fees for the Easter term.

The impact of these increases was offset by declines in mainly two divisions. A fall of 0.2% was seen in the Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages divisions. The movement in this division was largely influenced by a decline of 1.4% in the sub division Vegetables and Starchy Foods because of lower prices for starchy foods and vegetables locally. The division Transport’ also recorded a negative movement, 0.1 per cent for the period, because of lower cost for air travel.

Inflation in all the three regional areas increased for the month of January 2018 relative to December 2017. Inflation in the Greater Kingston Metropolitan area (GKMA), Other Urban Centers (OUC) and Rural Areas increased by 0.7%, 0.5% and 0.5%, respectively.



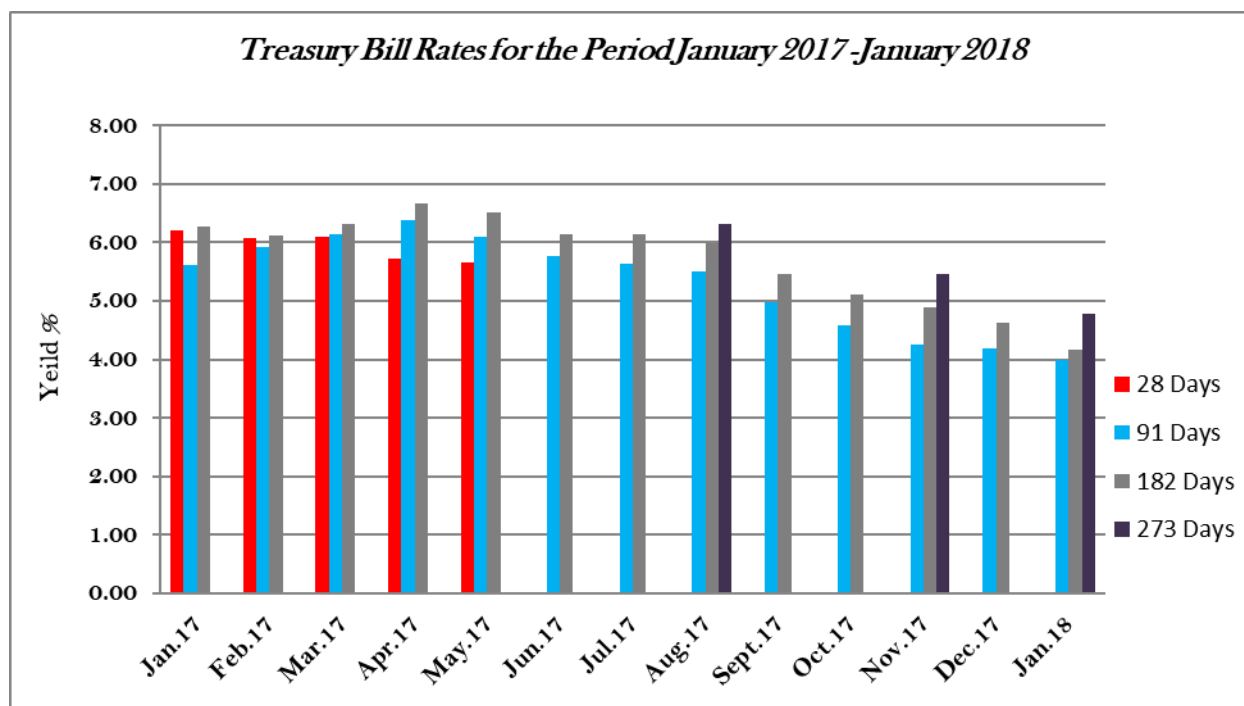
Monthly Inflation Rate and Treasury Bill Rates



Treasury Bill Rates

For the month of January 2018 yields on the Government of Jamaica 91-day, 182-day and 273-day were bills **3.99bps**, **4.16bps** and **4.79bps** respectively. For January relative to December yields on the 91-day decreased by 19bps and yield on the 182-day decreased by 47bps. For the period January

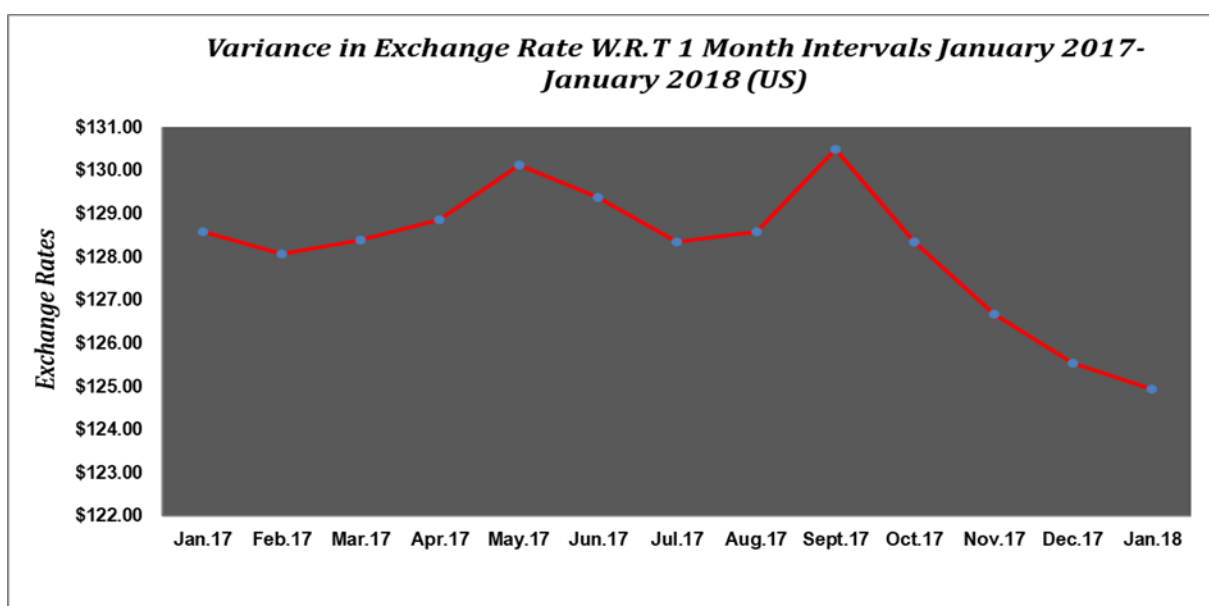
2018 in comparison to January 2017, yields on GOJ 91-day, 182-day and the 273-day decreased of 221bps, 146bps and 148bps respectively. A two-year comparison showed decreases in the rate of 196bps and 178bps on the yields of the 91-day, and 182-day.



Monthly Exchange Rates Update

JMD:USD

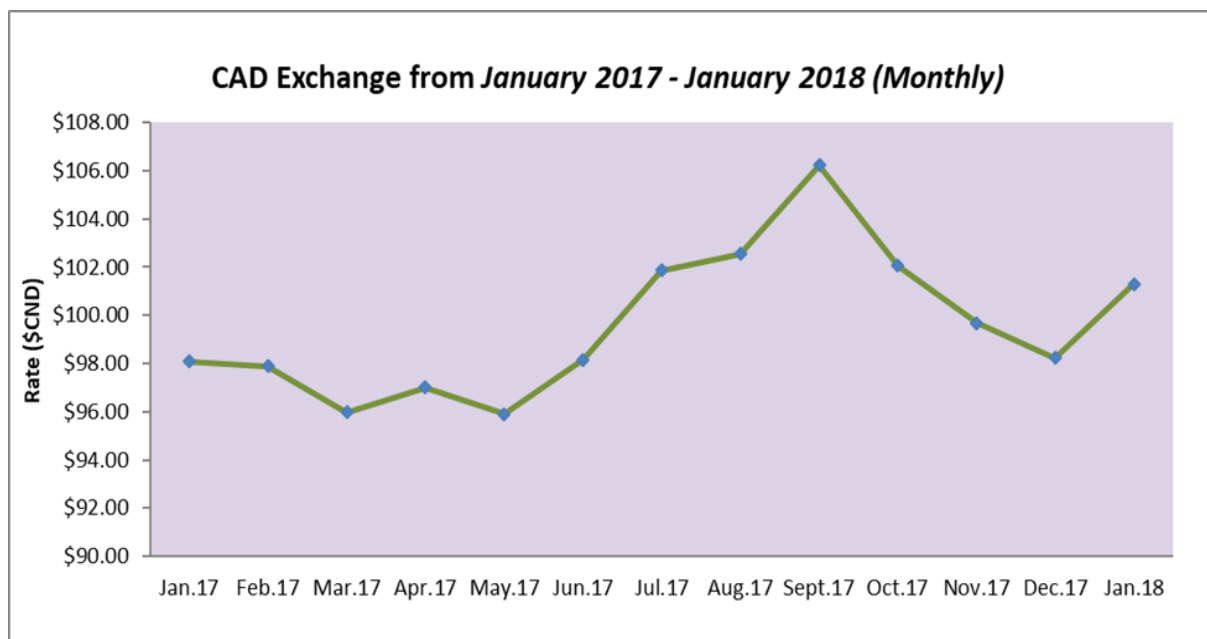
In analysis of the exchange rates over the period January 2018 over December 2017, the monthly average value of the Jamaican dollar appreciated by **\$0.62** or **0.4938%** relative to the US dollar. As a result, the exchange rate progressed to settle at **US\$1.00=J\$124.93**. A one-year comparison revealed appreciation in the currency ratio of J\$3.65, resulting in an overall decrease in the value of the \$US by 2.839%. The month's exchange rate was further compared with the rate of the same month recorded previously in 2016, the comparison showed that there was an increase in the value of the \$US by J\$4.07 (percentage increase of 3.367).



JMD:CAD

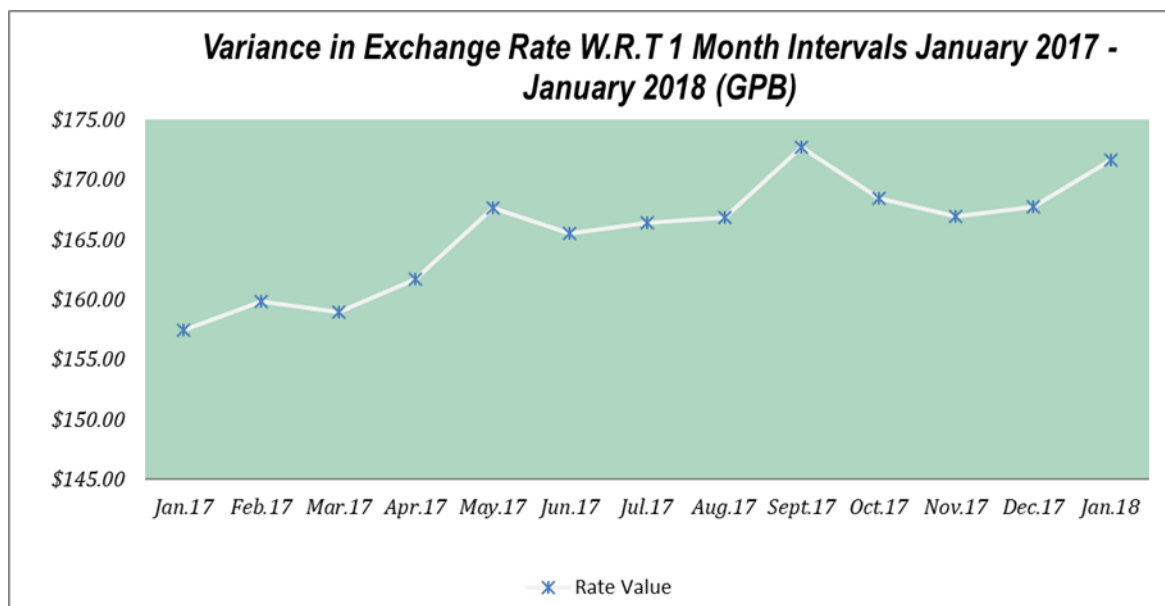
In relation to the exchange rate recorded for the month of January 2018, calculations accentuated the fact that the Jamaican dollar depreciated by **3.146%** (**\$J3.09**) relative to the previous month. In this regard, the value of the Jamaican dollar to the Canadian dollar at the end of January was **CAD\$1.00=J\$101.31**. The exchange rate of January 2018 was further set side by side with the rate 1 year earlier (January 2017) which revealed that the value of the Jamaican dollar depreciated by J\$3.22 or 3.284%. Furthermore, calculations comparing the exchange rate values for January 2018 and January 2016 made clear the overall depreciation of the dollar over the 2-year period. This conclusion was made because of the difference in the value of the dollar of J\$16.45 (depreciation of 19.38%).

Monthly Exchange Rates Update



JMD:GBP

The exchange rate's monthly variance of **J\$3.91** was seen to exist within the boundaries of January 2018 and December 2017, this indicates that the Jamaican dollar depreciated by some **2.330%**. The exchange rate at end January was **GBP1.00=J\$171.67** in comparison to the previous month GBP1.00=J\$167.76. The annual comparison of the exchange rates for the months January 2018 and January 2017 revealed that the Jamaican dollar depreciated in such a way that there was an increase in the price of the \$GBP equal to J\$14.22 (9.031%). Further investigation of the exchange rate extending to January 2016 showed that the cost of the Pound decreased by J\$0.66 or 0.3830%.



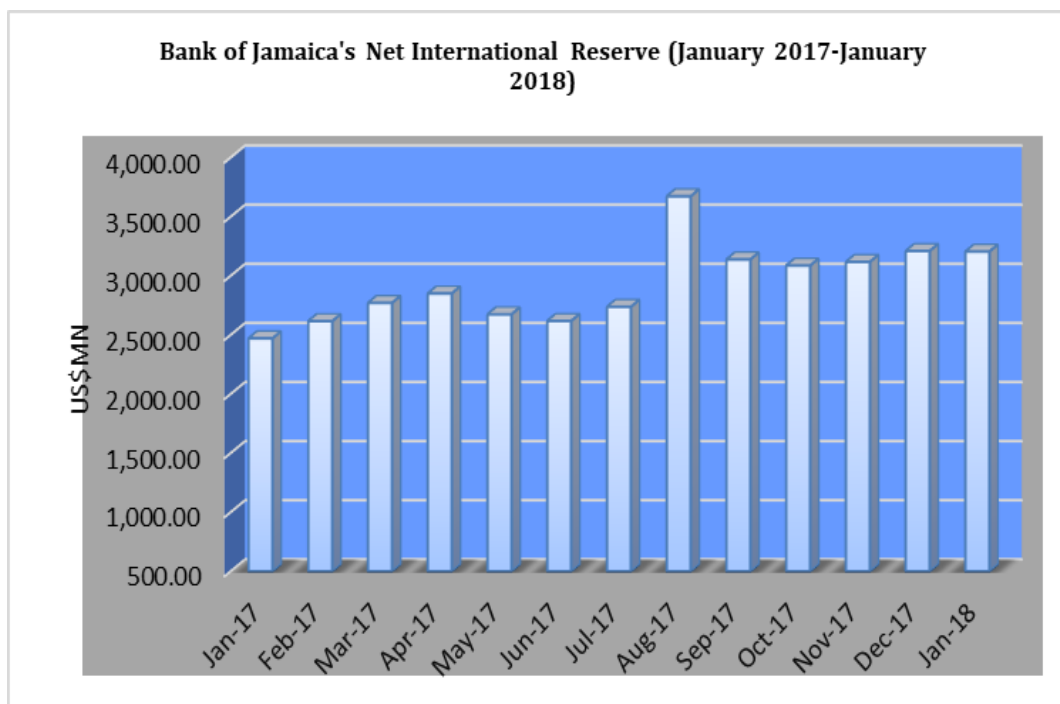
Net International Reserves & Money Base

January 2018 Issue

Net International Reserves

Data for the month ending January 2018 revealed that the stock of Net International Reserves (NIR) at the Bank of Jamaica was **J\$408.65** billion (**US\$3,203.36** million). This reflected a decrease of **J\$0.628** billion (**US\$4.93** million) relative to December 2017. The change in the NIR for the month was due to an increase both in foreign assets and foreign liabilities. Under the category of foreign asset one source decreased while two increased. Currency and Deposit decreased by **US\$16.73** million. Securities increased by **US\$18.78** million and SDR & IMF Reserve Position increased by **US\$6.30** million. The month ended with total

foreign asset **US\$3,789.51** million representing a total increase of **US\$8.34** million. Under the category of Foreign liabilities payments to the IMF increased while Other payments remained the same. Payments to the IMF increased by **US\$13.27** million which was the total increase in Foreign liabilities. Foreign Liabilities ended the month at **US\$586.15** million. At the end of January, the gross reserves were sufficient to finance **40.23** weeks of goods imports which represented **28.23** weeks over the international benchmark of **12** weeks of goods imports.

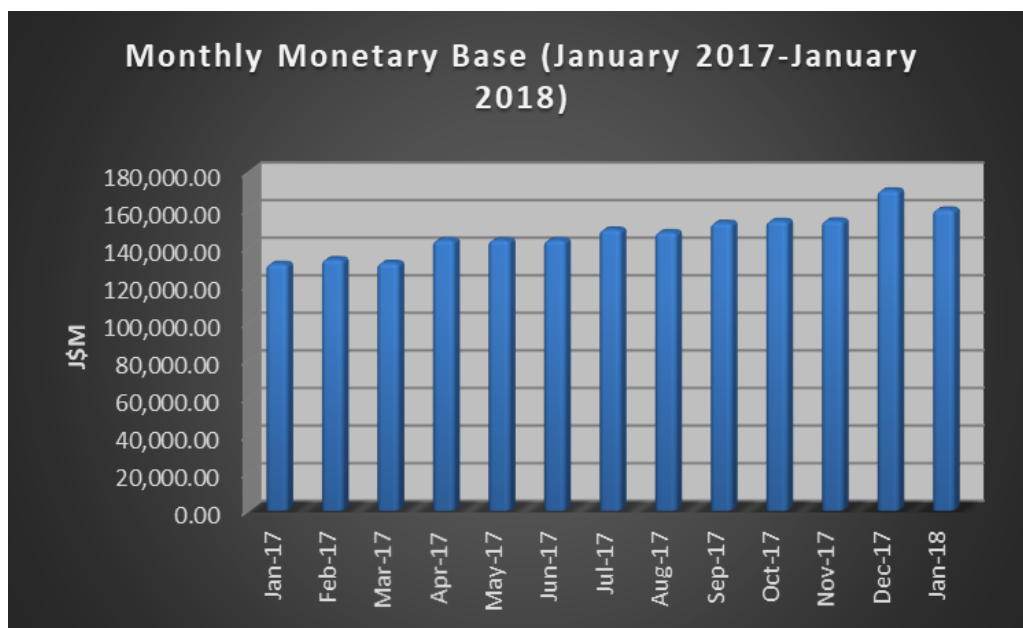


Net International Reserves & Money Base

January 2018 Issue

Monetary Base

The monetary base decreased by **J\$10.211** billion to end month of January at **J\$160.180** billion. The change in the base reflected decreases in two sources while one source increased. Net Currency Issue decreased by **J\$11.999** billion to end at **J\$98.921** billion. Commercial Banks' Current Account decreased by **J\$0.261** billion to a total of **J\$0.452** billion. The Commercial Banks' Statutory Reserves increased by **J\$2.048** billion to a total of **J\$60.807** billion.



Tourist Arrivals

January 2018 Issue

Stopover tourist arrivals for December 2017 were **251,800**. This month's total was **64,738** or **34.61%** higher than the 187,062 in November 2017. This year's December total is an increase of **9.3%** over the **230,453** recorded in December 2016. May to

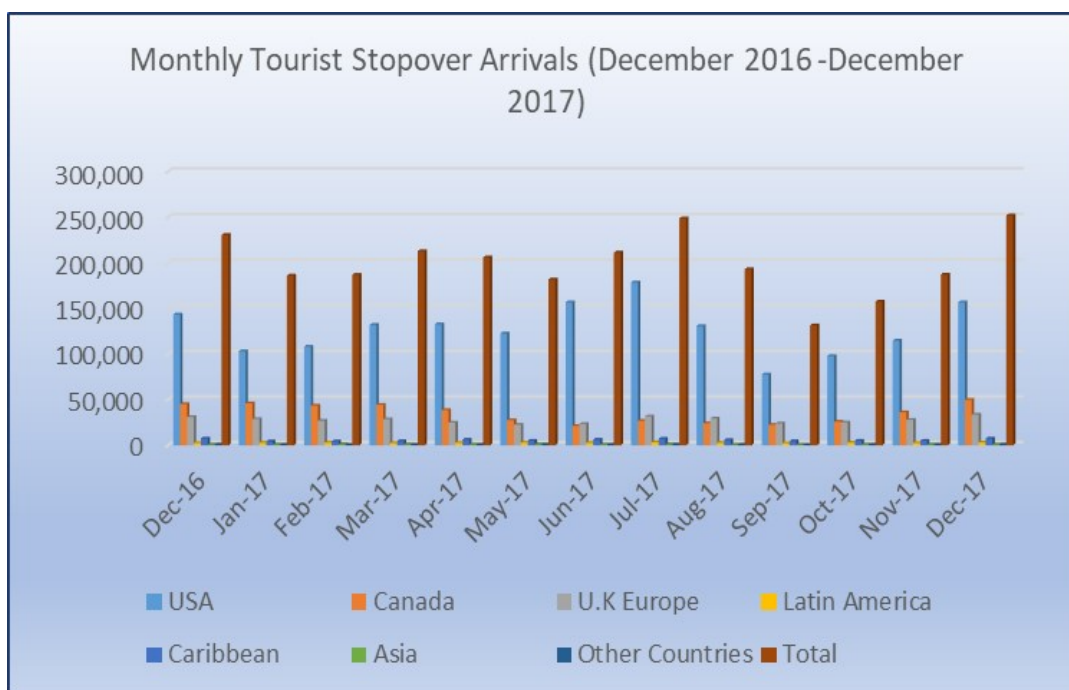
December stopover totaled 1,561,950, an 10.9% increase over the 1,408,576 in 2016. Total stopovers for the calendar year 2017 was 2,352,915, representing an increase of 7.8% compared to 2,181,684 for the corresponding period last year.

For December 2017, the changes reflected in the total stopovers observed in the seven categories varied. Out of the seven categories four recorded increases, two recorded decreases while one remained the same. Increases were seen in arrivals from the United States (9.4%), Canada (10.5%), Europe (9.0%) and Latin America (27.0%).

Decreases were seen in arrivals from the Caribbean and Asia. Decreases recorded for the following categories were 0.6% and 6.2% for the Caribbean and Asia respectively. Arrivals from other countries remained the same.

A total of **208,212** cruise passengers visited Jamaica in December 2017. This represented a **26,431** or **11.26%** overall decrease compared to the **234,643** recorded in November 2017. For the corresponding period in 2016 total cruise passengers was **182,341** hence this year's total was **14.2%** more.

Total cruise passenger arrivals for 2017 was 1,923,274. This a 16.2% or 267,712 increase in comparison to the corresponding period last year.



Previous Highlights: December 2017 Summary

January 2018 Issue

The Jamaican economy macro indicators have remained relatively stable during 2017. The period of economic stability is one of the best in past decades.

At the end of 2017, the Jamaican economy recorded a calendar year inflation rate of 5.2% which was within the target range for FY2017/18 of 4.0% to 6.0%. There were no adverse movements recorded during the year. The lowest rate was recorded in May at 0.1%. The highest rate was recorded in the months June and September at 0.7%.

A total appreciation of approximately 2.356% was recorded in the movement of the Bank of Jamaica's monthly average exchange rate between the US Dollar and the Jamaican Dollar over the period of 2017. In this regard, the rate moved from \$128.58 in January 2017 to \$125.55 in December 2017. At the start of 2017, the monthly average exchange rate between the Canadian and Jamaican Dollars was \$98.09 however by year end the value was at \$98.22 representing a marginal depreciation of 0.1325%. Depreciation of 6.54% was calculated over the period on 2017 between the Jamaican dollar and the Great Britain Pound. The monthly average exchange rate moved from \$157.45 at the start of the year to \$167.76 at year end.

Total Value Added at Basic Prices for the Third Quarter in 2017 was 1.4% up from the 1.0% in the second quarter of 2017, which was two times the percentage recorded in the third quarter of 2016 at 0.7%.

According to the International Merchandise Trade (IMT) Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, Jamaica's merchandise trade deficit

totaled US\$3,636.9 million at the end of the January to October 2017 period. The deficit is 24.1 percent or US\$706.4 million higher than the US\$2,930.4 million recorded in the similar 2016 period.

Total population as at July 2017 as recorded by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica was 2,737,400 and the labour force as at the same period was 1,371,200. Unemployment Rate as at July 2017 was 11.3%.

Throughout the year 2017 business and consumer confidence indices remained strong. For the years 2016 - 2017 the optimism of both businesses and consumers remained relatively high since the start of the study in 2001. The survey reported that business confidence for the final quarter of 2017 stood at 142.6, just marginally below 144.6 in the first quarter of 2016, the highest recorded. The consumer confidence index was 148.0 in the last quarter of 2017, slightly below the 151.1 in the third quarter of 2017. Overall, in the past two years, business confidence index averaged 140.2 and consumer confidence index average 149.225.

The World Bank has acknowledged that the institutional reforms and efforts to improve the investment climate starting to bear fruit in the country. However, it was also noted by the Bank that "Despite the progress, faster economic growth is needed to eliminate poverty and boost shared prosperity. Crime and violence levels remain high. Youth unemployment is a persistent problem". Jamaica is not immune from the negative or positive shocks which occur at any time. The country should not only seek to build and improve trade relations but also develop our industries to meet the needs of domestic and international consumers. The country, in all sectors, needs to maximize the use of our local resources. The government should invest in developing, and modernizing, our labour force and also the agricultural industry, which are the main drivers behind growth.

KEY

January 2018 Issue

ACP— Africa Caribbean Pacific States	Loan – Average Loan Rate
BM – Base Money	M – Monthly Percentage Change
BP — Basis Points	M2 – Money Supply
CaPRI— Caribbean Policy and Research Institute	MT – Million tonnes
CARICOM— Caribbean Community & Common Market	N/A – Not Available
CARIFORUM— CARICOM and Dominican Republic	NIR – Net International Reserves
CPI – Consumer Price Index	OMO – Open Market Operation
CSME— Caribbean Single Market & Economy	P – Point-to-Point Percentage Change
EC— European Commission	R – Revised
EPA—Economic Partnership Agreement	S – Stopover
EU—European Union	Save – Average Savings Deposit Rate
FX Dep – Foreign Exchange Deposit	T-bill – 6-month Treasury Bill Yield
JCB – Jamaica Conference Board	Tourism – Total Tourist Arrivals
JCC – Jamaica Chamber of Commerce	WATBY- weighted average Treasury bill yield
KMA — Kingston and Metropolitan Area	WTO—World Trade Organization
KSA—Kingston and St. Andrew	OECD—Organisation for Economic Co-operating and Development (membership of 30 major countries)
WTI — West Texas Intermediate (Spot Oil Price)	

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The Economic Bulletin is a monthly synopsis of the major developments impacting the Jamaican economy. It covers a wide range of areas including inflation, the financial markets, fiscal accounts, tourism, the productive sectors and external trade. In addition to tracking changes in the main indicators, it also goes behind the numbers to examine the underlying factors driving those changes. The Bulletin also provides insight into how current trends may shape developments going forward in order to help inform your business decisions.