The Corporate Area Coroner's
and
The Special Coroner's Court
(January 1, 2024 - March 31, 2024)

OVERALL QUANTITATIVE HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2024

Court	Case Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	98.48	115.91	2.31
Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court	0	380	52.29
Weighted Average	91.55	134.51	12.25

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The Special Coroner's Court and Corporate Area Coroner's Court are vital members of the Jamaican judiciary. They enquire into the deaths of persons caused by state actors (Special Coroner) and non-state actors (Coroner). It is important to note that the data on the Special Coroner's Court covers the entire island because the Special Coroner has an island wide jurisdiction whereas the Coroner's Court in this report covers only the parishes of Kingston and St Andrew.

For this quarter the Corporate Area Coroner's Court had a case disposal rate of 98.41% that is, it disposed of 98 cases for every 100 filed in the period January to March 2024. Its clearance rate was equally impressive at 115.91%. This court has a net backlog of under 5% and is therefore officially backlog free.

The Special Coroner's Court has an average time to disposition of 52.29 months. This average time is well above the 24-month time standard set for disposition of cases regardless of the court in which those cases are filed. A closer analysis needs to be done to unearth the reasons for this long delay. Nonetheless, the Special Coroner's Court has a very impressive clearance rate of 380%.

The judges and staff of these two courts are to be commended for their contribution to making our judicial system better. Also, our stakeholders have contributed to the improved efficiency of these courts. The judiciary will continue its effort in making Jamaica's legal system one of the best globally.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Bryan Sykes, OJ, CD
Chief Justice of Jamaica

Executive Summary

This report provides a detailed analysis of case activity within the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. Key performance indicators such as case disposal rate, case clearance rate, and average time to disposition were examined to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of these courts.

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court recorded a case disposal rate of 98.48%, indicating that approximately 98 cases were resolved out of every 100 filed in the first quarter of 2024. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court continues to maintain a case clearance rate above international standards. This reporting period saw 153 disposed cases (regardless of date of origin) and 132 new cases filed, this produced a case clearance rate of 115.91%. The average time to disposition was 2.31 months, indicative of efficient case processing within the Corporate Area's Coroner's Court.

In the first quarter ended March 31, 2024 the Special Coroner's Court filed 10 new cases; none of the new cases filed during the quarter were disposed. The Special Coroner's Court disposed 38 cases regardless of the date of origin, indicative of efforts to resolve older cases within the reporting period January 1, 2024 through March 31, 2024; with an average time to disposition of 52.29 months. The court's jurisdiction across parishes, saw cases in the reporting period primarily originating from Kingston (40%), Clarendon (20%), and Trelawny (20%); other matters filed in the quarter ending March 31, 2024, originated from Portland, St. James and St. Catherine.

Key performance Summary-First Quarter ended March 31, 2024

Court	Disposal Rate (%)	Case Clearance Rate (%)	Average time to disposition (months)
Corporate Area Coroner's Court	98.48	115.91	2.31
Special Coroner's Court	0	380	52.29
Weighted Average	**91.55**	**134.51**	**12.25**

The report also analysed various aspects of case activity, including sources of cases, causes of death, gender distribution, and age demographics. Notably, in the Corporate Area Coroner's court the majority of cases were filed by the police (79.41%), highlighting their role in initiating legal proceedings. The majority of cases filed in the Corporate Area Coroner's Court for the first quarter of 2024 were males (68.89%), and the prevalent cause of death as reported was gunshot wounds. As it concerns Form D applications, most (59.26%) of the outcomes were in accordance with Section 14, indicating the acceptance of matters for an inquest. Despite the fact that delays were encountered, primarily due to part-heard matters (50 %) and awaiting jury panels (29.17%), the Corporate Area Coroner's Court overall performance for the first quarter ending March 31, 2024, remained impressive.

An examination of the demographic disaggregation and causes of death for cases in the Special Coroner's Court, noted all cases were male victims. It is also of note for the period January through March 2024 that all matters filed in the Special Coroner's Court were deaths related to JCF incidents. Although none of the new cases filed in the period were disposed of, the Special Coroner's Court recorded an exceptional case clearance rate of 380% exceeding international standards.

Across both courts in the first quarter ended March 31, 2024, a total of 142 new cases were filed, with 130 disposed of during the quarter and an overall average time to disposition of 12.25 months. The weighted average case disposal rate was 91.55%, and the weighted average case clearance rate was 134.51% for the reporting period.

Introduction

The Coroner's court serves as the judicial body responsible for determining the cause of death in diverse circumstances. Although the Coroner's Court operates across all parishes in Jamaica, this report concentrates specifically on the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court. It is important to note the distinction between the Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court, with the latter focusing on cases involving deaths caused by individual or institutional state actors or occurring under state care. Despite the fact that there's only one Special Coroner's Court on the island, located in Kingston and St. Andrew, it conducts special sittings in all parish courts, ensuring full coverage.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key statistics regarding case activity within both the Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Courts during the first quarter of 2024. It includes various metrics related to productivity, time lag, resource utilization, and other relevant measurements. The objective is to offer insights into the case flow dynamics within these courts, including disposals, factors contributing to case delays, and other crucial aspects of case progression management and outcomes.

Chapter 1.0: The Corporate Area Coroner's Court

This subsection on the Corporate Area Coroner's Court details information on the case activity in this court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024, as well as the associated measurements of productivity in the disposal of cases, time lag measures outlining the average times between important events on the case flow continuum, as well as other supplementary measurements and information.

Table 1.1: Summary of time interval between date death reported and date case opened for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Descriptive Statistics (in days)	
Number of observations	136
Mean	1004.7353
Median	277.0000
Mode	157.00a
Std. Deviation	1931.46465
Skewness	4.805
Std. Error of Skewness	.208
Range	16237.00
Minimum	42.00
Maximum	16279.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The table above provides a descriptive summary of the time taken between the date deaths were reported and the date that the cases for investigation of causes of death were opened in court at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. It is seen that from a sample of 136 observations, the average time taken between the date deaths were reported and the date that the associated cases were opened in Corporate Area Coroner's Court was roughly 1004 days or 2.8 years. The modal time taken was 157 days or 5.2 months and the median was 277 days or approximately 9 months. The standard deviation stands at a high of 1931 days (or 5.3 years), strongly suggesting that the alignment between the time of reporting death and the date cases open in the court varies widely around the mean.

The acutely high positive skewness further suggests that decisively more of the scores fall below the overall average, a result that is not surprising considering that the modal and median values are significantly below the overall mean. The maximum time shown between date deaths reported and date case opened is approximately 45 years, while the lowest is 42 days.

Table 1.2: Case Activity Summary for the quarter ended March 31, 2024

Approximate Number of new cases filed	Approximate Number of active cases	Number of disposed or inactive cases(from those filed in the quarter)	Estimated Case disposal rate (%)
132	2	130	98.48

The above table provides a summary of the cases filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in 2024. It is shown that 132 new cases were filed over the year, 51 cases or 62.96% more than the 81 cases filed in the similar first quarter of 2023. There were 130 disposed cases, while 2 remained active at the end of the quarter. These results yield an estimated case disposal rate of 98.48% this disposal rate satisfies the international standard on this measure and suggests that for every 100 cases filed over the period, roughly 98 cases were resolved. The case clearance rate will be examined later in this report.

Table 1.3: Sampling distribution of Source of cases filed for the quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Police	108	79.41
Family	28	20.59
Total	**136**	**100**

A sample of 136 cases filed at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court shows that 108 cases or

79.41% of cases filed were filed by the police, while 28 or 20.59% were filed by the family of
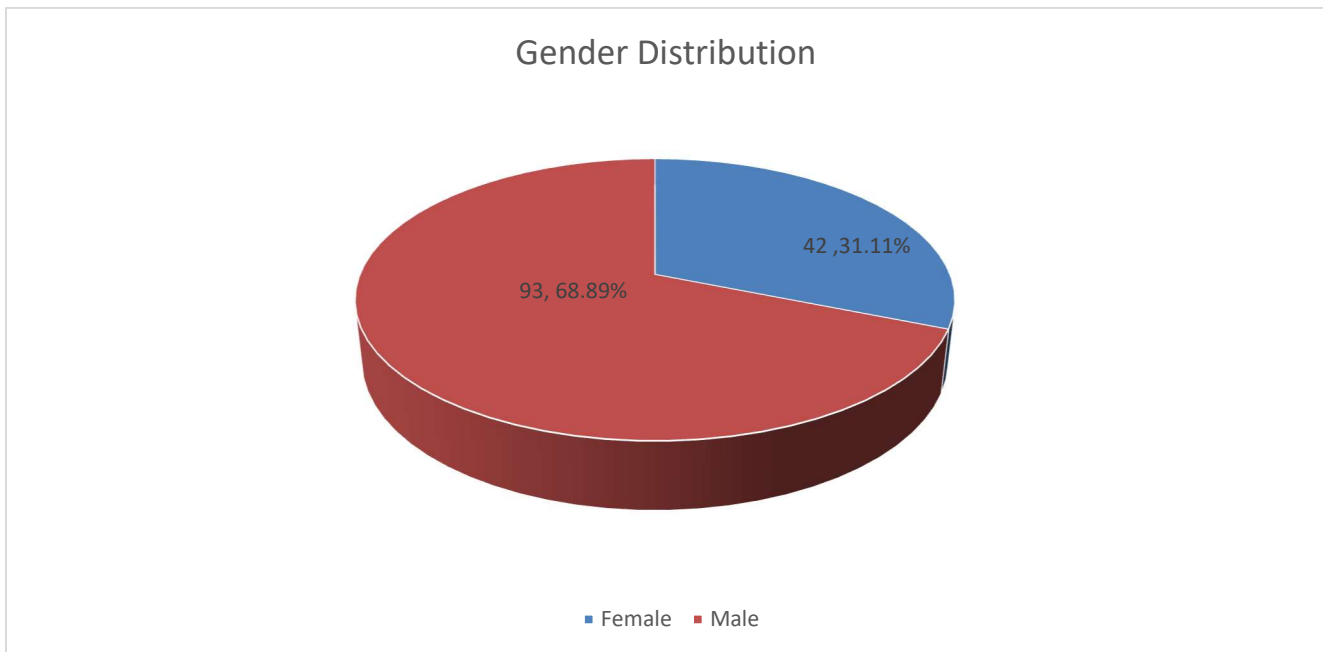
deceased.

Table 1.4: Sampling distribution of deaths reported at various Police and brought before the court for the quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Police Station	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Half Way Tree police Station	24	17.91
Denham Town Police Station	17	12.69
Elleston Road Police Station	10	7.46
Duhaney Park Police Station	9	6.72
Hunts Bay Police Station	8	5.97
Total	**68**	**51**

Sample of observations (N) = 134

The data showed a sample of 134 Coroner's Court cases reported at the different police stations in

the Corporate Area which were subsequently brought to the court. Of that number, the Half Way

Tree Police Station accounted for the highest proportion of cases filed/investigated for the quarter

with 24 or 17.91%. The Denham town Police Station ranked next with 17 or 12.69%, while the Elleston

Road Police Station followed with 10 or 7.46% and the Duhaney Park Police Station with 9 cases or

6.72% of the sample. The top five police stations accounting for cases filed at the Corporate Area

Coroner's Court was rounded off by Hunts Bay Police Stations with 8 or 5.97% of the sample.

Chart 1.1: Distribution of gender of the deceased for new cases filed in the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Gender Distribution

42 ,31.11%

93, 68.89%

■ Female ■ Male

The above chart summarizes gender distribution, using a sample of 135 deceased persons involved in the cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. It is shown that 93 or 68.89% of the deceased were male, while the remaining 42 or 31.11% were female. In the similar quarter of 2023, males also accounted for a larger proportion, 80 or (74%) of the total sample. For the reporting period the absolute number of cases of males increased by 16.25% when compared to 2023.

Table 1.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Descriptive statistics (age in years)	
Number of observations	131
Mean	58.13
Median	60.00
Mode	69
Std. Deviation	23.475
Skewness	-.025
Std. Error of Skewness	.212
Range	88
Minimum	15
Maximum	103

A sample of 131 ages of the deceased involved in the cases filed revealed that the average age is roughly 58 years while the median is 60 years, and one of the most common age value is 69 years. The standard deviation stands at a moderate value of 23 years, indicating a modest variation of the scores around the mean. The skewness is low negative value, suggesting that the distribution of ages largely clusters around the mean. The smallest age value in the data set is 15 years, while the largest age value was 103 years.

Table 1.6a: Sampling distribution of the causes of death reported for cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Cause of death	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gunshot wounds of head, chest, face, torso, neck and buttock	14	10.14
Multiple gunshot wounds	9	6.52
Blunt impact trauma of the head	6	4.35
Undetermined	4	2.90
Brain lacerations, Multiple skull fractures, Gunshot wounds to the head and face	2	1.45
Total	**35**	**79**

Sample size (N) = 138

The above table is computed using a sample of 138 observations of the causes of death associated with cases. It is shown that among the most common causes of death reported are death caused by gunshot wounds with 14 or 10.14% of the sample and multiple gunshot wounds with 9 or 6.52%. Death by blunt impact trauma to the head followed with 6 or 4.35%; Undetermined with 4 or 2.90%, and brain lacerations/multiple skull fractures with 2 or 1.45% rounded off the top five causes of death for the reporting period.

Table 1.6b: Sampling distribution of the causes of death as officially determined by the coroner for matters disposed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Cause of death determined by Coroner	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Death due to natural causes	70	53.03
Death due to gunshot wounds	48	36.36
Death due to motor vehicle accident	6	4.55
Cause of death unknown	3	2.27
death due to drowning	2	1.52
Total	**129**	**98**

Number of observations N= (132)

The above table is computed using a sample of 132 observations of the causes of death as officially determined by the Coroner. It is shown that among the most common causes of death reported in the quarter ended March 31, 2024, are deaths due to natural causes with 70 or 53.03% of the sample and deaths due to gunshot wounds with 48 or 36.36% of the sample. It is important to note that there may often be variances between the causes of death as reported and the causes of death as determined by the Coroner.

Table 1.7: Sampling distribution of the Summary of outcomes of Form D applications made during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Outcomes	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Section 14	80	59.26
Other	53	39.26
Trial and Judge	2	1.48
Total	**135**	**100.0**

During the processing of a case at the Coroner's Court, a Form D application is made which the judge reviews an order to determine the direction of the case thereafter. The above table provides a summary of the outcomes of these applications over the period under examination. It is seen that the dominant outcome from Form D applications were decisions in accordance with Section 14, which means that the matter was accepted for an Inquest to be carried out by the Coroner. For 80 or 59.26% of the outcomes, trial and judge accounted for 1.48%. While the generic category 'other outcomes' accounted for the remaining 53 or 39.26%. These results are typical to the trends observed in the Coroner's Courts Island wide. The data was computed using a sample of 135 cases.

Table 1.8: Sampling distribution of reasons for adjournment/continuance during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Reasons for adjournment/continuance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Part-heard	12	50.00
Mention/Awaiting Jury Panel	7	29.17
File incomplete/awaiting medical certificate	5	20.83
Total	**24**	**100**

In the report period, 24 matters were adjourned/continued. Continuances (delays attributable to case progression stages) by way of part heard matters accounted for the highest portion of the sample with 12 or 50%. Adjournments due to incomplete files/awaiting medical certificate, and continuances for mention/awaiting jury panel accounted for the remaining 5 or 20.83% and 7 or 29.17% respectively of the sample.

Table 9.0: Sampling distribution of the type of hearings in the third quarter ended March 31, 2024

Type of hearing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chambers	134	97.5
Trial Judge Only	2	1.4
Total	**136**	**99**

A sample of 136 hearings at the Corporate Area Coroner's Court in the first quarter of ended March 31, 2024, reveals that 134 were chamber hearings, and the remaining 2 were trial by Judge only.

Table 1.10: Sampling distribution of the methods of Disposition of matters completed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Methods of disposition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	95	60.13
Section 10	61	38.61
Inquest	1	0.63
Open Court Verdict	1	0.63
Total	**158**	**100**

The methods of disposition for the sample of 158 matters which were disposed during the quarter ended March 31, 2024, showed that 95 or 60.13% of matters were disposed by way of an Inquest, under the provisions of Section 14 of the Coroner's Court Act. Matters disposed by way of inquest under the provision of Section 10 of the Coroner's Court Act followed with 61 or 38.61% of the sample and matters disposed by inquest or open court verdict accounted for 0.63% each.

Table 1.11: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Descriptive Statistics (in days)

Number of observations	159
Mean	69.25
Median	9.00
Mode	9
Std. Deviation	281.883
Skewness	4.867
Std. Error of Skewness	.192
Range	1658
Minimum	2
Maximum	1660

The above data shows that the average time taken to dispose of matters during the quarter is approximately 69 days. This was derived from a sample of 159 matters resolved over the year. The data also revealed that the median time taken to dispose of the matters was 9 days and the modal time was also 9 days. The standard deviation of 281.88, however, suggests that there is a wide variation in the individual scores and the high positive skewness indicates that a larger proportion of the scores fell below the overall mean. The minimum time taken was 2 days, with the maximum time taken being 1660 days. The average time taken between the date the file was received and the date of first hearing was 5.18 days compared to the 3.72 days recorded in the similar quarter of 2023.

Table 1.12: Case clearance rate summary for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Approximate Number of new cases filed	Approximate Number of cases disposed or inactive	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
132	153	115.91

Courts that consistently maintain an average case clearance rate of between 90%-110% long enough will at a minimum have its disposals keeping up with the number of new cases filed but may also likely make considerable strides in reducing its case backlog rate to an acceptable level of under 10% of its active cases. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court with a case clearance rate of 115.91% for the quarter ended March 31, 2024, up from the 109.88% recorded in the similar quarter of 2023, falls within the above –mentioned range which shows promising signs of a well-managed caseload. There were 132 new cases filed during the quarter and 153 cases were resolved (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate. It suggests that for every 100 new cases filed, 115 cases were resolved of during the quarter.

Chapter 2.0: The Special Coroner's Court

This section provides a detailed summary of case activity and events as well as case outcomes and related factors at the Special Corner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Table 2.1a: Case activity summary for the quarter ended March 31, 2024, in the Special Coroner's Court

Approximate number of new cases filed	Approximate number of active cases	Approximate number of disposed or inactive cases (from those filed in quarter)	Estimated Case disposal rate (%)
10	1	0	0.0

Note 1: There were 9 new pending cases at the end of the quarter

The above table provides a summary of the cases filed at the Cooperate Area Special Coroner's Court. It is shown that 10 new cases were filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024, there were no disposed cases and 1 active case at the end of the period.

Table 2.2: Sampling distribution of the parish of origin of matters filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Parish Origin	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Kingston	6	40.00
Clarendon	3	20.00
Trelawny	3	20.00
Portland	1	6.67
St Catherine	1	6.67
St James	1	6.67
Total	**15**	**100.0**

As a parish court, the Special Coroner's Court has a single location in Kingston but is deployed island wide to hear cases originating in the various parishes. The above table provides a summary of the 'parish of origin' of cases filed in the Special Coroner's Court. It is seen that Kingston with 40% of the cases filed, Clarendon and Trelawny with approximately 20% each accounted for the largest share of new cases filed in the Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Table 2.3: Sampling distribution of the source of matters filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Source	Frequency	Percentage (%)
INDECOM	15	100

A sample of 15 matters filed at the Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024, shows that all 100% were filed by INDECOM.

Table 2.4: Sampling distribution on the type of death by Institution for the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Type of death	Frequency	Percentage(%)
JCF	15	100.00
Total	**15**	**100.0**

It is seen in the above table, that all the matters filed in the first quarter of 2024 were matters related to JCF deaths, (15 or 100%).

The majority of the causes of death as reported in the cases filed during the report period were stated as "hemorrhage and shock" or "gunshot wound to the body", accounting for 60% of the sample.

The sex distribution of the deceased involved in the 15 cases filed in the first quarter of 2024, were all (100%) males.

Table 2.5: Descriptive Statistics on the age of the deceased in cases filed during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024

Descriptive Statistics (age in years)

Number of observations	14
Mean	31.14
Median	27.00
Mode	27
Std. Deviation	10.458
Skewness	1.925
Std. Error of Skewness	.597
Range	38
Minimum	22
Maximum	60

The above descriptive summary on the age of the deceased involved in cases filed during the first quarter of 2024 revealed that from a sample of 14 observations, the average age was roughly 31 years, while the most frequently occurring age was 27 years old. The highest age recorded was 60 years, while the lowest is 22 years old. The moderate standard deviation of roughly 10 years suggests that there was a modest variation of the individual ages from the overall mean, while the relatively high positive skewness shown is an indication that proportionately more of the scores fell below the overall mean.

Table 2.6: Sampling distribution of the methods of disposition for matters resolved during the quarter ended March 31, 2024

Methods of distribution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Section 14	23	56.10
Section 16(1)	18	43.90
Total	**41**	**100.0**

The methods of disposition for a sample of 41 matters, which were disposed of during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024 revealed that 23 or 56.10% of matters were disposed by way of an inquest under the provisions of Section 14 of the Coroner's Court Act.

The remainder were matters disposed by way of Inquest under the provision of Section 16 of the Coroner's Court Act with 18 or 43.90% of the sample.

Table 2.7: Descriptive Statistics on the time to disposition for matters completed during the quarter ended March 31, 2024

Descriptive Statistics (Days)	
Number of observations	40
Mean	1568.88
Median	1609.00
Mode	1775
Std. Deviation	772.568
Skewness	.156
Std. Error of Skewness	.374
Range	3386
Minimum	107
Maximum	3493

The above table shows a sample of 40 cases disposed of, in the first quarter of 2024, at an estimated average of roughly 52 months. The maximum of time to disposition was approximately 9.5 years and a minimum of 107 days (3.5 months). The low positive skewness is an indication that proportionately more of the scores in the distribution were clustered around the series mean, while the moderate standard deviation shows moderate variation in the data points around the overall mean.

Table 2.8: Descriptive statistics on the age of active cases as at March 31, 2024

Descriptive Statistics (in days)

Number of observations	12
Mean	563.67
Median	450.50
Mode	435
Std. Deviation	437.018
Skewness	2.035
Std. Error of Skewness	.637
Range	1625
Minimum	99
Maximum	1724

The above data is based on sample of 12 active Special Coroner's matters during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. The average age of these matters was roughly 564 days or approximately 19 months, while the most frequently occurring age of active cases in the distribution was 435 days. The standard deviation of roughly 437 days suggests that there is a relatively large dispersion in the individual scores from the average, while the positive skewness seen is an indication that there were more scores in the data set which fell below the overall average age of the active cases. The oldest active matter was 1724 days old or 4.7 years, while the youngest case was 99 days.

Table 2.9: Case clearance rate summary for the quarter ended March 31,2024

Approximate number of new cases filed	Approximate number of cases disposed	Estimated Case clearance rate (%)
10	38	380

Note 1: There were 9 pending cases at the end of quarter
Note 2: there were 0 inactive cases for the end of the quarter

Courts that consistently maintain an average case clearance rate of between 90%-110% for long enough will at a minimum, have its disposals keeping up with the number of new cases filed but may also likely make considerable strides in reducing its case backlog rate to an acceptable level of under 5% of active cases.

The Special Coroner's Court with a case clearance rate of 380% in the first quarter of 2024, exceeds the above-mentioned range, which shows promising signs of a well- managed caseload. During the report period, there were 10 new cases filed and 38 cases were disposed (regardless of date of origin), leading to the stated clearance rate.

Aggregate Case Activity Summary

Table 2.10: Aggregate case flow performance estimates for the quarter ended March 31, 2024

Metric	Corporate Area Coroner's Court	Corporate Area Special Coroner's Court	Total/Weighted Average
Approximate number of new cases	132	10	142
Approximate number of disposed cases	130	0	130
Approximate gross number of disposed cases (regardless of date of origin)	153	38	191
Estimated Case Disposal Rate (%)	98.48	0	91.55
Estimated Case Clearance Rate (%)	115.91	380	134.51
Average Time to Disposition	2.31	52.29	12.25

The above table provides a summary of aggregate case activity across the featured specialized Coroner's Court and Special Coroner's Court during the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. It is shown that a total of 142 new cases were filed in these courts, while 130 of these cases were disposed of, leading to an estimated weighted case disposal rate of 91.55%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court had an estimated case disposal rate of 98.48%, an impressive result. The table also shows that a gross number of 153 cases were disposed of for the quarter, in the Corporate Area Coroner's Court, leading to an estimated weighted case clearance rate of 115.91% and the Special Coroner's Court recorded an estimated case clearance rate of 380%, both notable results which exceed the international standard.

Concluding Note

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court and the Special Coroner's Court both continue to contribute to reducing the overall net case backlog rate and enhancing judicial efficiency. In the first quarter ended March 31, 2014, the combined weighted average time to disposition was 12.25 months. Across both courts the estimated case disposal rate was 91.55%, and the estimated case clearance rate was 134.51% in the reporting period.

The Corporate Area Coroner's Court has consistently sustained high rates of case disposal and clearance, and to this regard has achieved and maintained the judiciary's goal of reducing the backlog to under 5%. These sustained high case disposal and clearance rates, are pivotal in positioning the Jamaican judiciary as one of the most efficient globally. The data shows that, for the reporting period, the Special Coroner's Court filed 10 new cases none of which were disposed. Considering the cases disposed regardless of the date of origin, the Special Coroner's Court recorded a case clearance rate of 380%, suggesting efforts to resolve older cases with an average time to disposition of 52.29 months in the first quarter ended March 31, 2024. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court, filed 132 new cases in the reporting period, and disposed of 158 matters irrespective of the date of origin, producing a case clearance rate of 115.91%. The Corporate Area Coroner's Court, in particular, continues to be an exceptional performing court and one of the fastest in disposing of new cases, having disposed of 130 of the 132 new cases filed (98.48%) in the first quarter ended March 31, 2024 and an average time to disposition of 2.31 months.

Glossary of Terms

Sampling Distribution: A sampling distribution of a given population is the distribution of frequencies of a range of outcomes that could possibly occur for a statistic of a population. A population is the entire pool from which a statistical sample is drawn.

Range: This is a measure of the spread of values in a data set, calculated as the highest minus the lowest value. A larger range score may indicate a higher spread of values in a data set.

Standard deviation: This is a measure of how widely spread the scores in a data set are around the average value of that data set. The higher the standard deviation, the higher the variation of the raw scores in the data set, from the average score. A low standard deviation is an indication that the scores in a data set are clustered around the average.

Outlier: An outlier is a value that is too small or too large, relative to the majority of scores/trend in a data set.

Skewness: This is measure of the distribution of scores in a data set. It gives an idea of where the larger proportion of the scores in a data set can be found. Generally, if skewness is positive as revealed by a positive value for this measure, this suggests that a greater proportion of the scores in the data set are at the lower end. If the skewness is negative as revealed by a negative value for this measure, it generally suggests that a greater proportion of the scores are at the higher end. If the skewness measure is approximately 0, then there is roughly equal distribution of scores on both the higher and lower ends of the average figure.

Clearance rate: The ratio on incoming to outgoing cases or of new cases filed to cases disposed, regardless of when the disposed cases originated. For example, in a given Term 100 new cases were filed and 110 were disposed (including cases originating before that Term) the clearance rate is 110/100 or 110%.

Note: The clearance rate could therefore exceed 100% but the disposal rate has a maximum value of 100%. A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system. The inferred international benchmark for case clearance rates is an average of 90% - 110 annualized. This is a critical foundation to backlog prevention in the court system.[i]

Disposal rate: As distinct from clearance rate, the disposal rate is the proportion of new cases filed which have been disposed in a particular period. For example, if 100 new cases are filed in a particular Term and 80 of those cases were disposed in said Term, then the disposal rate is 80%.

Note: A persistent case clearance rate of less than 100% will eventually lead to a backlog of cases in the court system.[ii]

Case congestion rate: The ratio of pending cases to cases disposed in a given period. It is an indication of how fatigued a court is, given the existing state of resources and degree of efficiency. A case congestion rate of 150% for example, is an indication that given the resources currently at a court's disposal and its degree of efficiency, it is carrying 1.5 times its capacity.

Trial/hearing date certainty: This is the proportion of dates set for trial or hearing which proceed without adjournment. For example, if 100 trial dates are set in a particular Term and 40 are adjourned, then the trial certainty rate would be 60%. The international standard for this measure is between 92% and 100%.

Case File Integrity Rate: Measures the proportion of time that a case file is fully ready and available in a timely manner for a matter to proceed. Hence, any adjournment, which is due to the lack of readiness of a case file or related proceedings for court at the scheduled time, impairs the case file integrity rate. The international benchmark for the case file integrity is 100%.

Courtroom utilization rate: The proportion of courtrooms in full use on a daily basis or the proportion of hours utilized in a courtroom on a daily basis. The international standard for this rate is 100%.

Case backlog: A case that is in the court system for more than two years without disposition.

The **gross backlog rate** measures the proportion of all cases filed within a given period which remain unresolved for a period of over two years.

The **net backlog rate** on the other hand measures the proportion of active cases filed in a given period which are unresolved for over two years.

Continuance and Adjournment: In a general sense, any delay in the progression of a hearing in which a future date/time is set or anticipated for continuation is a form of adjournment. However, in order to make a strict distinction between matters which are adjourned for procedural factors and those which are generally avoidable, court statistics utilizes the terms 'continuance' and 'adjournment'. Here, 'continuance' is used strictly to describe situations in which future dates are set due to procedural reasons and 'adjournments' is used to describe the circumstances in which future dates of appearance are set due to generally avoidable reasons. For example, adjournments for another stage of hearing, say from a plea and case management hearing to a trial hearing or from the last date of trial to a sentencing date are classified as 'continuance' but delays for say, missing or incomplete files, due to outstanding medical reports or attorney absenteeism are classified as 'adjournments'. Adjournments as defined in this document have an adverse effect on hearing date certainty rates but continuances do not.

Percentile Rank: This refers to the percentage of scores that are equal to or less than a given score. Percentile ranks, like percentages, fall on a continuum from 0 to 100. For example, a percentile ranks of 45 indicates that 45% of the scores in a distribution of scores fall at or below the score at the 35th percentile. Percentile ranks are useful when you want to quickly understand how a particular score

compares to the other scores in a distribution of scores. For instance, knowing a court disposed 300 cases in a given period doesn't tell you much. You don't know how many case disposals were possible, and even if you did, you wouldn't know how that court's score compared to the rest of the courts. If, however, you were told that the court scored at the 80th percentile, then you would know that this court did as well or better than 80% of the courts in case disposals.

Difference between percentage and percentile changes: The difference between percentage and percentage points, the latter is strictly used to compare two percentages, for example, if the clearance rate in 2018 was 89% and the clearance rate in 2019 is 100%, then the appropriate expression to compare these would be "an 11 percentage points increase". However, if we are comparing two absolute numbers, say, 1000 cases were disposed in 2018, and 1500 in 2019, then there would be a 50% increase in cases disposed.

Weighted Average: Weighted average is a calculation that takes into account the varying degrees of significance of the groups or numbers in a data set. In calculating a weighted average for a particular variable, the individual scores or averages for each group are multiplied by the weight or number of observations in each of those groups, and summed. The outcome is then divided by the summation of the number of observations in all groups combined. For example, if we wish to calculate the weighted average clearance rate for the parish courts, the product of the clearance rate and number of cases for each court are computed, added, and then divided by the total number of cases across all the parish courts. This means that a court with a larger caseload has a greater impact on the case clearance rate than a smaller court. A weighted average can be more accurate than a simple average in which all numbers in a data set are assigned an identical weight.

Exponential Smoothing: Exponential smoothing of time series data assigns exponentially decreasing weights for newest to oldest observations. In other words, the older data, the less priority ("weight") the data is given; newer data is seen as more relevant and is assigned more weight.

Smoothing parameters (smoothing constants) – usually denoted by a- determine the weights of the observations.

Exponential smoothing is usually used to make short term forecasts, as longer term forecasts using this technique can be quite unreliable.

- **Simple (single) exponential smoothing** uses a weighted moving average with exponentially decreasing weights.

- **Holt's trend-corrected double exponential smoothing** is usually more reliable for handling data that shows trends, compared to the single procedure.

- **Triple exponential smoothing** (also called the Multiplicative Holt-Winters) is usually more reliable for parabolic trends or data that shows trends and seasonality.

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[i] Source:
http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf

[ii] Source:
http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/bestpractice/BestPracticeCaseAgeClearanceRates.pdf