

# INTRODUCTION

Classification systems, such as the Jamaica Standard Occupational Classification (JSOC), seek to organize similar occupations into a structured set of distinct and unique categories. An occupation, as defined by the ILO is a *“set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterised by a high degree of similarity.”* Occupational classifications are used for the statistical description and analysis of the labour market; summarizing and presentation of employment data by grouping detailed occupations into aggregated groups.

The revision of the JSOC has become necessary due to increased demand for tools to assist in the analysis of labour market information. There is also an urgent need to modify the structure of the classification to reflect the current workforce in Jamaica. Demands for streamlined labour market information, the needs of labour market practitioners as well as rapid technological changes that has significantly altered a number of occupational categories, made the need for a revision even more compelling.

Additionally, the existence of two labour-related legislations will require an up-to-date classification of occupations. These are the Occupational Safety and Health Act which will stipulate safety requirements for workers by occupational categories and the other is the Caribbean Community (Free Movement of Skilled Persons) Act of 1997 intended to facilitate the implementation of the free movement of goods and services in the Caribbean Free Market and Economy.

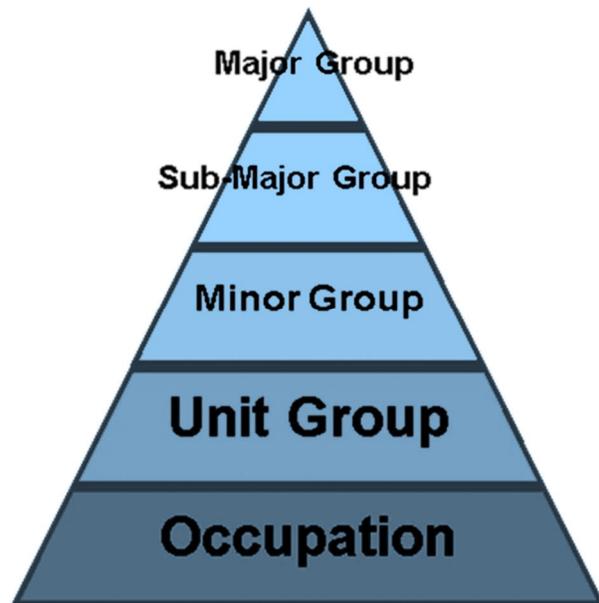
## The Classification Structure

The structure of the JSOC is based on the structure of the International Standard Classification of Occupations – ISCO 2008, a classification in which jobs are ordered into a hierarchy of occupational categories. According to ISCO, a job is defined as *“a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person, including for an employer or in self-employment.”* Like the ISCO, the JSOC is a skills-based classification that groups jobs by occupations based on the type of work performed or the type of work that should be performed.

The JSOC is a hierarchical classification system divided into major groups, sub-major groups, minor groups, unit groups and occupations. There are ten (10) major occupational groups, of which, nine (9) relate to civilian occupations and the tenth to the Armed Forces. Each Major Group, brings together workers with a similar level of education and skill; carries a title that summarizes the nature of the occupations in that Group and is assigned a unique number code.

At the second level in the classification hierarchy, there are 41 Sub-Major Groups, each related to one of the 10 Major Groups and denoted by a two-digit code. Minor Groups are denoted by

3-digit codes which are extensions of the Major and Sub-Major Group codes. There are 129 Minor Groups in the JSOC. The Unit Group is denoted by a 4-digit code and are extensions of the Minor Groups. There are 442 such 4-digit codes in the JSOC. The fifth and final level of the classification, Occupations, is denoted by a 5-digit code. There are 1,071 such codes.



The grouping of related occupations at different levels of detail in the JSOC classification system has resulted in a pyramid structure with five distinct levels of detail.

At the top of the structure is the **Major Group**. This is followed by the **Sub-Major Group** at the second level, the **Minor Group** at the third level, the **Unit Group** at the fourth level and finally by the **Occupation** at the fifth and most detailed level.

## Improvements incorporated into JSOC 2015

The revised JSOC includes several new features which are aimed at improving the usefulness of the classification.

### *Occupational Definitions*

The introduction of more narrative and annotations within the text to explain these terms, concepts and rules are aimed at adding greater clarity for users while facilitating the standardization of terms and procedures.

The detailed occupational profile will all carry:

- The Occupational Title with the assigned classification code.
- Alternate Titles where relevant
- A short occupational summary that encapsulates the main occupational functions.
- A list of tasks that represent the most important duties performed.

- The minimum academic qualifications needed for the occupation and other related requirements for practice in the given profession e.g. registration, apprenticeship, or passing of a qualifying examination etc. Also included is a list of the important skills required for performing in each occupation.
- Two optional areas that some definitions carry are “Related Occupations” and “Areas of Specialization.”

### ***Conversion Tables***

The JSOC 2015 includes detailed two-way conversion tables that compare the classification categories and their associated codes with the previous (1991) and current (2015) versions of the classification.

### ***Alphabetical Index***

The JSOC 2015 also provides a detailed alphabetical index which will help users to easily find where occupations are coded.