Status of Civil Registration in Jamaica
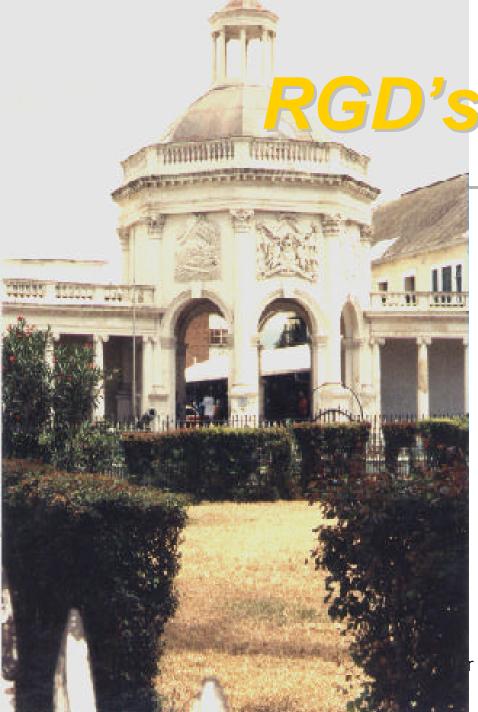
April 3-7, 2005

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica

RGD's Vision

To become one of the most efficient and effective agencies in the island, satisfying the needs of all customers and implementing Total Quality Management (TQM).

RGD's Mission

To support national planning and to provide evidence of every birth, death, marriage, stillbirth and adoption and provide a secure repository for public records.

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica

RGD's Background

- *Established in 1879*
- *Reports to Minister of Health*

Head Quarters

Executive Agency since April 1, 1999

Jamaica

- AREA SQ KM10,991

- POPULATION 2,650,937 (End of year 2004)

- LIFE EXPECTANCY 76.07 years

Executive Agency Status

Under Public Sector Reform Project the RGD became an Executive Agency on April 1, 1999

Since then the Agency's operations have been characterised by:

o **Customer-service culture**

o **Innovations in services offered**

o **Improved physical plant**

o **Aggressive public education and information**

o **De-centralisation of services**

OVERVIEW OF THE RGD

- Activities are governed by over 30 statutes
- Two main arms

  General Register Office

  Island Record Office
- Repository of over 70 million records from as early as 1660s
- Registration of:

  Births, Deaths, Marriages and Stillbirths

  Provide updating services for original records (e.g. late registration, correction of error)
- Recording of wills deeds, conveyances
- Provide certified copies of all records

OVERVIEW OF THE RGD

- Register all vital events (births, deaths, marriages, foetal deaths, legitimation and adoption) and provide certified copies of records

- Compile and publish vital statistics to support national planning.
- Drafting of deed polls
- Perform Registry Weddings

Status of Civil Registration

- The RGD has 380 members of staff
  - 10% contractual for data entry operations
- There are approximately 1800 marriage officers
  - They cover approximately 40 Religious denominations and 14 civil registrars
- 330 Local District Registration centres
  - – those representing over 80% of registrable events are permanently employed. For small remote districts the relationship is voluntary but monitored by Parish Officers
- 7 Regional Offices
- 2 mobile units – East and West

Status of Civil Registration

- Births
  - 95% of all births occur in formal birthing centres
  - Birthing centres required under law to report the event of birth within five days to the local district registrars of the RGD
  - Some parents do not name the infant in hospital nor return early to name child
  - Definition of birth being included in revised legislation

Status of Civil Registration - Births

- The unique Entry number is the Alpha numeric number of the birth record with the date of registration . It usually has 2 to 3 letters and up to 4 digits
  - Eg. EA 1234

- The letters represent the parish and district

  Eg.   E –St.Catherine,

           A – Spanish Town (a town in St Catherine)

           1234-represents the one thousand two hundred and thirty fourth person who was registered.

Status of Civil Registration

- On average the number of births registered each year since 2001 has show a gradual reduction to some 46,000

- Deaths registered each year is 15 to 16,000

- Marriages account for some 26,000 per annum with 50% of these marriages being carried out in hotels

- Stillbirths are under 700 cases per annum

- Infant deaths are under 500 cases per annum

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica

Status of Civil Registration

- Deaths
  - All deaths are registered in the RGD based on the medical certificate of the cause of death provided by the medical doctor or the coroners report or postmortem signed by the pathologist
  - ICD 10 coders trained and in place at the RGD
  - 40% of all deaths occur in hospitals
  - Medical certificate of the cause of death inaccurately completed by some doctors
  - Partial registration of death being carried out until the coroners determination is received
  - Police data on violent and sudden deaths included in statistical publication
  - Electronic death edit developed in house and in use

Death Registration –types of death

- **Natural Causes** e.g.
  diabetes
- **Sudden** e.g.
  Heart attack,
  motor vehicle accident
- **Violent** e.g.
  - Shooting or stabbing

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica

Registering the Death

- The Local District Registrar will require the following information to register the death

    1. Medical certificate of the cause of death

    2. The correct name of the deceased

    3. Occupation of the deceased

    4. Address & place of birth of the deceased

    5. Order for Burial

    6. Form D of the coroner if violent or sudden death

Status of Civil Registration

- **Stillbirths**
  - Notification forms available at hospitals and birthing centres
  - These forms are comleted by the medical record staff and collected along with other births and deaths notification by Parish officers employed to the RGD
  - Traumatized family members sometimes do not register the event
  - A perception that there is under reporting in this area – studies are being carried out
  - Including in revised legislation criteria for stillbirth definition
    - Foetal length crown to heel
    - Gestation period
    - Birth weight

Status of Civil Registration

- Marriages
  - Over 1800 religious marriage officers serving the island
    - Banns are published
    - Special licenses are used
    - Articulo mortis marriages
  - 50% of all marriages are for visitors to the island
  - 14 Civil registrars of marriages
  - Hotel marriages
    - Tourists are able to secure a license after being in the island for 24 hours
  - Certified copies are being delivered to hotels before customer returns to his/her country
  - Marriage officers are trained before they are allow to perform ceremonies
  - Form need to be redesigned
  - Published marriage officers' handbook

Non-traditional Services

Registry Wedding

- For persons who want an economical wedding

- Speed (two weeks notice or same day with Minister's license)

- Certified copy provided at the time of the marriage

- Of 23,000 Marriages some 12,000 are hotel marriages

Status of Civil Registration

- Hospitals and birthing centres send notification to the LDRs who register in duplicate
    - LDR gives Family member a certificate of registry
    - Parish officers collect originals and they are kept in secure fireproof vaults at the RGD
- Hospitals, coroners, private medical doctors prepare medical certificate of the cause of death (mcocod)
    - Send mcocod to LDR
    - Death is registered
    - Cause of death is coded in RGD applying the principles of ICD 10
- All data is keyed to an electronic database and record and supporting documents imaged. Data is shared in a limited way without personal information and using passwords
- Firewalls and encryption in place
- Death edit programme is applied against the death data

How records are held

- Paper
  - Original (loose leaf)
  - Duplicates (bound)
- Microfilm (original and duplicates)
- Microfiche
- Electronic (original duplicate and backup also including redundancy)
- Original and duplicates are held in different physical locations and electronic backup held offsite

Records Management

- Air conditioned vaults with temperature control
- Records are placed on steel shelving
- Record vaults are secured by combination locks with dual access
- Security cameras installed for record centres
- Fire suppression system
- Acid free containers for paper records
- Electronic tracking of movement of records
- Special ink and special paper used
- Gloves are worn by users of the records

Certified copies of Vital Records

- RGD Produces certified copies of birth death and marriage records on request – over 260,000 applications satisfied in 2004/05 earning income of over J$400 million

- Since May 7, 2001, these certificates have been printed on special security paper

- Certificates **produced by the RGD** before this date remain legally valid

- Applications can be made online via the web

Customer Online query screen

www.rgd.gov.jm

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica

Customer Online query screen

Registrar General's Department -
Jamaica

Application tracking system

Jamaica

Initiatives since April 2003

- Application Tracking System (ATS)
  - Launched April 1, 2003
  - Born from a great need to track customer requests, respond effectively to customer queries, have a common system to be used by staff in processing applications
- Online Query System
  - Launched December 30, 2003
  - Available through RGD's website – www.rgd.gov.jm
  - Customer able to track status of their application
- All involved in record preservation and protection are members of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators- this facilitates online training

Updating Civil Records

- Late Registration:
    - for persons not registered within one year after birth/death
    - Statutory declaration and evidence required
    - Cost is higher than for registration at birth ($3000 compared to $200)
- Correction of Error:
    - corrections to errors of fact
- Late Entry of Name:
    - Name entered on birth registration if not done within one year
    - Automatic registration from hospitals but parent need to name the child
- Adding of father's particulars (status)

Record Updating Procedures

- **Status**: (Status of Children Act of 1975) to address adding of father's particulars where the parents are unmarried. The father's particulars are added to the birth record of the child i.e name, age , occupation and place of birth at the time of the birth of the child
  - If the father is deceased, the family court would be required to give a ruling
  - If the father's name is to be changed (a new father) – the matter would have to be brought before the family court)
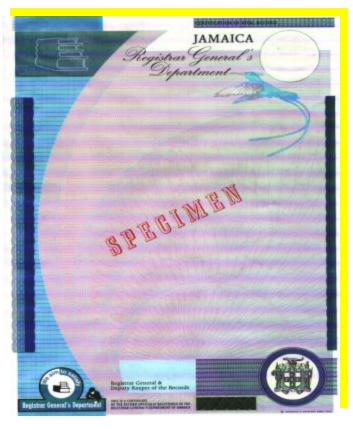 - If mother is deceased – RGD will need a copy of the mother's death certificate

Record Updating Procedures

- Re-registration to reregister a child and add father's particulars to record of child born out of wedlock when parents marry each other

- Adoption: Records adoption orders received from the Family Court and closes the registration record against being issued

No Impediment Certificates

- A certificate of no-impediment is produced after a search is conducted to determine if a person is married or has ever been married.

- Such searches are usually requested for immigration purposes, particularly when an individual wishes to sponsor his or her spouse .

Certificates produced on SECURITY PAPER

- Blind embossing
- Watermark
- Deeply engraved texts
- Embossed latent image
- Chemical sensitivity
- Invisible imprint

- RGD's Logo
- Microlines
- RGD verifier – handheld device

Public Education and Information

- Radio Drama "RGD and You" daily on 11 radio stations
- RGD and You TV version to be launched in April 2005
- Target of 80 public education outreaches per month
- Special events – first baby born at selected hospital gets RGD gift package and registration highlighted
- Registration month – white bibles with registration information for child entered
- Monthly Newsletters – "For the Record"

Public Education and Information

- Mobile teams target over 1000 schools each year
- Awards to outstanding marriage officer, Local District Registrar etc
- Training for
  - Local district registrars, Midwives, Doctors, Police, Coroners, medical records staff and RGD gives lectures at the Universities and colleges on medical records and registration
- Facilitating research from university students, researchers and genealogical surveys and tours from students

Future

- RGD will Provide the national registration number at birth during 2005/06
- Hotel Interface
- Registry Management System
- Further deployment of wireless connectivity and access for Customer Service Reps.
- Increased payment options: Paymaster, Online Payments, point of sale etc.
- Tender evaluation concluded for bulk data entry of 10 million vital records for earlier years
- Launch of online registration in May 2005

- RGD will also provide links to other Overseas databases for

Genealogical Research

"WE AIM TO SATISFY"

THANK YOU

Registrar General's Department - Jamaica