

More police vehicles for tourist areas

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ROSE HALL, St James — The shortage of police vehicles in the island's tourist resort areas is expected to be eased within the next few weeks as the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) will be spending \$32 million to purchase 16 new vehicles for the resort towns.

“Those units will be deployed particularly in the Montego Bay, Negril and Ocho Rios areas and wherever else that the security forces feel that they are needed,” Tourism Minister Ed Bartlett said in making the announcement. “But the emphasis will be in Montego Bay, simply because the issues of safety in that area are higher than the other resort areas.”

Bartlett was speaking at the inaugural St James Police Civic Committee Police Ball held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre on Saturday night.

He later told the Observer that the donation forms part of the TEF's on going programme to support security efforts in the resort areas.

The vehicles which are expected to be deployed in time for the December 15 start of the Winter Tourist Season, and the tourism minister said they will bear “special markings”, indicating that they are assigned to resort areas.

Bartlett said he will be recommending to Commissioner of Police Owen Ellington that two of the units be assigned to the Barrett Town Police Station in St James, which he said currently has one service vehicle.

“With the expansion of the Barrett Town police area, which includes communities Rhyne Park, Rose Vale, Lilliput, Grange Pen, Long Bay and Barrett Hall, the police now have a wider area to cover so we believe that at least two of the units should be assigned to that station,” Bartlett explained.

Meanwhile, the St James Police Civic Committee received a cheque for \$100,000 from the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry to repair two disabled service vehicles assigned to the St James Police division.

Chamber President Davon Crump, in making the presentation at the ball on Saturday night, said the donation forms part of the chamber's on-going drive to assist the constabulary.

The St James Police Civic Committee also received a cheque for US\$1,000 from Detroit-based prosecutor Edward Velelak during the ceremony.

The St James Police Civic Committee was recently launched with a view of sourcing resources to aid the police in the parish in maintaining higher efficiency.