



KINGSTON, JAMAICA

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PARAMOUNT TRADING (JAMAICA) LIMITED- ANNOUNCEMENT ON RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Early in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic threw Jamaica and the world into a tailspin. This novel situation created fear and anxiety, as health and economic challenges loomed ahead both for the country and for us at Paramount Trading (Jamaica) Limited.

As a corporate social entity, we implemented health and safety procedures in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, which included health aide stations, intensifying our sanitation routine and providing employees with appropriate PPEs as well as individual thermometers for personal self-regulation. In addition, we factored in safeguards to minimize the negative impact on our employees, many of whom reside in some of the more vulnerable communities surrounding the company.

Based on the current climate, we will have to consider all cost reduction possibilities, as well as revenue enhancement opportunities to ensure the viability of our company and protect our shareholders' interests. In an effort to contain costs, we applied for moratoriums on our existing debts from various loan institutions, sought more favourable payment arrangements with suppliers to secure liquidity and increased our collections. Systems were instituted to facilitate customer online payments. We also redeployed staff in a number of core areas for greater efficiency.

From the reaction to the pandemic worldwide, regionally and eventually locally, there was a huge demand for sanitizing and cleaning products. This increased demand came at a time when we had started to feel the impact of the pandemic in reduction in the viability of some of the products that are integral to our revenue stream.

In response, we immediately formed our COVID-19 task force, which gave birth to a new "Paramount survival strategy". Fortuitously, just weeks before COVID-19 we also had a leadership retreat on *Change & Change Management*.

Bringing the power of innovation to strengthen our response to COVID-19, our production and lab teams put into production the formulations for our own brand of hand sanitizer and hard surface cleaner to comply with the regulatory bodies. Our operations team assessed the capacity buildout, rehabilitating existing equipment such as mixing tanks and identified and converted warehouse space to accommodate production. Drawing on the inherent knowledge of our team members, we were able to manufacture these products. We were also able to transfer and use these skills across the various

manufacturing processes. We are therefore very thankful to our team for the level of agility, flexibility and ingenuity they displayed in shoring up the sustainability and continuity of the company.

COVID-19 has also created a space to forge stronger relationships with our business partners such as J Wray and Nephew and building on these synergies, we were able to support their charitable efforts.

Working in the COVID-19 environment, every day is fluid with many moving parts. Previous investments in equipment and machinery allowed us to respond promptly to the national crisis.

We, at Paramount Jamaica, feel extremely blessed that we have been able to continue our operations and give thanks for our customers and other businesses who have been able to keep their doors open.