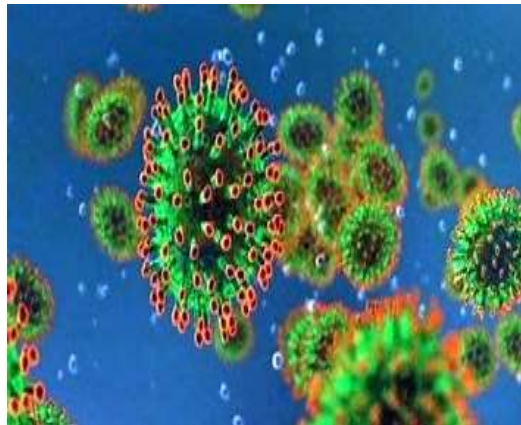




**THE GOVERNMENT OF MONTSERRAT'S
INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC 2020**



July 2021



**Government of Montserrat
Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

This report has been prepared under
Section 103(1) of the Montserrat
Constitution for presentation to the
Legislative Assembly in accordance with
Section 9 of the Act

Marsha V E Meade
Auditor-General (Ag)
Office of the Auditor General
30 July 2021

PREAMBLE

Vision Statement

The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) plays a crucial role in ensuring that public monies are spent wisely. Our vision is therefore

Mission Statement

“The OAG is the national authority on public sector auditing issues and is focused on assessing performance and promoting accountability, transparency and improved stewardship in managing public resources by conducting independent and objective reviews of the accounts and operations of central Government and statutory agencies; providing advice; and submitting timely Reports to Accounting Officers and the Legislative Assembly”.

The Goal

Our goal is “to promote staff development, enhance productivity, and maintain a high standard of auditing and accounting in the public sector, thereby contributing to the general efficiency and effectiveness of public finance management”.

ABBREVIATIONS

CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DFID	Department for International Development
DMCA	Disaster Management and Co-ordination Agency
ECCB	Eastern Caribbean Central Bank
ECCU	Eastern Caribbean Currency Union
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office
GOM	Government of Montserrat
MAHLE	Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands and Environment
MOEYAS	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports
MOFEM	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
MOHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MSS	Montserrat Secondary School
NIPPC	National Influenza Pandemic and Preparedness Committee
RSS	Regional Security System
WHO	World Health Organisation

Contents

PREAMBLE.....	iv
ABBREVIATIONS	v
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background	1
Objective of the Review	1
Management Responsibility	1
Auditor’s Responsibility	2
Scope.....	2
Why We Performed This Review	2
What We Excluded from this Review	3
Methods.....	3
Standards used.....	3
Chapter 2 PANDEMIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	4
Response Strategy.....	4
Organisations involved in Strategy	7
Governance and Decision-making arrangements.....	9
CHAPTER 3 COMMITTED OR ACTUAL ASSISTANCE.....	11
Overview	11
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank	11
Department for International Development (DFID)	11
European Union (EU)	12
Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica	12
Civil Society donations	12
Private entrepreneur donations	12
Summary of committed and actual donations	13
CHAPTER 4 ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMMES, COSTS.....	14
Healthcare costs.....	14
Quarantine facilities and social distancing	14
Social assistance for individuals and families	15
Cuban Medical Support	16
Other Activities	16

Support for Businesses.....	16
Montserrat Red Cross’s Delivery-Service.....	17
The GOM’s Revenue Shortfall.....	17
Education IT Support.....	17
Additional Assistance to the St. Augustine Primary School.....	18
Support for farmers	18
Summary of Budgeted Expenditure.....	19
Limitations and uncertainty in cost information available	20
Provision of audited cost figures	21
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION.....	22
Subsequent Event	22
Acknowledgement	22
Appendix 1: OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL (OAG)	23
Functions.....	23
Functions of Auditor-General	23
National Audit Office	23
Appendix 2 – CABINET MEETINGS RE COVID 19 PANDEMIC	25
Appendix 3 COVID 19 RESPONSE – STATUTORY RULES & ORDERS	26
Appendix 3 COVID 19 RESPONSE – PRESS RELEASES etc.	31

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 The first known cases of the coronavirus outbreak were officially reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019. By January 2020, the coronavirus had spread across several countries and continents and became a regional epidemic in the Asian countries. In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared it a global pandemic and gave it the name, COVID-19. In mid-March 2020, the first case was identified on Montserrat and the Government initiated its action plan. This virus threatened lives and forced the closure of all non-essential public and private sector services, disrupting health services and the economy in general. The first national lockdown was from 25 March to 24 May 2020.
- 1.2 This report is the first of a programme of work undertaken by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to support the Legislative Assembly in its scrutiny of the GOM's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides a summary of committed funding and the Government's actions to 10 July 2020 inclusive of the Cuban Medical Support from July to October 2020.

Objective of the Review

- 1.3 The objective of this review is to provide a broad overview of the Government's initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to activities undertaken, committed income, and costs.

Management Responsibility

- 1.4 Management is responsible for designing systems to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes, but is not limited to, systems to curtail the spread of the virus and/or eradicate it. It is also responsible for ensuring that support is provided to citizens who are affected by decisions taken as part of its response to managing the pandemic.
- 1.5 As required by the Constitution Order 2010, Management is also responsible for providing the Office of the Auditor General with:
 - I. Access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the GOM's COVID-19 Response;
 - II. Additional information that may be requested from management for the purpose of the review; and
 - III. Unrestricted access to all relevant systems and persons from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

Auditor's Responsibility

1.6 This review of GOM's COVID-19 Response was conducted in accordance with auditing standards issued by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements, and plan and perform the review to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to provide reasonable assurance that reliance can be placed on the information provided.

Scope

1.7 This report provides an overview of the GOM's response to COVID-19 and the costs involved. It sets out the facts relating to:

- the Government's coronavirus action plan launched on 13 March 2020;
- the organisations involved in the Government's response;
- the governance and decision-making structures for the Government's response;
- the Government's activities and related costs across five response areas: health and social care; other public services and emergency responses; support for individuals; support for businesses; and other support;
- the role of Government departments and other bodies in implementing those plans; and
- our approach to examining the Government's response.

1.8 The report covers the main actions taken by the Government of Montserrat, as well as the funding committed or received and estimated and actual costs to support responses. It covers the Government's response up to 10 July 2020 and the procurement of the first phase of the Cuban Medical Support.

1.9 Apart from funding, the report will also set out other measures taken under the Public Health Act and various Statutory Rules and Orders (SROs) to ensure the Government continued to function during the COVID-19 outbreak [for example, suspending requirement of some tender procedures as mandated under the Public Finance (Management and Accountability) (Procurement) Regulations, S.R.O. #27 & #30 of 2019] to facilitate timely purchase of equipment for COVID-19 prevention and/or monitoring.

Why We Performed This Review

1.10 **Accountability to Legislative Assembly and Citizens of Montserrat.** Our role requires us to audit the activities of GOM and to write a report of our findings and recommendations for presentation to the Legislative Assembly. (Appendix 1 outlines the full functions of the Auditor General and by extension her office). Furthermore, the public response to the corona virus pandemic was a unique activity undertaken by our GOM and it created much interest to the citizens of Montserrat. There continues to be much discussion regarding the GOM's response to COVID-19 across several

media platforms. In our quest to provide value and benefit to citizens, we deemed it an opportune moment to determine the facts of the response and to share it with the Legislative Assembly and the citizens and residents of Montserrat.

- 1.11 **Accountability to External Donors.** The Department for International Development (DFID) (now FCDO) provided ring-fenced funding for the GOM to manage its response to the coronavirus pandemic. As with any financial assistance given to Montserrat, an MOU is signed between the GOM and the DFID setting out terms for granting the aid. One such term is that the financial assistance/aid must be audited by the OAG.

Methods

- 1.12 We have produced this report after collecting evidence for the period 1 May and 10 July, 2020 inclusive of the first phase of the Cuban Medical Support which ran from July to October 2020. We:

- reviewed announcements made by the Government in response to COVID-19;
- reviewed key documents and guidance published by Government departments in response to COVID-19;
- reviewed the Government's data on the costs of responding to COVID-19;
- reviewed other estimates on the costs of the Government's response, such as from the Office for Budget Responsibility; and
- drew on discussions with Government departments about the impact of COVID-19 on their operations.

Standards used

- 1.13 This audit was conducted according to standards promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI). Those standards require that we plan and perform our audit in order to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to reach a reasonable conclusion.

Chapter 2 PANDEMIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2.1 This Chapter is intended to set the frame under which the GOM launched its COVID-19 Response strategy.

Response Strategy

2.2 The GOM's COVID-19 Response Strategy comprised of the following elements:

- **Research and Preparation.** The National Influenza Pandemic Planning and Preparedness Committee (NIPPPC) was activated in January 2020 to determine risk, develop scenarios, actions and mitigation measures to deal with COVID-19.

With the virus reaching pandemic proportions in January 2020, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) was tasked with researching the virus: e.g., what it is, how it is spread, and how it could be controlled. Additionally, the MOHSS was tasked with developing plans to manage the health impacts of the virus and to guide the GOM's general management of it. As part of its plan, the Ministry developed a model to determine possible numbers of persons to be affected; assessed its stocks of Personal Protective Equipment; determined availability of ventilators; acquired test kits; identified facilities to be used as dedicated quarantine and isolation units; sourced a place to have COVID-19 tests conducted; and provided guidance to affected persons. In addition, the Ministry established protocols¹ to deal with the virus. These included procedures

- to be followed by health staff when persons present at healthcare facilities with flu-like symptoms;
- for monitoring of persons arriving at Ports of Entry;
- for treating persons suspected to be infected with novel Coronavirus;
- for treating persons confirmed to be infected with novel Coronavirus;
- for cleaning and waste management to contain the spread of the Coronavirus.

The MOHSS also trained a total of 65 Nurses, Montserrat Cleaning Cooperative Members, and Church-based Cleaners to deal with the arrival of the virus. During quarter 2 of 2020, a further 94 persons were trained in protocols for the prevention and control of infection.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MOFEM) was tasked with developing a tentative budget to finance the GOM's COVID-19 Responses. This effort was made to facilitate the sourcing of finances, primarily from the DFID (now FCDO), the GOM's primary funding partner.

- **Public Education and awareness.** The Government of Montserrat, together with various Ministries/Departments, utilised public education and awareness programmes to draw

¹ <http://www.gov.ms/coronavirus-pprepartions-continue-montserrat-remains-at-low-risk/>

citizens' attention to the onset of the virus, provided guidance on how to prevent spread, frequently reported about the Government's management of the crisis, and announced information on its various stimulus/support packages and how to gain access to them.

The information dissemination began in January 2020, when the spread of the virus became more evident. Several avenues were used to share the information. The Table below will highlight the media used, by entity, up to 11 June 2020, approximately two months after the last active corona virus case had been acknowledged in Montserrat.

Table 1
COVID-19 Response – Press Releases etc².
23 January – 11 June 2020

Persons/ Entity	News Releases	Press Statements	Press Releases	Press Conferences	Weekly Messages	Interviews	Totals
GIU	30						30
GOM				2			2
Governor & GOM				1			1
MOEYAS	1						1
MOF			1				1
MOHSS	8	2	5	1		3	17
MOHSS & Others		1					1
ODG			2				2
Premier		1	1		9	1	12
Premier & MOHSS				1			1
ZJB Radio	9						9
Total	48	5	9	5	9	4	80

Data Analysed and Compiled by Office of the Auditor General

Information shared included weekly updates on affected persons. This was captured pictorially and placed on the Government website as a national COVID-19 dashboard. The information provided below focused on information shared by the Government Information Unit's website on 17 April 2020 – when there were two recoveries – and on 13 May 2020 – when all COVID-19 patients on Montserrat had recovered.

² Source – Information compiled from <http://www.gov.ms/latest-on-the-coronavirus/> and <https://www.zjbradio.com/news>



- Virus Containment, Control and Management.** On the 13 March 2020, the GOM learnt of a suspected COVID-19 case on Montserrat, and a sample was taken and submitted to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) in Trinidad for testing. On the 15 March 2020, in an effort to curb/contain the spread of the virus, the GOM informed the public of its decision to close the ongoing St. Patrick’s festival. Visitors were also encouraged to depart the island early. On the 17 March 2020, a positive COVID-19 test-result was returned. In light of this result, the GOM called a press conference, later that day, to inform the public of COVID-19’s appearance on Montserrat.

The following measures were also taken in an effort to curb the spread of the virus:

- Restrictions on visits to Glendon Hospital, Margetson Memorial Home, Golden Years Home and Look Out Warden Apartments
 - Schools closed from the 16 March, 2020
 - Prohibition of large gatherings
 - Various curfews, including a period of full 24-hour shut-down except for essential services
- Mitigation.** Guidance documents were provided to affected persons regarding what is expected from them during quarantine or isolation and what is expected from the MOHSS. The GOM converted the use of the St. Peter’s Clinic into an influenza-monitoring clinic where persons with “flu-like” symptoms could visit for checks for the corona virus. The Physiotherapy Unit was converted into a 6-bed isolation ward. The ground floor of the Margetson Memorial Home, located on the Glendon Hospital’s compound, was converted into an isolation unit which can accommodate 20 – 24 patients depending of the severity of the patient’s condition.
- Provision of Assistance.** Several financial packages were developed to assist persons/entities whose livelihoods were impacted by the shutdowns and lockdowns ordered by the GOM. Other assistance included medication delivery service, the Red

Cross grocery-delivery service, the provision of laptops to facilitate on-line tutoring of students, provision of psychological services, and assistance to farmers.

Organisations involved in Strategy

3.3 Several organisations assisted the GOM in delivering its COVID-19 Response. These included Government departments, statutory agencies, civil society, and the Royal Montserrat Defence Force. Entities who assisting the COVID-19 Response are detailed in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1
Entities involved in the COVID-19 Response

Key response Area	Key Department	Other Key Organisations
Research and Preparedness		
Conduct research into the new virus and into its potential effects to residents, visitors and businesses	Ministry of Health and Social Services	[1] WHO, [2] CARPHA
Establishment of the NIPPPC to aid preparation for, and management of, virus	Ministry of Health and Social Services	
Development of protocols to prevent, to suppress, and to control the spread of COVID-19	Ministry of Health and Social Services	[1] NDPRAC, [2] NIPPPC, [3] CARPHA, [4] WHO, [5] Public Health - England
Public Education and Awareness		
Dissemination of information or updates to COVID-19 challenges	[1] Office of the Premier [2] Ministry of Health and Social Services; [3] Government Information Unit; [4] Radio Montserrat; [5] Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands & Environment: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Centre; [6] Human Resources Management Unit	[1] Discover Montserrat, [2] 664 Connect, [3] Montserrat Reporter, [4] Allioucana Express News, [5] D. S. Media and Designs, [6] MNI Alive
Viral Containment, Control and Management		
Procurement of prevention and monitoring equipment	[1] Ministry of Health and Social Services; [2] Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: Treasury Department	Public Health - England
Contact tracing, monitoring and support for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases	[1] Ministry of Health and Social Services: [a] Primary Health Care Department [b] Secondary Healthcare Department; [2] Royal Montserrat Police Service	

Collection and testing of samples	Ministry of Health and Social Services	CARPHA
Crowd control, curfew management, and social distancing strategies	[1] Royal Montserrat Police Service; [2] Magistrate's Court; [3] Statistics Department	Royal Montserrat Defence Force
Development of guidance for public servants	Office of the Deputy Governor	
Functioning of the public service	Office of the Deputy Governor	
Mitigation		
Retrofitting buildings for use as isolation units for COVID-19 patient control	[1] Ministry of Health and Social Services: [a] Headquarters, [b] Primary Health Care Department, [c] Secondary Health Care Department; [2] Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: Treasury Department; [3] Ministry of Communications, Works, Energy & Labour: Public Works Dept.	Private Building Contractors
Establishment of dedicated flu clinic	Ministry of Health and Social Services: [a] Headquarters, [b] Primary Health Care Department, [c] Secondary Health Care Department.	
Support for Businesses		
COVID-19 Tourism Sector Salary Support package	Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: [a] Headquarters and [b] Treasury Department	
COVID-19 Salary Support to all businesses	Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: [a] Headquarters and [b] Treasury Department	Montserrat Social Security Fund
Tourism sector One-off Grants	Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: [a] Headquarters and [b] Treasury Department	
One-off grants to small and micro businesses	Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: [a] Headquarters and [b] Treasury Department	
Assessment of Economic Impact on Business	Office of the Premier: Trade and Infrastructure Department	University of the West Indies (Open Campus, Montserrat)
Support for Individuals		
Care packages and cleaning supplies	Ministry of Health and Social Services: Social Services Department	[1] Royal Montserrat Defence Force, [2] Montserrat Red Cross
Monthly unemployment benefit assistance	[1] Ministry of Health and Social Services: Social Services Department. [2] Ministry of Finance & Economic Management: Treasury Department	

Extended Meals on Wheels service	Ministry of Health and Social Services	Meals on Wheels
Red Cross delivery service	Ministry of Health and Social Services	Montserrat Red Cross
Medication collection and delivery service	Ministry of Health and Social Services	[1] Royal Montserrat Defence Force, [2] Montserrat Red Cross
Support for School Children		
Food-packages to the households of all children registered in the school-lunch programme	[1] Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs & Sports; [2] Ministry of Health and Social Services: Social Services Department	[1] Royal Montserrat Defence Force, [2] Montserrat Red Cross
Distribution of laptops for remote teaching and learning	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs & Sports	
Support for Farmers		
Assistance to backyard gardeners	[1] Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands & Environment, [2] Ministry of Communications, Works, Energy & Labour: Public Works Department	
Assistance to commercial farmers	[1] Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands & Environment; [2] Ministry of Communications, Works, Energy & Labour: Public Works Department	
Re-opening of the Economy		
Guidance for phased re-opening of the economy	[1] Ministry of Health and Social Services, [2] Members of the Parliamentary Opposition, [3] Core Management Team, GOM	[1] Montserrat Chamber of Commerce, [2] Economic Recovery Task Force, [3] University of the West Indies (Open Campus, Montserrat)
Guidance for phased re-opening of Government schools	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs & Sports	

Governance and Decision-making arrangements

- 3.4 The MOHSS was at the forefront of the GOM's Response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was tasked with gathering information on the virus, and with providing its findings and projections to inform the GOM's decision-making.
- 3.5 The Cabinet³ met weekly to provide updates on the crisis and to develop strategies to prevent, to contain, and to manage it. In early March 2020, meetings were held face-to-face, but, as the crisis

³ The GOM's Cabinet is chaired by His Excellency the Governor and comprises the Honourable Premier and the Minister of Finance and Economic Management), the Honourable Deputy Premier and the Minister of Communication, Works, Labour and

deepened, the meetings were held remotely via teleconferencing. See Appendix 2 for the exact dates these meetings were held. Over the period of 2 March – 31 July 2020, a total of 34 such meetings were held. Stemming from these meetings, twenty Statutory Rules and Orders relating to COVID-19 management were issued. Appendix 2 (COVID-19 Response – Statutory Rules and Orders) will provide a synopsis of each order.

- 3.6 The Honourable Deputy Governor, the Honourable Attorney General, and the Honourable Financial Secretary provided various reports and types of information to guide the Cabinet’s decision-making. The Attorney General also provided legal instruments, in the form of Statutory Rules and Orders (SRO) to formalise decisions taken. These were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on the 19 May 2020 and thereby became a part of the Laws of Montserrat.
- 3.7 Opposition Members of Parliament participated in a virtual meeting to discuss the spread and the curtailment of the COVID-19. The Leader of the Opposition was also tasked with providing ideas on how COVID-19 Responses should be addressed⁴.

Energy), the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, & Sports who is also the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Housing, Lands and Environment, the Honourable Deputy Governor, the Honourable Attorney General, and the Honourable Financial Secretary.

⁴ Source: Legislative Assembly discussions of 19 May 2020.

CHAPTER 3 COMMITTED OR ACTUAL ASSISTANCE

Overview

3.1 COVID-19 brought along a number of unplanned costs. By the 30 June 2020, a number of agencies had made commitments to provide financial and other in-kind assistance to help the GOM to implement its COVID-19 strategies. These agencies included the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), the European Union (EU), the Department for International Development (DFID) (now FCDO), the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, and the Government of Cuba.

Eastern Caribbean Central Bank

3.2 The ECCB was established in October 1983 and according to its Role and Functions, it “Advances the good of the people of the currency union by maintaining monetary and financial stability and promoting growth and development”⁵.

3.3 The ECCB functions as the Monetary Council for eight members of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU): namely, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

3.4 At a virtual meeting of the Monetary Council held on the 3 April 2020, it was decided that the Bank should provide financial assistance of EC\$4M⁶ to its members to assist their respective COVID-19 Response in the purchase of supplies. Along with each of the fellow members of the ECCB, the GOM was allotted EC\$500,000; however, only \$250,000 was actually received.

Department for International Development (DFID)

3.5 The Department for International Development (DFID) (now FCDO) is a United Kingdom Government department responsible for administering overseas aid. As part of its responsibilities, the DFID is tasked with providing financial support for the Government of Montserrat’s recurrent spending on average 60% of the annual recurrent budget – and also most of its capital expenditures.

3.6 Faced with implementing a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated rising costs, the GOM presented a business case to the DFID seeking financial assistance to cover unplanned costs. The GOM requested from the DFID a grant to support its proposed COVID-19 response budget of \$15M. The DFID approved an emergency supplementary budget of £2.5M, which was equivalent to EC\$8.3M in the first instance⁷.

⁵ <https://www.eccb-centralbank.org/p/roles-and-functions>

⁶ Source – COVID -19 Weekly Message – Premier Hon. Joseph E Farrell dated 8 April 2020. Retrieved from <http://www.gov.ms/latest-on-the-coronavirus/>

⁷ Source – Budget Statement 2020 -2021: Building Montserrat’s Economy in a Digital Age, paragraph 52

- 3.7 On 21 April 2020, the GOM received its first shipment of medical supplies from the UK Government, consisting of personal protective equipment. This consignment added to Montserrat's stocks of gowns, gloves and masks which were crucial for the safety of the medical staff and other front-line workers. The total value of this consignment was \$437,283.

European Union (EU)

- 3.8 The European Union is a group of 27 countries in Europe. These countries came together to make things better, easier and safer for people. They agreed to work together and to help each other. On an international scale, the European Union plays an important role in the world in that it helps hundreds of millions of people in poorer countries by providing developmental assistance to their Governments.
- 3.9 Through its European Development Fund programme, the EU has provided funds to assist Montserrat's capital development programmes for a number of years. With respect to the GOM's response to COVID-19, it has provided €900,000⁸ which was the equivalent of EC\$2.94M. This fund was existing grant support that was rechanneled to support the GOM's response to the pandemic.

Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica

- 3.10 In April, 2020, the GOM received a shipment from the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, consisting of two ventilators and 1,000 rapid-test kits to assist in the fight against COVID-19⁹. The estimated values of these humanitarian gifts are unknown.

Civil Society donations

- 3.11 The Rotary Club of Montserrat donated a number of bottles of hand sanitizer to employees in a number of Government departments and business places. The Montserrat Football Association donated financial packages, back to school supplies and computers to students participating in its programmes. The full quantum and value of these donations are unknown.

Private entrepreneur donations

- 3.12 Three Montserradians came together to donate 300 reusable personal protective equipment face masks and 300 face shields, worth approximately US\$10,000, to frontline workers in the Ministry of Health and Social Services, in the Royal Montserrat Police Service, and in the Montserrat Fire Service¹⁰.

⁸ Source – Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, Montserrat

⁹ Source - <https://www.zjbradio.com/news/2020/4/29/Government-of-dominica-delivers-ventilators-to-montserrat>

¹⁰ Source - <https://www.zjbradio.com/news/2020/5/14/ministry-of-health-receives-personal-protective-equipment-from-generous-montserradians>

Summary of committed and actual donations

3.13 Table 2 below provides a summary of committed and actual donations as at the 31 July 2020.

Table 2

Committed or Actual Donations to support the GOM's Initial Response to COVID-19

Entity	Committed Receipts	Exchange Rate (EC\$)	Actual (EC\$)
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank	EC\$500,000	-	250,000
Department for International Development	£2,500,000	3.32	8,300,000
UK Government - PPE Donations			437,283
European Union	€900,000	3.00	2,940,000
Government of Commonwealth of Dominica (est.)	unknown		unknown
Civil Society Donations	unknown		unknown
Private Entrepreneur Donations	US\$10,000	2.70	27,000
Estimated Total			11,954,283

3.14 Commitments and actual donations received have not been audited; thus, the list of contributors and the estimated value of contributions could change once the financial audit is completed.

3.15 Across the public service, each Ministry and each Department reviewed and commented on the activities and costs relating to its role in the GOM's response to COVID-19.

CHAPTER 4 ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMMES, COSTS

4.1 This Chapter seeks to highlight activities, programmes and their budgeted associated costs. At the time of this report, the COVID-19 response activities were still ongoing; hence, final actual costs could not be determined and reported.

Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS)

4.2 The Ministry of Health and Social Services played a critical role and undertook several activities in assisting the GOM's COVID-19 Response. These are categorised as follows:

Healthcare costs

4.3 **Procurement of PPE for frontline workers.** Due to the infectious nature of the virus and the envisaged increase in patients, additional personal protective equipment, such as aprons/gowns, gloves, goggles, face shields, and masks were procured. The approximate cost to the GOM was \$543,790.

Quarantine facilities and social distancing

4.4 **Creation of Isolation Wards.** The Physiotherapy Unit, the downstairs of the Margetson Memorial Home buildings, and a Laboratory Container were retrofitted to facilitate use as isolation units for COVID-19 patient control and testing. The estimated cost to the GOM of these three works was \$303,130; the actual cost was \$220,481.

4.5 **Repairing of the Golden Years Home.** Armed with a plan to use the entire Margetson Memorial Home as an isolation ward, the Golden Years Home was repaired to facilitate the transfer of the Margetson Memorial Home's residents. The budgeted cost to the GOM was \$101,318; the actual cost was \$117,080.

4.6 **Establishment of an influenza clinic.** During the period reviewed, the St. Peter's Clinic strategically suspended its regular medical services in order to be temporarily dedicated to serving as an influenza clinic, thus providing a special space where persons with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 could go to get their medical checks and diagnoses. This measure was used to ensure the utmost safety of healthcare workers as well as the general public whereby those with suspected COVID-19 would not mingle with other patients either at community clinics or at the Casualty Department at the Glendon Hospital. This was done at no additional cost to the Government. As of 6 June 2020, the St. Peter's Clinic resumed regular medical services to the community.

4.7 **Quarantine expenses.** Persons suspected of having COVID 19, together with individuals coming in close contact with them, were placed in quarantine. The budget allocated for this was \$4,300.

During this period, some persons were isolated, and food was provided for them at a cost of \$27,560.

Social assistance for individuals and families

- 4.8 **Care packages.** A total of 807 parcels containing food and cleaning materials were provided to vulnerable people, including households whose children were unable to get their usual school-meals when schools were required to remain closed for several months, and persons otherwise in need (especially those who were made newly unemployed in jobs and businesses, such as all those related to tourism, that were required to close during the pandemic). Estimated cost was \$480,000; the actual cost was reported at \$137,450.
- 4.9 **Monthly unemployment benefit assistance.** The GOM introduced a new COVID-19 Social benefit to support the many individuals who lost jobs directly as a result of the closure of businesses or reduced operations mandated by the GOM's public-health measures. The GOM set aside a provision of \$900 per month to all resident persons who had no income and who were unable to access the established sick leave/unemployment mechanisms. The estimated cost of this benefit was \$474,000. Actual take up was \$3,607,200, due to the duration of the pandemic, and also because these benefits were extended to include even those persons who were unemployed prior to the pandemic. **Note:** As of the last National Census Count (2018) and the most recent National Workforce Survey (2020), 176 and 238 persons were classified as unemployed respectively.¹¹ However, the number in need was much greater because that official unemployed number, by definition, excluded all those of working-age who were without work and not included in the workforce (e.g., full-time students who are over 16 years old; persons without jobs and who had stopped searching for work; those giving full-time unpaid care to the elderly/sick family-members; parents who are full-time at home.)
- 4.10 **Extended Meals on Wheels Service.** As a result of the strict public-health measures implemented by the Government, including (a) the closing of schools, (b) the closure of many businesses, (c) growing numbers of persons required to be in quarantine at home, (d) restrictions on movement and transportation, (e) restricted days and hours of opening of supermarkets, and (f) the self-isolation of people over 70 years old, concerns were raised about the vulnerable in our society and ensuring that they are provided with at least one hot meal a day during the first national lockdown from 25 March to 24 May 2020. The estimated total cost to the GOM equalled the actual cost of \$50,000.
- 4.11 **Support to children on the school lunch programme.** Twenty-four vulnerable children benefitted from the food packages from the Food Bank. The total cost spent on the food packages for the children were not calculated as the items were gathered from the established Food Bank. Individual food packages were valued between \$250 and \$300.

¹¹ Source – Montserrat Statistics Department, National Census Count 2018 and Labour Force Survey 2020

4.12 *Medication collection and delivery service.* The staff of the Customs & Excise Department assisted with this initiative. Excepting a few purchase orders for petrol granted by the MOHSS, this service was undertaken at no additional cost to the GOM.

Cuban Medical Support

4.13 The GOM reached out to the Government of Cuba to seek direct medical support to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. Due to the disruption of international travel, the team of 13 persons did not arrive on the island until July 2020, after the first wave of the pandemic crisis had essentially ended. Their focus now was to provide cover for the essential front-line employees of the MOHSS to allow them to rest and to rejuvenate. The approved budget of this medical brigade was \$955,900. The total expenditure for July through to October amounted to \$1.3M.

Other Activities

4.14 The Ministry also allowed the use of its Health Promotion Unit to help the populace to understand the coronavirus, shared facts about how it is spread, and reported the measures to be undertaken to contain its spread. Additionally, the psychologist to provide guidance on dealing with mental challenges coping with virus or the lock/shut down. Social Services staff provide guidance on how to safeguard and protect vulnerable children from various kinds of abuse during the pandemic.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MOFEM)

4.15 Several activities were undertaken by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management in assisting the GOM's COVID-19 Response. Apart from preparing the budget, it was also responsible for directly managing several of the GOM's stimulus packages. These are detailed as follows:

Support for Businesses

4.16 ***COVID-19 Tourism Sector Salary Support package.*** The worst affected sector was tourism and hospitality. Therefore, in its earliest initiative to help the private sector during the pandemic, the GOM provided support to businesses in the tourism industry (including hotels, travel agents, tour operators and guides, taxis and buses) to allow them to pay at least 80% of their employees' salaries. These grants were intended to help to keep their businesses from failing and closing permanently during the protracted period with little or no revenue. The maximum payment was set at 80% of salaries/wages (up to \$4,000¹² per person) i.e., a maximum cash benefit of \$3,200 per employee per month. The estimated total cost to the GOM was \$870,000. Actual total cost was \$346,000.

4.17 ***COVID-19 Salary Support for all businesses.*** As several other types of businesses were forced to close in-person services, on the direction of the Government, the scheme later extended to

¹² Social Security payments being used to independently verify salary paid for employees, with salary payments being capped at \$4,000.

businesses outside the tourism sector. This also included persons identified as self-employed. As above, the benefit was a maximum payment of 80% of salary (up to \$4,000) per person per month: i.e., a maximum cash benefit of \$3,200 per employee. The estimated total cost to the GOM was \$3,390,000; the actual total cost was \$1.9M.

4.18 ***One-off grants to businesses in Tourism Sector.*** A cash injection of no more than \$10,000 was offered to businesses in the tourism, food service, and transportation sectors, to enable them to pay for costs that they cannot defer except for loan payments. This scheme covered primarily rent and utility bills based on the average of their actual expenses for the preceding three months. The estimated total cost was \$200,000; the actual total cost was \$306,586.

4.19 ***One-off grants to small or micro businesses.*** The GOM provided additional support to small businesses that were affected by the closure of businesses. Financial assistance was provided to offset rent and utility expenses. The actual cost amounted to \$102,665.

Montserrat Red Cross's Delivery-Service

4.20 The Montserrat Red Cross assisted the GOM in transporting food packages to elderly residents, those who were home-bound, and other vulnerable persons, or to pick-up their shopping from supermarkets and to transport it to their homes. Estimated total cost of the service to the GOM was \$150,000; the actual cost was \$12,000.

The GOM's Revenue Shortfall

4.21 The closure of borders and businesses had an associated cost with respect to major shortfalls of revenue from non-collection of normal levels of personal and corporate income taxes, import duties, and decreases across all revenue streams. For the 2020/2021 financial year, the MOFEM estimated that the total tax revenues lost (especially from much reduced business activities and from the near 100% reduction in international travel and tourism) was \$21.99M¹³ on 18 June 2020. Subsequently, in September 2020, the Honourable Premier, with responsibility for Finance and Economic Management, announced that his Government was able to reduce this budget deficit to \$3M by eliminating international travel expenditures for the year, halting the hiring of technical consultants and not filling vacant posts.

Ministry of Education (MOE)

Education IT Support

4.22 ***Procurement of software as Education support for pupils.*** This is an off the shelf product with the ability to build additional content locally as needed. The estimated cost to procure this was \$64,000. In the end, the software was acquired for free.

¹³ Source – Budget Statement 2020-2021: Building Montserrat's Economy in a Digital Age, paragraphs 201-206

- 4.23 ***Distribution of laptops for remote teaching and learning.*** Provision of 25 laptops so that teachers at the Monserrat Secondary School (MSS) could provide online classes to students. The Ministry also provided 100 laptops for children based on vulnerability statistics. Estimated cost \$304,000.
- 4.24 Additionally, 75 laptops were procured for the Montserrat Secondary School and 50 laptops for the St Augustine Primary School. Two (2) photocopiers were also procured to aid the printing of materials. The actual cost incurred for these pieces of equipment was \$320,000.

Additional Assistance to the St. Augustine Primary School

- 4.25 The St. Augustine Catholic Primary School is a privately funded educational institution; however, the school has received some financial assistance from the Government of Montserrat since 2017. The GOM agreed to provide additional support to the school. The estimated total cost to the GOM was \$176,000; the actual support amounted to \$174,448.

Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Land and the Environment (MAHLE)

Support for farmers

- 4.26 In an effort to improve Montserrat's food security, the MAHLE urgently considered ways to boost the provision of local produce, amidst the plight of the local farmers arising from major reductions in imported provisions, sales to local residents, after many persons lost jobs, and especially in sales of local produce to visitors in supermarkets/hotels/restaurants after the borders were closed to all overseas tourists and visitors for non-essential travel (except Montserratians abroad). Hence, as part of the COVID-19 Response, the MAHLE was granted approval to aid backyard gardeners and commercial farmers. The Ministry provided assistance to backyard producers and farmers by the following means:
- 4.27 ***Increased production of seedlings by the GOM's nursery.*** Backyard producers and farmers were provided with seedlings from the MAHLE's nursery free of charge. This resulted in a targeted and sustained increase in production of the specified crops/products. Estimated cost of this support was \$100,000.
- 4.28 ***Support in sheltered production systems for backyard gardeners.*** This focused on providing the raw products to enable farmers to build the structure from local materials. The materials provided include insect mesh to cover the houses and provided the irrigation systems, plain hose and joiners. The estimated total cost of this activity to the GOM was \$70,000.
- 4.29 ***Increase in commercial sheltered production systems.*** The intent here was to facilitate the development of two large green houses in order to make a substantial impact in the supply of salad

crops to the island. The total cost of this incentive was estimated at \$100,000; the actual cost to the GOM for the three (3) initiatives above amounted to \$219,442.

- 4.30 **Increase in Chilled Storage Facility.** This assistance focused on the procurement of chilled storage facility to extend the shelf life of crops. Such extra storage is required to address the seasonal over-production of some local produce, which would otherwise spoil and be wasted. The estimated cost to the GOM was \$64,000; the actual cost was \$68,629.
- 4.31 **Provision of Irrigation Systems.** A significant increase in production and yields was expected but reliance could not be placed on rain fed irrigation. Other forms of irrigation systems were required to increase production and yields. These included dams and irrigation channels; pumps and lines; and water tanks. The expected cost of the irrigation systems was \$200,000; the actual cost was \$137,006.
- 4.32 **Increased Poultry Production (Layers and Broilers).** There was a need to build additional pens to reduce reliance on imports of eggs and broilers. The GOM estimated cost of this assistance was \$80,000 but the actual cost was \$44,557.

Summary of Budgeted Expenditure

- 4.33 Table 3 below provides a summary of budgeted COVID-19 expenditure.

Table 3
Summary of Budgeted COVID-19 Initial Related Expenditure 2020
(by Departments and activity)

Activity/Programme	Budgeted Cost EC\$	Actual Cost EC\$
Ministry of Health and Social Services		
Procurement of PPE/Pharmaceuticals - frontline workers	-	543,790
Isolation Wards	303,130	220,481
Repairs to Golden Years	101,318	117,080
Establishment of flu center (at the St. Peter's Clinic) *	-	-
Quarantine expenses	4,300	27,560
Care packages (food and cleaning supplies)	480,000	137,450
Monthly unemployment benefit assistance	474,000	3,607,200
Extended Meals on Wheels Service	50,000	50,000
Medication collection and delivery service*	-	-
Cuban medical support	955,900	1,332,020
Sub-Total	2,368,648	6,035,581
Ministry of Finance and Economic Management		
COVID-19 Tourism Sector Salary Support	870,000	346,000
COVID-19 Salary Support across other Business Sectors	3,390,000	1,914,000
One-off grants to businesses in Tourism Sector	200,000	306,586
One-off grants to small and micro businesses	-	102,665

Cleaning Supplies for GOM's Ministries and Departments	-	110,777
Montserrat Red Cross's Delivery Service	150,000	12,000
Sub-Total	4,610,000	2,792,028
Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports		
Procurement of Software for shared learning platform*	64,000	-
Purchase of laptops	304,000	320,000
Additional support for St Augustine School	176,000	174,448
Sub-Total	544,000	494,448
Ministry of Agriculture, Housing, Lands and Environment		
Increased production of seedlings (\$100,000)	270,000	219,442
Support in sheltered production systems for backyard gardeners (\$70,000)		
Increase in Commercial sheltered production systems (\$100,000)		
Increase in Chilled Storage Facility	64,000	68,629
Provision of Irrigation Systems	200,000	137,006
Increased Poultry Production (Layers and Broilers)	80,000	44,557
Sub-Total	614,000	469,634
Total	8,136,648	9,791,691

* No additional cost to the GOM

4.34 Table 4 below shows projected expenditure by summarized activity.

Table 4
Summary of Budgeted COVID-19 Initial Related Expenditure 2020
(by type of activity)

Activity	Budgeted Cost ECs	Actual Costs EC\$
Healthcare costs*	-	543,790
Quarantine facilities and social distancing	408,748	365,121
Social assistance for individuals and families	1,004,000	3,794,650
Cuban Medical Support (July – October 2020)	955,900	1,332,020
Support for businesses	4,610,000	2,681,251
Education IT Support	368,000	320,000
Assistance to St Augustine School	176,000	174,448
Cleaning Supplies for GOM*	-	110,777
Support to farmers	614,000	469,634
Total	8,136,648	9,791,691

* No budgeted cost submitted

Limitations and uncertainty in cost information available

4.35 There are limitations and uncertainty in the information available. These include:

- The completeness and quality of cost information. We have not audited individual programme costs.

- The overlap between COVID-19 additional funding and costs that are business-as-usual. Funding does not always represent the net additional cost to Government (i.e. how much additional funding to the GOM's Departments was eventually required), as in some cases the measures were delivered through the reprioritisation of the GOM's existing funding and resources. Some of these additional costs include extra cleaning costs (materials and labour), additional rental space to facilitate social distancing of staff, IT equipment (both hardware and software), telephones to allow staff to work and/or communicate from home, and the setting up and operation of handwashing stations at frequently accessed public-facing Government offices.
- In order to contain the virus, it was necessary to test suspected COVID-19 samples and, by 30 June 2020, sixty-two (62) samples had been forwarded for testing. In the early stages of the virus, sample testing was done by the CARPHA in Trinidad. The costs of testing these COVID-19 samples, at CARPHA, were subsumed under the Government's annual subvention to the CARPHA. Courier services for the packages were either paid from the normal Secondary Health Care's budget (before borders were closed) or were facilitated by the Regional Security System (RSS) aircraft. Cost of testing, therefore, cannot be fully determined.
- We are dependent on our clients to provide us with information, documentation and responses to our queries to ensure that we provide a true and accurate report. We have experienced significant delays or non-submission by some clients which then deferred the finalisation of audit work undertaken. We have adopted several strategies, including giving additional time for our requests to be actioned, and making further written and verbal requests, which have caused further delays. As we cannot keep our review open indefinitely, we have opted to finalise our report with the information received to date. We expect to provide appropriate updates in future reports.

Provision of audited cost figures

4.36 Finally, budget lines and projected cost are subject to change as the GOM undertakes additional responses especially with the national lockdown in February 2021. Actual expenditure figures will be provided as part of our Report of the Auditor General on the Public Accounts of Montserrat for the fiscal year 2020/21.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

Subsequent Event

- 5.1 Projected shortfall was less than expected due to the impact of COVID-19. Funding was also withdrawn from every Ministry/Department to boost the GOM response and to re-direct funds to where they were most needed.
- 5.2 The 2nd national lockdown, which was in February, 2021, caused further disruption and hardships to the unemployed. As such, further support was given by the GOM, including payment of utility-bills for every household directly through rebates to their accounts with the Montserrat Utilities Limited.
- 5.3 Since the COVID-19 virus affected Montserrat in March 2020, the GOM implemented measures that have had continuing impact up to the present, including all households in which persons remain unemployed because the entire sector of tourism remains shut until at least 1 October 2021, per the Premier's most recent public announcement on 31 August 2021. In September 2021, the Tourism Division successfully hosted a Service Ready Training Programme for local hospitality practitioners in preparation for the reopening of the island's borders to visitors.

Acknowledgement

- 5.4 I wish to thank all the Accounting Officers, Heads of Departments and other officials who provided information, clarifications or extended any courtesy during this assignment.



Marsha V. E. Meade
Auditor-General (Ag)
30 July 2021

Appendix 1: OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL (OAG)

Functions

By the authority of *The Montserrat Constitution Order 2010*, the OAG is established and upheld in its independence and in its functions within the public sector of Montserrat. The relevant section states as follows below:

“Functions of Auditor-General

103. (1) The Auditor General shall audit and report on the public accounts of Montserrat and of **all public offices**, including the courts, the central and local Government administrations, universities and higher education institutions, and any **public corporations or other bodies** or organisations established by an Act of the Legislature, and may conduct financial and value for money audits in respect of **any project involving public funds**.

(2) The Auditor General shall submit to the Legislative Assembly annually a report of the accounts audited by him or her under subsection (1) for the immediately preceding financial year.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), **the Auditor General and any person authorised by him or her shall have a right of access at all reasonable times to all such documents** as appear to him or her to be necessary for the purposes of the audit, and shall be entitled to **require from any person** holding or accountable for any such documents such information and explanation as he or she thinks necessary for those purposes.

(4) In the exercise of his or her functions, the Auditor-General shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.”

The independence of both (a) the functioning of the Auditor General and (b) the budgetary allocations from the Government’s national Consolidated Fund to finance the Office of the Auditor General are clearly stated and emphatically declared as follows below:

National Audit Office

104. (1) **The Legislature shall by law make provision for the establishment of an independent National Audit Office** headed by the Auditor General.

(2) **The budget for the National Audit Office** shall be charged on and paid out of the Consolidated Fund, and **must at all times be adequate** to enable the full performance of the functions conferred on the Auditor General by this Constitution or any other law.

(3) The accounts of the National Audit Office shall be audited and reported on by an auditor appointed by the Legislative Assembly.” [Bold and underlined emphases added throughout.]

In line with international standards for public-sector auditors and global best practices for Supreme Audit Authorities, the O.A.G. of Montserrat espouses the following values and priorities:

Our Values

Respect. We seek to build productive professional associations and cordial personal working relationships with colleagues internally as well as with other public servants externally.

Honesty. We tell the truth even when it is unpleasant or embarrassing. Accurate self-assessment is vital for every person and for every unit of Government to acknowledge its strengths and its weaknesses, and to begin to address performance-gaps and shortfalls from relevant policies, from applicable standards, and from currently binding laws and regulations.

Transparency. Our work is in the service of the Government and the people of Montserrat. Therefore, all of our final reports on engagements undertaken are made available to all stakeholders, to the public and to any other interested parties via publication on our website.

Confidentiality. In the course of our duties, we protect the identity of all persons who reveal secret information or private details. Our reports disclose general conclusions and focus on practicable solutions rather than highlighting any person or department directly.

Accountability. By definition, the work of the O.A.G. is to hold accountable all public-sector Ministries, Departments, agencies, public-private partnerships, and State-owned enterprises. In turn, we are accountable (a) to colleagues through quality-control procedures and through peer-review, (b) to local, regional and multinational professional accounting and auditing bodies, and (c) to global standards-setting bodies. Finally, the O.A.G. itself is subject to annual audits by an independent external audit-firm of the highest repute.

Objectivity. Auditors must remain impartial, devoid of partisan bias, without membership of political parties, and otherwise focused on the truth and the facts, rather than personal opinions, emotions, or self-interest. All of our analyses, conclusions and recommendations are based on facts and verifiable and auditable evidence, supported by retained audit-papers and work-in-progress files throughout each and every audit-engagement. Information is gathered solely for the purposes of the official audit and never to be used for personal advantage of either the auditors themselves or of any other person, party, entity, or enterprise.

Independence. Vitally important to the respectability of the OAG is the independence of the Auditor-General and of his/her staff both in appearance and in fact, both in public discourse and in social intercourse. Auditors must avoid any potentially compromising personal relationships or business activities with any public-sector auditee. Where he/she has (i) any material private indirect interest and/or (ii) any direct financial or other interest in an auditee and/or (iii) in or with any of its employees, suppliers, investors, creditors, or other related parties, an auditor must either refrain from any part of an audit of such entity and/or disclose the nature and the extent of such actually or potentially compromising interest whatsoever it be.

Appendix 2 – CABINET MEETINGS RE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

Cabinet Meetings held between 2 March and 3` July 2020

MONTH	NO. OF MEETINGS	DATE
March	10	5, 12, 13, 15, 18, 23, 24, 25/26, 27,28
April	8	2, 7, 9, 16, 17, 23, 28, 30
May	4	7, 14, 18, 28
June	5	2, 4, 11, 19, 25
July	7	1, 2, 9, 16, 23, 27, 30

Source – Cabinet Secretary

Appendix 3 COVID 19 RESPONSE – STATUTORY RULES & ORDERS

In 2020, the GOM introduced the following Statutory Rules and Orders as part of its response to the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. The information was gathered from <http://agc.gov.ms/> under the SRO tab.

No.	SRO #	Date of Order	SRO Name	Main Details
1	11 of 2020	5 March 2020	Public Health (Environmental Health Officer) Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designation Environmental Officers as Environmental Health Offices for purposes of the Quarantine Act.
2	15 of 2020	13 March 2020	Public Health COVID-19 Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of the spread of COVID-19 [(i) persons arriving in Montserrat shall be examined by a Medical Officer and undergo surveillance and (ii) persons on Montserrat likely to be infected may be examined and present himself for surveillance]. • Prohibition of large gatherings (more than 50 people). Prohibition expires 3 April 2020. • Penalty for breaches \$500 or imprisonment for 3 months.
3	16 of 2020	18 March	Public Health COVID-19 (No.2) Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of the spread of COVID-19. More detailed guidance. (1) For persons arriving on island the Regulations now includes the concept of self-quarantine for 14 days commencing on date of arrival on Montserrat whether or not person has symptoms of COVID-19. (2) For persons on Montserrat – shall be required to self-quarantine or may be isolated. • Prohibition of large gatherings. Large gathering, with the exception of embarkation or disembarkation of passengers prohibited. • Penalty. Fine of \$500 or imprisonment of 3 months or both.
4	17 of 2020	13 March	Public Health (Closure of Schools) Regulations	For purposes of preventing, limiting and suppressing the spread of COVID-19 all schools closed commencing 16 March and shall remain closed until 3 April 2020.

No.	SRO #	Date of Order	SRO Name	Main Details
5	18 of 2020	24 March	Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of COVID-19 previous provisions remain. • Prohibition on a large gathering. Prior provisions remain. <p>NEW provisions include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the addition of persons employed to provide essential services and b) funerals (15 persons) from the prohibition c) maintenance of physical distance of at least 6 feet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curfew. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 7 p.m. – 5 a.m. daily. Also sets out the entities allowed to open, and activities allowed to be conducted b) Non-essential services not allowed. • Closure of Schools. Re-opening date removed. • Penalty. \$1,000, term of 6 months or both added for second or subsequent offences. • Order expires on 10 April 2020. Date
6	19 of 2020	24 March	Immigration (Prohibition on Entry) Order	<p>Persons travelling by air or sea into Montserrat is prohibited from entering Montserrat (closure of borders) except for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montserratians; • Holders of permanent residence permits • Members or crew of an aircraft or ship • Dependents of Montserratians or holders of permanent resident permits • Any other person as may be determined by the Minister of Health.
7	20 of 2020	25 March	Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression) (Amendment) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amends the Paragraph 2 of the Principal Order to allow the extension of essential services • Amends Paragraph 5 of the Principal Order to allow the Minister to (a) give permission, in writing, for a person to be in a public place between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m. and (b) deem a service an essential service.

No.	SRO #	Date of Order	SRO Name	Main Details
8	22 of 2020	27 March	Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression) (No.2) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of spread of COVID-19. Remains substantially the same as prior provisions. • Prohibition of large gatherings. Same as previous. • Curfew. Sets conditions where persons can be in a public place during curfew. • Closure of business. Establishes that non-essential business shall cease to offer services • Opening hours and social distancing. Sets opening hours for essential businesses and social distancing guidelines for setting of social distancing markers.
9	23 of 2020	9 April	Proclamation Embodying the Montserrat Defence Force	Embodied for the purpose of securing public safety and maintenance of public order on Montserrat
10	24 of 2020	9 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression) (No.2) (Amendment) Order	<p>Principal Order amended to allow exceptions for 11 and 12 April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5A(a) – one member of household allowed to go grocery shopping (according to surname and at certain time) and (b) allows for the opening of hardware stores. • 5B – provisions to prevent price gorging.
10	25 of 2020	9 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Shelter in Place) Order	<p>Purpose – control and suppress spread of COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curfew – 24 hours from 13 April except for doctor’s office, pharmacy, undertaker and businesses granted permission • Mandatory Closures – sets out the businesses and persons that should not operate • Restrictions on visitations – sets guidance for where people should not visit • Restrictions on use of airport or seaport • Restriction of road traffic. Sets guidance for who cannot be on the road and exemptions • Remote working mandatory. Allows employer to operate business from home using electronic means or otherwise • Public Officers to work remotely.

No.	SRO #	Date of Order	SRO Name	Main Details
10	25 of 2020 cont'd	9 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Shelter in Place) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition of large gathering with some exceptions • Identification. Persons given permission to gather shall have identification at all times • Permits. Minister may give written permission for an essential service
11	27 of 2020	17 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Shelter in Place) (Amendment) Order	<p>SRO 25 amended for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To define what is meant by “form of identification” and “senior citizen” (b) Outline measures for 20 – 22 April grocery shopping and banking trips (c) Re-introduce full curfew for 23 - 30 April 2020 (d) Require people to carry identification at all times and to show identification to enforcement officer on request
12	28 of 2020	28 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Shelter in Place) (Amendment) (No.2) Order	<p>SRO 25 amended to focus on measures for 1 May – 7 May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides guidance on when various businesses can open • Provide guidance for activities persons can undertake when they leave home • Allows the conduct of funerals to a maximum of 15 persons
13	31 of 2020	28 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) Order	<p>For purpose of controlling and suppressing COVID-19 (7-22 May)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines “enforcement officer” and expands “essential service provider” • Curfew – person may be in a public place between 5 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday to Friday but shall remain at home on Saturday and Sunday • Outlines permitted activity Monday – Friday • Outlines mandatory closures
14	32 of 2020	28 April	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) (Amendment) Order	<p>Amends SRO 31 of 2020</p> <p>Allows people to be in a public place Saturday and Sunday for certain activities to include running, walking, swimming alone or with no more than 4 members of the same household between 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. provided that no vehicle used.</p>

No.	SRO #	Date of Order	SRO Name	Main Details
15	34 of 2020	18 May	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) (No.2) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night-time curfew 8 p.m. – 5 a.m. from 22 May - 8 June. • Allows the opening of restaurants, cook-shop and similar businesses for collections of orders, and food delivery service. • Allows the opening of barber shop, beauty salon, spa and similar business by appointment allowing no more than 2 customers at a time.
16	34 of 2020 cont'd	18 May	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) (No.2) Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows bus driver and taxi operators to conduct business but imposes certain conditions • Allows churches to reopen and funerals to be conducted but with no more than 30 persons • Schools remain closed • Lifts restrictions on visitation to relatives in prison or in care establishment or facilities
17	35 of 2020	19 May	Legislative Assembly Standing Orders (Amendment) Order	Provides for the Premier to request the holding of Legislative Assembly meeting by electronic means, that is, video conferencing, teleconferencing or other electronic format.
18	36 of 2020	2 June	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) (No.2) Order	<p>In force 8 June – 1 July 2020 (5 a.m.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits mandatory closures to night club, nightspot or other similar business and gyms, sport club or other similar entity. • Allows restaurant, cookshop or similar business to have dine-in service from 15 June 2020 but must submit a plan to the Minister outlining seating policy, table spacing policy and sanitation plan. • Allows bars to offer take-away service from 8 June and sit in bar service from 15 June.
19	37 of 2020	6 June	Proclamation disembodying the Montserrat Defence Force	Disembodying comes into force the 8 June
20	39 of 2020	19 June	Public Health (COVID-19 Suppression) (No.3) Order	Order in force until 8 July (5 a.m.)

Appendix 3 COVID 19 RESPONSE – PRESS RELEASES etc.

COVID-19 Response - Press Releases etc.

24 January - 30 June 2020

No.	Date	Person/Entity	News Release	Press Statement	Press Release	Press Conference	Weekly Message	Interview	Total	Running Total
1	24-Jan-20	MOHSS	1						1	1
2	31-Jan-20	MOHSS	1						1	2
3	24-Feb-20	MOHSS	1						1	3
4	26-Feb-20	MOHSS	1						1	4
5	02-Mar-20	MOHSS & Others		1					1	5
6	05-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	6
7	13-Mar-20	Premier		1					1	7
8	14-Mar-20	MOHSS	1						1	8
9	14-Mar-20	MOHSS	1						1	9
10	14-Mar-20	MOHSS	1						1	10
11	15-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	11
12	15-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	12
13	17-Mar-29	MOHSS				1			1	13
14	18-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	14
15	19-Mar-20	MOHSS	1						1	15
16	19-Mar-20	Premier			1				1	16
17	19-Mar-20	GOM				1			1	17
18	20-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	18
19	21-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	19
20	23-Mar-20	MOHSS			1				1	20
21	24-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	21
22	24-Mar-20	MOHSS			1				1	22
23	25-Mar-20	Premier & MOHSS				1			1	23
24	25-Mar-20	ODG			1				1	24
25	26-Mar-20	GIU	1						1	25
26	26-Mar-20	Minister of Health		1					1	26
27	28-Mar-20	Governor & GOM				1			1	27
28	28-Mar-20	Premier					1		1	28
29	29-Mar-20	Minister of Health		1					1	29
30	06-Apr-20	MOHSS			1				1	30
31	07-Apr-20	MOHSS			1				1	31
32	08-Apr-20	Premier					1		1	32
33	08-Apr-20	GIU	1						1	33
34	09-Apr-20	GIU	1						1	34
35	12-Apr-20	GIU	1						1	35
36	15-Apr-20	Premier					1		1	36
37	16-Apr-20	GIU	1						1	37

38	17-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	38
39	17-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	39
40	17-Apr-20	Parliamentary Secretary						1	40
41	18-Apr-20	Premier						1	41
42	19-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	42
43	20-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	43
44	22-Apr-20	Premier					1	1	44
45	22-Apr-20	Minister of Educ.		1				1	45
46	22-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	46
47	23-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	47
48	24-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	48
49	24-Apr-20	Minister			1			1	49
50	24-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	50
51	25-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	51
52	29-Apr-20	Premier					1	1	52
53	29-Apr-20	GIU	1					1	53
54	01-May-20	GIU	1					1	54
55	06-May-20	Premier					1	1	55
56	08-May-20	GIU	1					1	56
57	08-May-20	GIU	1					1	57
58	12-May-20	GIU	1					1	58
59	13-May-20	Premier					1	1	59
60	14-May-20	GIU	1					1	60
61	15-May-20	GIU	1					1	61
62	20-May-20	Premier					1	1	62
63	21-May-20	ODG			1			1	63
64	21-May-20	GIU	1					1	64
65	27-May-20	GOM				1		1	65
66	29-May-20	MOF			1			1	66
67	04-Jun-20	MOEYAS	1					1	67
68	07-Jun-20	Premier					1	1	68
69	11-Jun-20	GIU	1					1	69
		Total GIU	39	5	9	5	9	2	69
1	29-Apr-20	ZJB	1					1	1
2	01-May-20	ZJB	1					1	2
3	14-May-20	ZJB	1					1	3
4	14-May-20	ZJB	1					1	4
5	14-May-20	ZJB	1					1	5
6	26-May-20	ZJB	1					1	6
7	26-May-20	ZJB	1					1	7
8	08-Jun-20	MOHSS						1	8

9	10-Jun-20	MOHSS						1	1	9
10	23-Jun-20	ZJB	1						1	10
11	30-Jun-20	ZJB	1						1	11
		Total ZJB	9	0	0	0	0	2		11
		Total GIU & ZJB	48	5	9	5	9	4		80

NB: To reduce instances of double counting items were taken from either the GIU web page or the ZJB web page.

