

The Jamaica Debates Commission (JDC) is an independent non-profit organization - legally established as a partnership between the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce (JCC) and the Media Association Jamaica Limited (MAJ). The Commission, which was established in 2002, is made up of six Commissioners equally appointed by the partner organizations. The Commissioners appointed by the JCC are Philmore Ogle, Noel daCosta and Anthony Chang and those appointed by the MAJ are Gary Allen, Brian Schmidt and Jennifer Grant. The Commission is presently chaired by Gary Allen. Noel daCosta is the Vice-Chairman and the past Chairman is Philmore Ogle. The Jamaica Debates Commission was responsible for the staging of the 2002 and 2007 National Political Debates. The Commission is supported by Trevor Fearon and Dr. Eleanor Henry providing key resource requirements and by Paula Graham-Haynes providing executive administrative assistance. The JDC is responsible for planning political debates including establishing formats, engaging panelists and questioners, inviting the participation of political representatives, guiding the topics for debates, securing the funding for the debates as well as engaging the radio and television production services required for the debates.

The Commission has in the last few years established a Debates Manual which has been used to guide its preparations for debates and has been shared with like organizations in Caribbean and non-Caribbean jurisdictions.

Funding support for previous debates has come from private sector and overseas donor organizations. The Commission's finances are independently audited and fully transparent. So far in 2011, the JDC has revised its format, solicited funding, engaged the Political Parties about their interest in debating and has held consultations with Journalists regarding the staging of the next set of political debates. The JDC's website [www.jamaicadebatescommission.org](http://www.jamaicadebatescommission.org) is being updated and will be re-launched in November.