

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Amendments to the Integrity in Public Life Act (IPLA)**

The Integrity Commission has noted comments made about the inadequacies of the Integrity in Public Life Act (IPLA) to effectively conduct investigations. The Chairman Mr Kenneth Gordon, when questioned by a reporter, is on record as saying the Commission is “almost like a toothless tiger.”

There are a number of things which the IPLA directs but does not spell out the process by which those things can be done. This poses a tremendous handicap to the Commission. The Commission is seeking to amend the IPLA to strengthen its investigative powers. The Commission has completed consultations with stakeholders and will soon publish a draft summary report of its recommendations to amend the IPLA.

#### **What does the Commission propose?**

To make the Commission more effective in its fight against corruption, the Commission proposes the following amendments to Part V (Sections 32 to 44) of the IPLA which deals with the Power of Investigation:

- The need to establish means for enforcing the provisions of Sections 5(2) (c) and 34 of the IPLA which gives the Commission the power to authorise investigations, summon witnesses and subpoena persons.
- The need to give the Commission powers of search and seizure, as well as arrest.
- The Commission also recommends that systemic arrangements be made to facilitate the exchange of information between the Board of Inland Revenue, the Police Service, Customs and Immigration, the Financial Intelligence Unit, in order to avoid duplication of effort, enhance investigative capabilities.
- The High Court should have the power to freeze the assets of a person under investigation.
- Section 32 of the IPLA be amended to include a provision imposing a duty on persons exercising public functions to report any act which he/she suspects may concern corrupt conduct.

Strengthening the investigative powers of the Integrity Commission has been addressed for the past eighteen months. The Commission’s recommendations will be presented for further public comment and in a final document to the Attorney General for submission to Parliament.

October 02, 2013