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MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 25th October, 2019

For Immediate Release

ODPM BOOSTS DISASTER MANAGEMENT UNITS SANDBAG STORES

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) on **Friday 25th October 2019**, distributed ten thousand (10,000) sandbags to the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (MoRDLG), as part of its continued drive to support first responder agencies' efforts at reducing discomfort, property damage and loss after heavy rainfall. The Handover Ceremony took place at the ODPM's Warehouse in Arima.

The sandbags are for the Disaster Management Units (DMUs) to distribute within their Corporations and were handed over by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the ODPM, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart to the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the MoRDLG, Ms Desdra Bascombe. Key officials witnessing the ceremony were the Regional Coordinator, Jaishima Gowandan; Warehouse Manager, Chris Thackoordath; Relief Officer, Keion Wight; and the Senior Disaster Management Coordinator of the MoRDLG, Jerry David.

In his delivery message Major General (Ret'd) Smart reminded the audience of the recent observance of the International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) on October 13th, 2019. He indicated that the distribution was linked to the (IDRR) Day and that the ODPM remains fully committed to boosting the capacity and capabilities of all first responder agencies. In particular, he singled out the DMUs of the MoRDLG, which he said are usually the 'first out the door' when it comes to adverse weather events. The General also said that this delivery brought the total sandbags distributed this year to almost twenty thousand (20,000) and hope that with this delivery, less homes and businesses would experience the devastating effects of flooding.

In her response, PS Bascombe thanked Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart for the ODPM's timely intervention and said she looks forward to continued engagement with the organisation. She said the sandbags would be distributed immediately to the various corporations as this would greatly help build resistance and resilience within vulnerable communities.

Photos and Captions



Photo and Caption 1: CEO of the ODPM, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart officially handover 10,000 sandbags to the PS of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, Ms Desdra Bascombe. ODPM officials witnessing the handover are from (L-R) Warehouse Manager, Chris Thackoordath; Regional Coordinator, Jaishima Gowandan; and Relief Officer, Keion Wight.



Photo and Caption 2: CEO of the ODPM Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart and PS of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, Ms Desdra Bascombe, inspect one of the sandbags during the official handover ceremony at the ODPM's warehouse.



Photo and Caption 3: PS of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, Ms Desdra Bascombe, thanks CEO of the ODPM, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart for the handover of sandbags as they are about to be loaded onto the Arima Borough Corporation's vehicle. Looking on are (L-R) Regional Coordinator Jaishima Gowandan; Relief Officer Keion Wight; and Senior Disaster Management Coordinator of the MoRDLG, Jerry David.

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Issued by:

Public Information, Education and Community Outreach Unit

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