
Office of Utilities Regulation

Consumer Affairs Unit

Quarterly Performance Report

2018 April - June

Publication Date: September 4, 2018



36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10

Consumer Affairs Unit Quarterly Performance Report

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The Role and Objectives of the OUR

The Office of Utilities Regulation Act of 1995 established the Office of Utilities Regulation (**OUR**) as a body corporate. Under the Act, the OUR is charged with the responsibility of regulating the provision of utility services in the electricity, telecommunications and water and sewerage sectors. The objectives are to:

- Ensure that consumers of utility services enjoy an acceptable quality of service at a reasonable cost;
- Establish and maintain transparent, consistent and objective rules for the regulation of utility service providers;
- Promote the long-term efficient provision of utility services for national development consistent with Government policy;
- Provide an avenue of appeal for consumers who have grievances with the utility service providers;
- Work with other related agencies in the promotion of a sustainable environment; and, act independently and impartially.

The Consumer and Public Affairs Department

Through the Consumer and Public Affairs (CPA) Department, the OUR discharges its mandate to protect utility consumers. The Consumer Affairs Unit, the Public Affairs Unit (PAU) and the OUR Information Centre (OURIC) all comprise the CPA Department. This Department is the section of the OUR that directly interfaces with utility consumers and one of its main responsibilities is to investigate appeals of decisions made by utility service providers brought by aggrieved consumers.

The Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU)

Among other things, the CAU receives, records and processes consumer complaints and appeals, monitors trends in consumer complaints and provides the Office with advice on measures to be taken to improve consumers' welfare.

The CAU uses as a primary input to its policy development and advice to the Office, the results of analyses of the complaints received from customers about the services provided by the companies. Feedback from consumers at town meetings, public fora and the media are also key sources for opinions and activities of utility services.

A consumer survey which seeks consumer feedback on a range of consumer issues is conducted every 18 - 24 months. Additionally, a public education programme is pursued which includes organizing consultations with stakeholders on pertinent regulatory matters.

The PAU manages the public education programme, media relations and the website while the Information Centre (OURIC), inter alia, provides information in keeping with the requirements of the Access to Information Act. The OUR through the CPA department also funds the activities of the Consumer Advisory Committee on Utilities (CACU) which was established to operate as an independent advocacy group providing critical feedback and support for consumer issues.

The Intent and Purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report

The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is prepared by the Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) and provides the public with information and analysis about the contacts received from utility providers. The information includes: the number of customer contacts received over the review period; JPS and NWC's performance against the Guaranteed Standards; utilities' responsiveness to our appeals process; and the performance of the Unit against the appeals process timelines.

The QPR is intended to be a fair, reasonable and transparent report of the above-mentioned activities. The statistics for each reporting period is gathered from our Customer Information Database and is reflective of the contacts received from utility consumers island-wide. These contacts are received via various channels, namely: letters, telephone, walk-in, e-mails, fax and social media.

Methods of Calculation

The methods of calculation used include: summation, quarterly and year-on-year comparisons. The resort latterly to normalize the numbers of contacts by expressing this as per the customer base reflects our allowance for fair comparisons. Consequently, the report cites the number of contacts per 100,000 of the service provider's customer base. Even so, it is recognized that the telecommunications sector with its heterogeneous customer bases presents a peculiarity for comparison with the water and electricity utilities that have more homogenous customer bases. The information should be interpreted as a sample, or statistical representation of the intake to the Unit.

Requests for additional details or any comments regarding this document should be directed to:

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Executive Summary

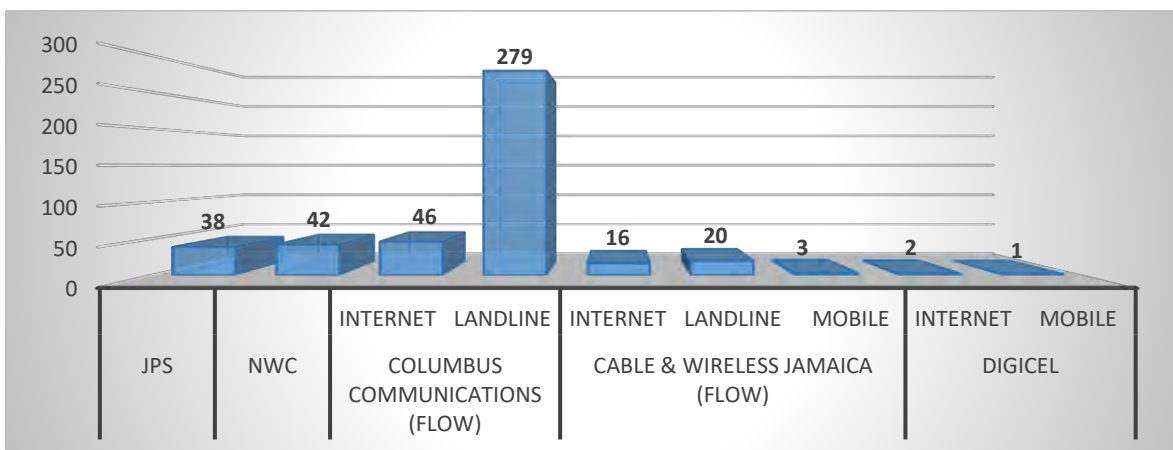
During the April - June period, the number of contacts to the CAU decreased by 30%, to 714, compared with the preceding quarter. Contacts relating to billing matters (-31%), service interruption (-39%) and service connection (-39%) accounted for the most significant declines over the preceding period.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service providers¹:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 242 (34%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 199 (28%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 78 (11%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 105 (15%)
- Digicel – 58 (8%)
- Small water and/or sewerage providers CanCara Development Ltd., Dynamic Environmental Management Ltd. (DEML) and Landmark Developers Ltd.; small telecommunications providers Dekal Wireless, Caricel and XtiNet Ltd.; and, Other (Not Utility Provider Related) – 32 (4%).

While JPS at 242, accounted for the highest number for total contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest number of contacts – at 279 per 100,000 – in proportion to its landline customer base.

Figure 1: Distribution of OUR contacts per 100,000 of customer base

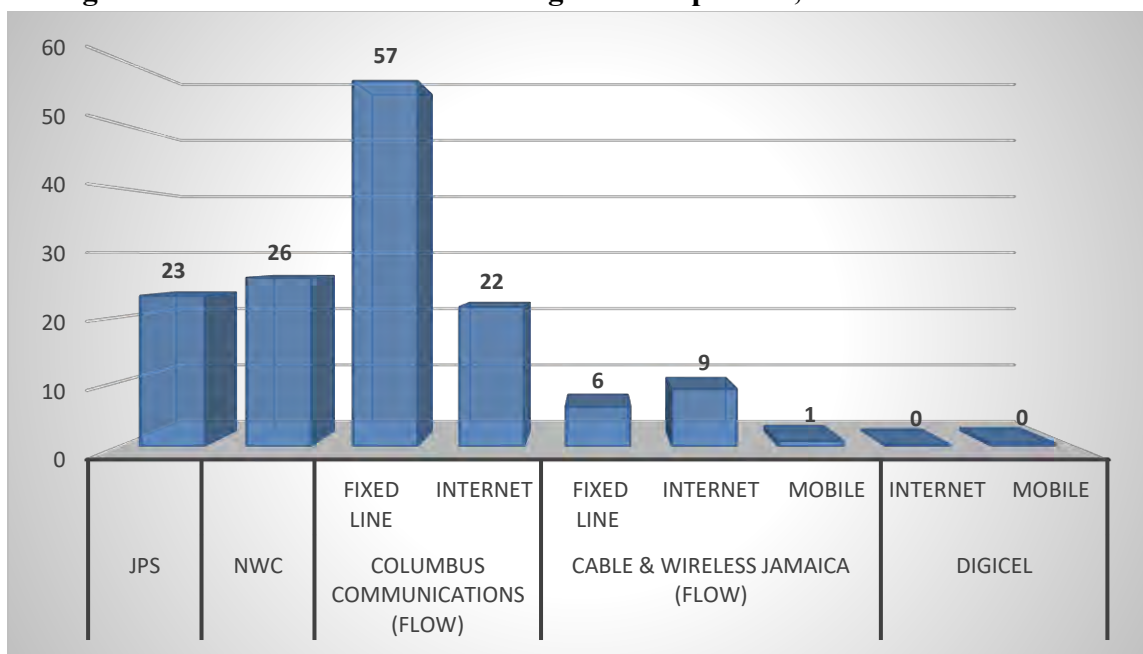


¹ Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 4 on page 23

While billing matters continued to be the main reason for utility consumers contacting the CAU, there was a one percentage point decrease, to 48%, in these contacts. As a percentage of total contacts, JPS and NWC with 144 (20%) and 124 (17%) contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing related matters.

While JPS and NWC accounted for the highest number of billing contacts as a percentage of the total number of contacts, Figure 2 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) at 57, accounted for the greatest number of billing related contacts per 100,000 of its customer base in relation to its fixed line service. NWC and JPS followed with 26 and 23 contacts respectively, per 100,000 of their customer base.

Figure 2: Distribution of OUR billing contacts per 100,000 of customer base



In keeping with the usual trend, service interruption issues, which represented 17% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact.

Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

(i) Acknowledgements

Of the ten (10) new appeals that were accepted for investigation during the review period, JPS and NWC accounted for four and six respectively. Requests for information, in the form of case letters, were sent for all new appeals accepted.

JPS submitted acknowledgements for the four case letters sent, however only two – or 50% - were received within the agreed timeline. For the NWC, acknowledgements were received for all six case letters sent, however only five (83%) were submitted within the agreed timeline (see Table 1).

Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)

<i>Quarters (2018)</i>	DEML	JPS	NWC
<i>January - March</i>	100%	83%	63%
<i>April - March</i>	N/A	50%	83%

(ii) Response to Case Letters

All four provider responses were received from JPS with three – or 75% - being received within the agreed timeline. Of the six case letters sent to NWC, responses for five were due at the end of the review period. Four of the five NWC responses were received with only two – or 40% - being received within the agreed timeline (see Table 2).

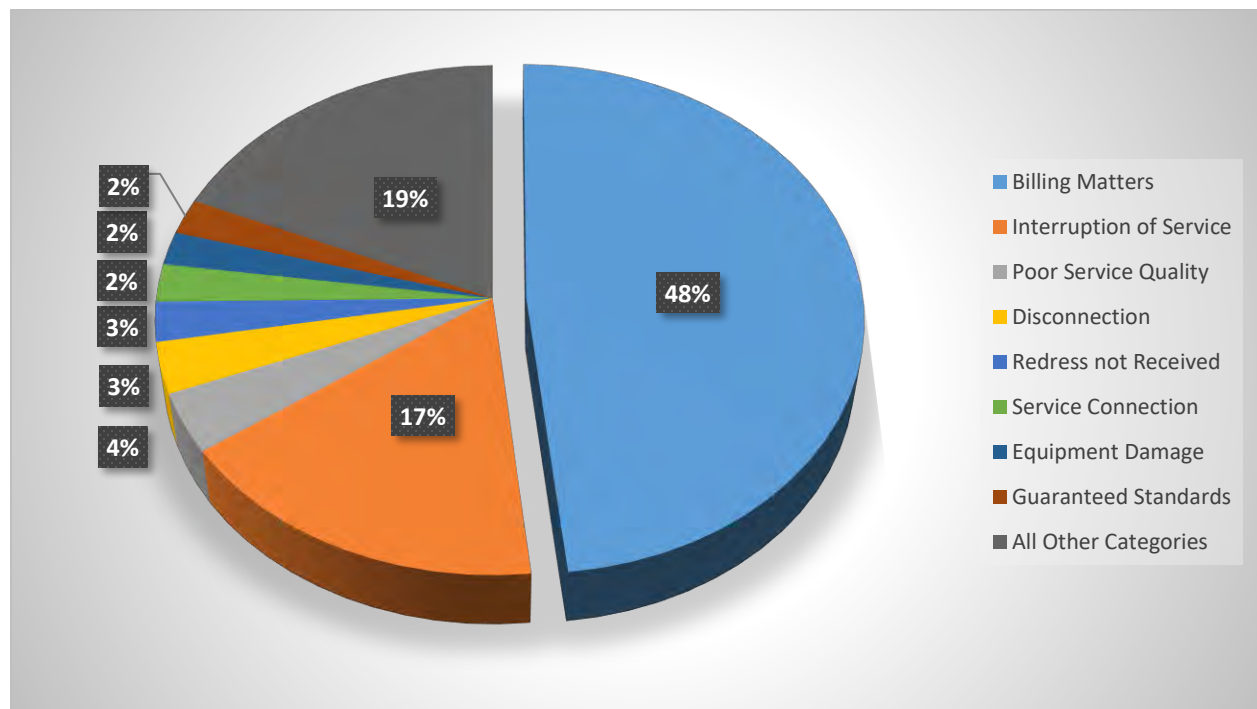
Table 2: Responses within standard (30 business days)

<i>Quarters (2018)</i>	DEML	JPS	NWC
<i>January – March</i>	100%	40%	100%
<i>April – June</i>	N/A	75%	40%

Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU related to: billing, interruption of service, poor service quality, disconnection, redress not received, service connection, equipment damage and Guaranteed Standards (see Figure 3). Further details on all contacts distributed per category is provided in Table 5.

Figure 3: Main Concerns



(i) Billing

Billing matters at 48% continued to be the main reason for customers contact; these included adjustments to customers' accounts, billing punctuality, high consumption, disputed charges and estimated billing.

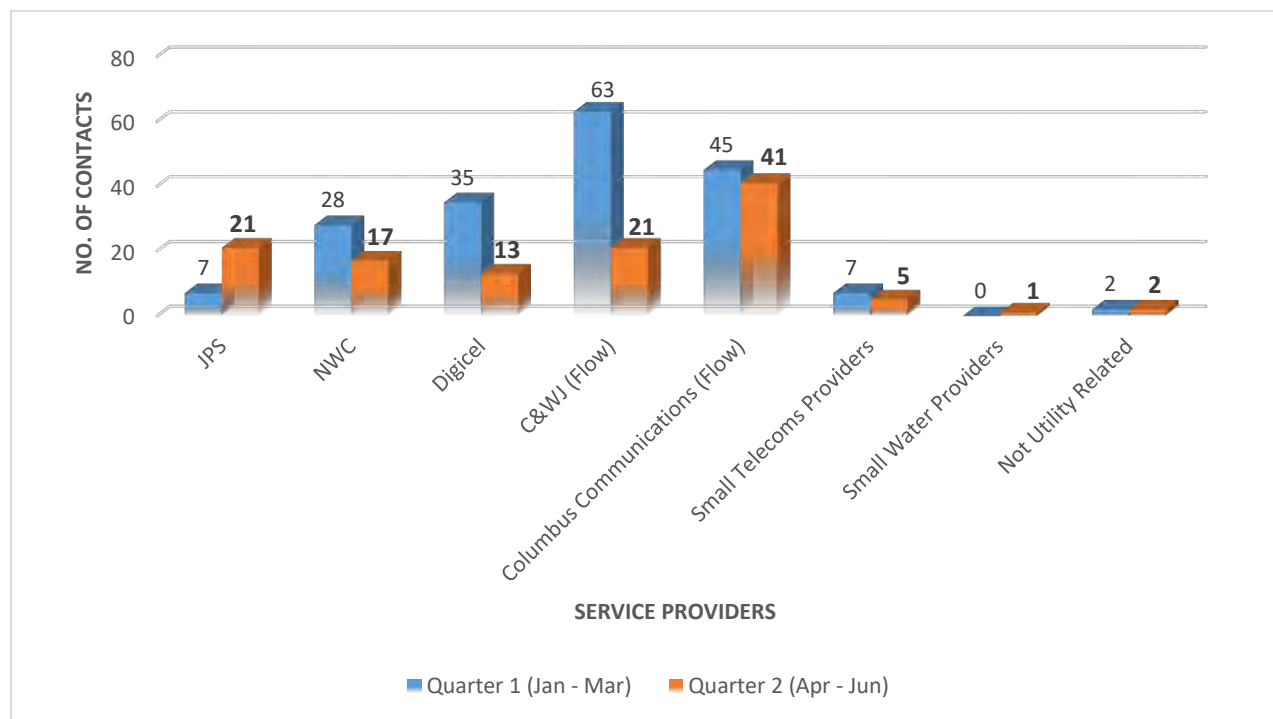
Of the 714 contacts received, 345 (48%) related to billing matters, which represents a one percentage point decline in billing contacts when compared with the preceding quarter. JPS and NWC accounted for 144 (20%) and 124 (17%) respectively. Columbus Communications (Flow) and C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 31 (4%) and 29 (4%) respectively while Digicel accounted for

14 (2%). Small telecommunications providers and contacts in the category of “Other/Not Utility Related” accounted for the remaining 3 (1%) billing matter contacts.

(ii) **Interruption of Service**

At 17%, service interruption contacts decreased by one percentage point when compared with the preceding quarter. As is seen in Figure 4, Columbus Communications (Flow) with 41 (6%), C&WJ & JPS each with 21 (3%) accounted for the highest number for service interruption contacts. Digicel and NWC each accounted for 2% while small telecommunications providers had a share of 1%.

Figure 4: Quarterly service interruption contacts



(iii) **Poor Service Quality**

Poor service quality represented 4% of total contacts with the main telecommunications providers, C&WJ (Flow), Columbus Communications (Flow) and Digicel each accounting for 1%. The remaining 1% of poor service quality contacts was shared between JPS and NWC.

(iv) **Disconnection**

Similar to the preceding quarter, contacts relating to disconnections remained at 3%. Columbus Communications (Flow), JPS and NWC each had a share of 1%.

(v) Redress not received

Two percent of total contacts received related to customers complaining about their service providers not making right what went wrong. These were received from customers of C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow).

(vi) Service Connection

Service connection matters decreased by one percentage point to 2% of total contacts over the preceding quarter. with C&WJ (Flow), Columbus Communications (Flow) and JPS each accounting for 1%.

(vii) Equipment Damage

Equipment damage issues accounted for 2% of total contacts and represented 6% of contacts relating to JPS.

Chapter 3: Guaranteed Standards Performance

(i) What are the Guaranteed Standards?

The Guaranteed Standards are performance measures that guide the provision of utility services delivered by the National Water Commission (NWC), small water providers and the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. If the companies fail to honour the agreement, the affected customer is entitled to compensation which is applied as a credit to their account.

(ii) How are customers compensated?

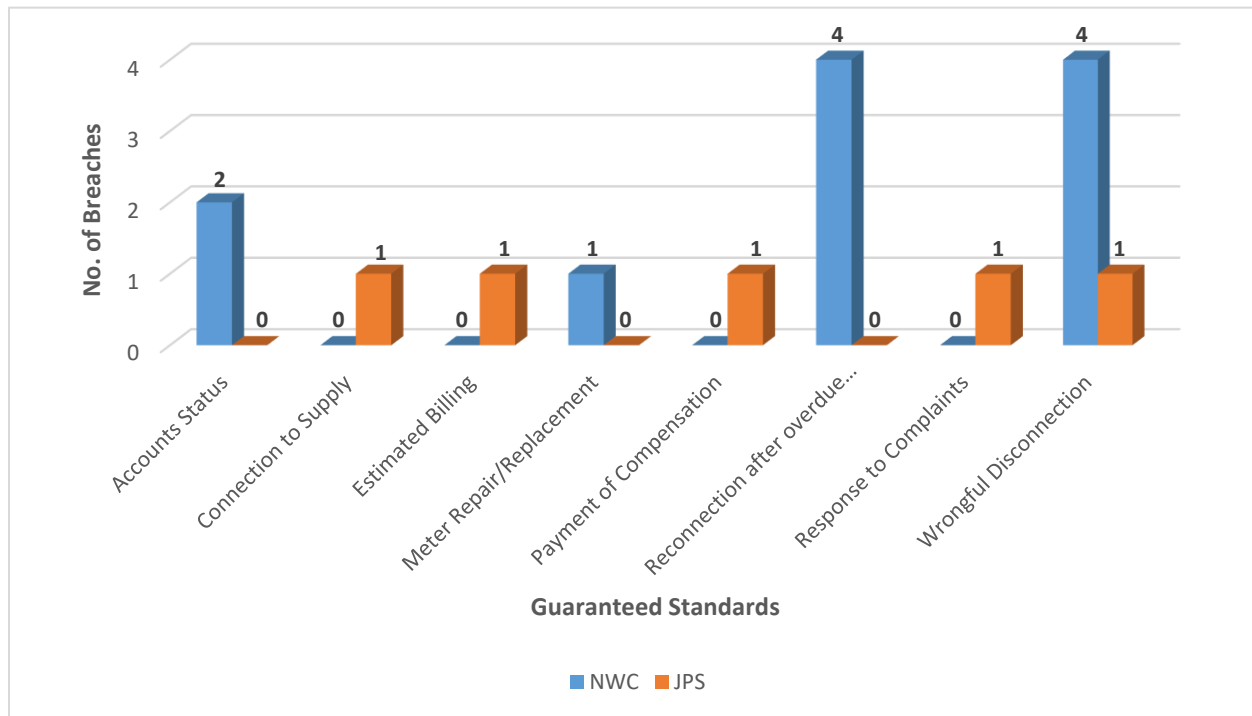
NWC: Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to six (6) periods of non-compliance.

JPS: Residential customers: equivalent to the reconnection fee; Commercial customers: four (4) times the customer charge. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to eight (8) periods of non-compliance.

(iii) Quarterly report of breaches

Sixteen (16) contacts were received in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards from customers of the JPS and the NWC. Similar to the preceding quarter, this represented two percent (2%) of total contacts received during the review period. JPS and NWC accounted for 5 and 11 contacts respectively, relating to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards.

As is seen in Figure 5, the five alleged breaches for JPS related to five of their Guaranteed Standards. In the case of the NWC, *Reconnection after overdue payments* and *Wrongful Disconnection* accounted for the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards.

Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts

(iv) Utilities' performance on Guaranteed Standards

JPS

The JPS compliance report on its performance on the Guaranteed Standards indicated that 17,634 breaches were committed; which represents a 12% decline in the number of breaches compared to the preceding quarter. These breaches also attracted compensatory payments of \$35,371,592 million, all of which was made out by way of automatic compensation.

For the review period, the standards with the highest incidents of breaches related to Estimated Bills (which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty) and Reconnection (which prescribes that disconnected service must be restored within 24 hours of payment of all overdue amounts). Both standards account for approximately 93% and 3% of breaches and compensatory payments, respectively.

NWC

The NWC's compliance report on the Guaranteed Standards scheme indicates a total of 632 breaches, representing a 75% increase in the number of breaches over the preceding period. These breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$2,176,260 while actual payments amounted to \$768,200 (representing 35% of total potential payments) which were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 65% of potential payments not made, represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

For the NWC the standards with the highest incidents of breaches were WGS 4(b) - Complaints Investigations (which requires that investigations of complaints are completed within 30 working days); WGS 1 - Access (which requires that new service connections are made within 10 working days); and, WGS8 - Meter Repair/Replacement (which requires that needed meter repairs or replacements must be completed within 20 working days. These standards represented 31% and 26% and 18% of total breaches respectively.

Chapter 4: Customer Contact Centre/Call Centre Performance Reports

In recognition of the important role of Customer Contact Centres (Call Centres) in customer service delivery, the OUR has deemed it necessary to include a report on the performance of the JPS and NWC Call Centres. Here focus will be placed on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that indicate general customer satisfaction levels (as is shown in Table 3).

Table 3: NWC's Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	KPI Definition	Performance	
		2018 Apr. - Jun	2018 Jan. – Mar.
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds ²	55%	55%
<i>Maximum Delay</i>	Maximum time that a caller waited in queue	Eighteen minutes and 30 seconds (18:30)	Fourteen minutes and ten seconds (14:10)
<i>Average Length of Calls (Call Handle Time)</i>	Average Length of Calls	Three minutes and fifty-two seconds (3:52)	Three minutes and fifty-two seconds (3:52)
<i>Percentage of Abandon Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	23%	31%

The NWC Call Centre Report for the review period indicates a similar performance level for *Percentage Service Level* and *Average Length of Calls* when compared with the preceding quarter. However, the maximum time that a customer waited in queue increased by four minutes and twenty seconds (4:20) while the percentage of abandon calls showed improvement with an eight percentage point decline over the preceding quarter. Details are provided in Table 3.

² This represents the measure used by the NWC

JPS:

The report received from JPS on its performance against the Quality of Service Standard which relates to Call Centre Responsiveness (EOS 10), indicates a compliance rating of 93%; which is a 5% percentage point decrease over the preceding quarter. This standard measures the percentage of calls that are answered within 20 seconds.

Chapter 5: Notification of Planned Outages Report

As part of their agreed Quality of Service Standards, the JPS and NWC are required to submit reports on their performance. One such report relates to their performance in notifying customers within a specified timeline about planned outages. This standard is a part of the Overall Standards for JPS (EOS 1) and the Performance Targets for the NWC.

JPS:

Under EOS 1, JPS is required to notify customers of planned outages, allowing at least 48 hours (2 days) advance notice. For the review period, JPS reported a 53.7% compliance rating in meeting this standard; which represents a 6.7 percentage points decline over the preceding period. The Company has advised that it is yet to implement measures to ensure that its compliance rating improves.

NWC:

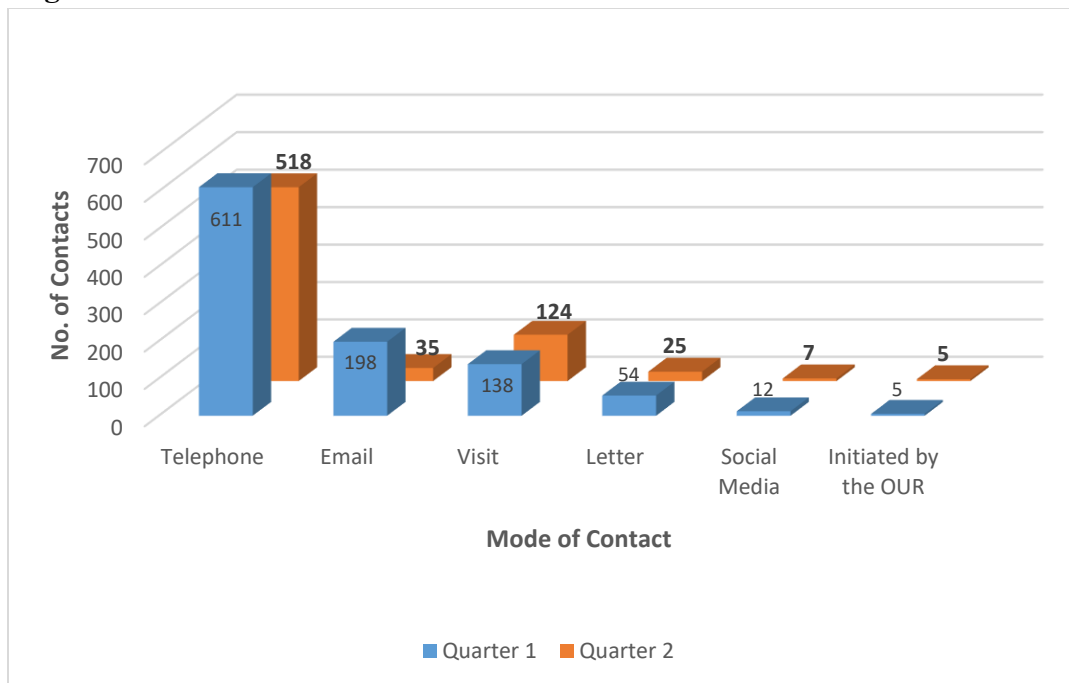
The NWC Performance Targets provides for a 98% attainment rate for 12 hours' advance notification of planned service interruptions of a duration of no more than 4 hours. However, where a planned interruption is expected to be for more than four hours, the NWC is required to give an advanced notice of at least 24 hours; at a 90% attainment rate.

Based on the information reviewed, the NWC attained a 95% compliance rating with the standard to provide at least 24 hours' advance notice prior to disruptions of a duration greater than 4 hours. Of the 63 related notifications received, 60 were in compliance with the stated target.

Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

At 518, representing 73% of total contacts, the telephone continued to be the most frequently used method for customer contact with the CAU. Visits, emails and letters followed with 17%, 5% and 4% of total contacts respectively. Social media and contacts initiated by the OUR accounted for the remaining 1% of contacts. Figure 6 provides further details.

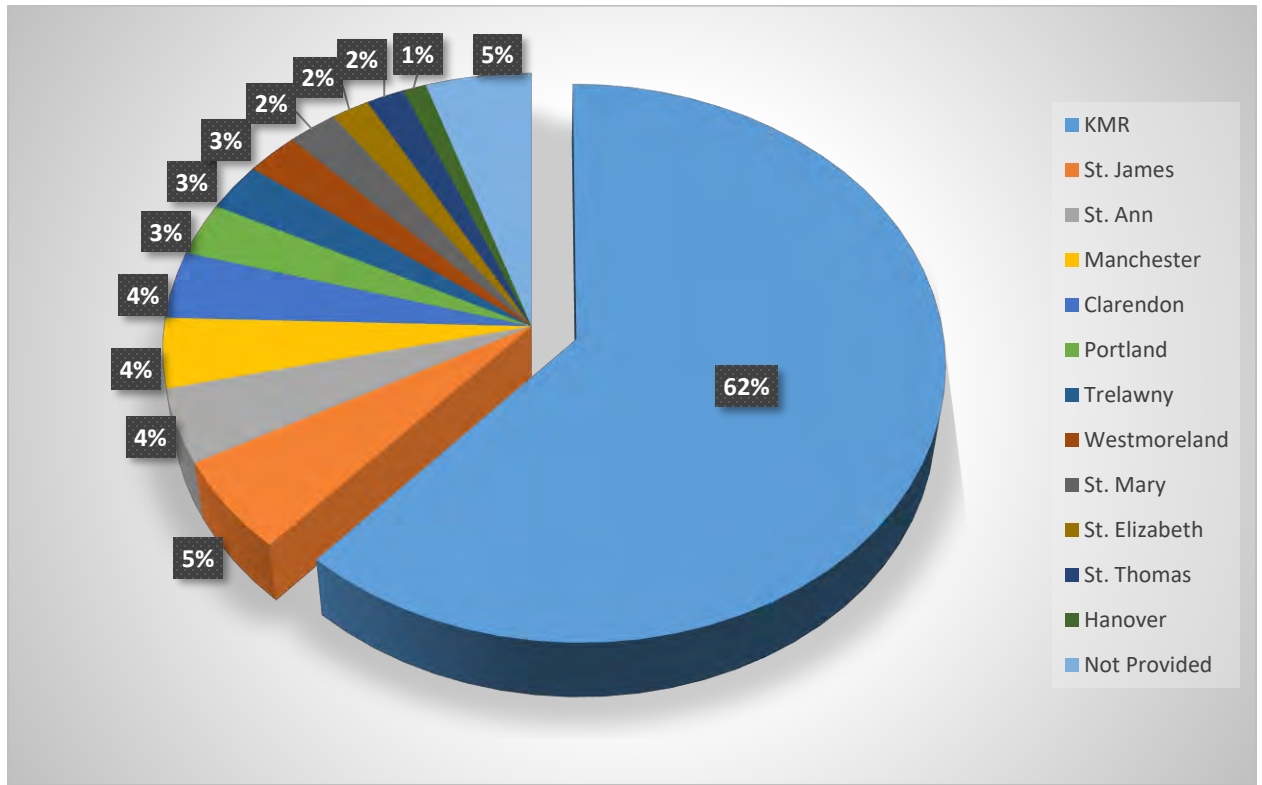
Figure 6: Methods of Contact



Geographical Distribution of Contacts

The Kingston Metropolitan Region (KMR) at 62%, which represents a 27% increase when compared to the preceding quarter, continued to account for the highest number of total contacts. At 5%, St. James accounted for the second highest number of total contacts. Clarendon, Manchester and St. Ann followed with 4% each while Portland, Trelawny and Westmoreland each had a share of 3%. The remaining parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Five percent (5%) of the contacts received provided no information on their location/parish or the information was not recorded. Details are provided in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Geographic Distribution of Contacts



Chapter 6: Appeals Performance

(i) Closure of Appeals³

During the reporting period, seventeen (17) appeals were closed of which 13 (or 76%) were resolved in favour of the service provider, three (or 18%) were in favour of the customer and one was closed due to lack of information from the customer.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of the 14 closed appeals were resolved within the OUR's-established standard of sixty (65) working days while the remaining 29% exceeded the timeline.

(ii) Outstanding Appeals⁴

At the end of the review period, seven (7) appeals remained outstanding, in that they exceeded the established 65 business days for resolution. Of these appeals, one (1) is awaiting the response from the service provider while the remaining six (6) are for action to be taken by the CAU/OUR. For two of the six awaiting OUR's actions, final letters were prepared to be dispatched.

Of the seven outstanding appeals, JPS accounted for two (2) equipment damage, one (1) property damage and one (1) billing related matter. The NWC accounted for the three remaining outstanding appeal which are billing related.

Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Of the ten (10) new appeals which were accepted for investigation, eight (8) provider responses were due at the end of the review period. Five (5) of the eight responses due were received within the established 30 working days' timeline, two responses were received outside of the timeline while one is yet to be submitted. Request for additional information was submitted for two of the responses received.

All relevant information was available for only five (5) appeals which were resolved within the 65 working days' timeline. This indicates a resolution rate of 100% which is a nine percentage point increase over the preceding period. Further details on the CAU's performance on some key appeals process activity are provided in Table 8.

³ Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 6

⁴ Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 7

Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

(i) Credits/Compensation

Through the intervention of the CAU, \$87,708.27 was secured for utility customers. Of this, C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) account for 2% and 53% respectively with the NWC accounting for the remaining 45%.

(ii) Call the OUR Hotline Segment

The Consumer Affairs Unit commenced a segment on the daily talk show radio programme “Hotline” in April. The half hour segment titled “*Call the OUR*” is designed to provide information to utility consumers about their rights and responsibilities in their dealings with their service provider as well as to invite utility customers to call into the programme to get advice regarding any issue they are having with their utility service provider.

During the review period, 12 utility consumers made contact through the *Call the OUR* programme and received assistance in having their issues resolved. The programme airs on Wednesdays at 1:15 p.m. The information provided thus far included: The Role of the CAU; NPA Relief Area Code 876; Guaranteed Standards and the Terms and Conditions of Service for the Utility Providers.

List of Tables 2018 April - June

Table 4: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities)

	Description	JPS	NWC	C&WJ (FLOW)			Columbus		Digicel			Small Telecoms Provider	Small Water Providers	OUR/Other (Not Utility Provider Related)	Total
				Internet	Landline	Mobile	Internet	Landline	Internet	Landline	Mobile				
A	Contacts for the Quarter														
(i)	New Appeals	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
(ii)	New Complaints	67	35	11	22	12	24	45	12	6	18	9	3	3	267
(iii)	New Enquires	17	17	0	1	3	0	3	1	0	2	1	0	1	46
(iv)	New Referrals	154	141	2	19	8	12	21	7	1	11	3	0	12	391
	Total Contacts	242	199	13	42	23	36	69	20	7	31	13	3	16	714
B	Closure/Resolution of Appeals:														
(i)	Insufficient Customer Information	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Customer	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
(iii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	13
	Total Closures	5	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
C	Total Appeals from Previous Periods:														
	Outstanding Appeals with OUR														
(i)	Awaiting Final Letters to Customers	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
(ii)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Outstanding Appeals with Utility (Awaiting Responses)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Total Outstanding Appeals	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7

Table 5: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers									Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&WJ (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Small Telecoms Providers (Caricel, Dekal Wireless, XtriNet)	Small Water/Sewerage Providers (CanCara, DEML, Landmark)	OUR/Other (not utility related)		
Billing Matters	144	124	14	29	31	1	0	2	345	
Broken Main	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Customer Service	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	6	
Defective Street Lights	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
Disconnection	9	6	2	0	4	2	0	0	23	
Equipment Damage	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	
Guaranteed Standards	5	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	
Guaranteed Standards Query	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Health & Safety	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	
Illegal Connections	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Interruption of Service	21	17	13	21	41	5	1	2	121	
Irregular Supply	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
Leak at Meter	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Metering	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
Number Portability	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4	
Other	6	5	11	6	8	2	2	10	50	
Payment Arrangement	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	
Phone Cards	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	
Poor Service Quality	3	3	6	8	7	0	0	0	27	
Property Damage	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
RAMI Service Connection & CDU	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Reconnection	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	7	
Redress not Received	1	2	3	5	6	0	0	1	18	
Service Connection	9	4	0		3	1	0	0	17	
Unable to get through to Provider	1	0	5	1	1	0	0	0	8	
Unavailability of Service - No Facility	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	6	
Total	242	199	58	78	105	13	3	16	714	

Table 6: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Complaint Category	Service Providers			Total
	DEML	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matter	1	2	11	14
Equipment Damage	0	3	0	3
Total	1	5	11	17

Table 7: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Complaint Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	1	3	4
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	1	0	1
Total	4	3	7

Table 8: CAU's Performance on Service Standards (Appeals)

Activity	Service Standards	% Compliance	Comment
Acknowledgement of Appeals	Within 2 business days of receipt of customer's correspondence	90%	Nine (9) of the 10 new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within 5 business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	90%	Nine (9) of the 10 Case Letters were dispatched within the stipulated 5 business days
Correspondence Copied to Customer	Customer is to be copied on all correspondence submitted to the utilities pertaining to their complaint	100%	
Final Response	Within the established timeline of receipt of all necessary information from relevant parties	100%	Five (5) provider responses were received which facilitated final responses being prepared and dispatched within the established timeline.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Definition Of Terms Used In Documenting Customer Contacts

- Appeal:** Any contact in which the utility company has completed an investigation into a customer's complaint, the customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome and writes to the OUR asking for an independent investigation of the matter.
- Complaint:** Any contact expressing dissatisfaction with the handling of a complaint by the utility company and to which the OUR takes steps to resolve without conducting a formal investigation.
- Customer Contact:** Any contact made to the OUR to register an appeal, inquiry, opinion, etc. Contact can be made through the telephone, post, electronic channels (emails, website, and Facebook page) and visits.
- Enquiry:** Any contact requiring verification/confirmation of information relating to the OUR, a utility service, policy and/or practice, etc.
- Opinion:** Any contact expressing a view about the actions, practice or terms of service, etc. of a utility company or the OUR.
- Referral:** Any contact advised by the OUR to consult the relevant utility company because the complainant had not initially utilized or exhausted the complaint procedure within the relevant utility company.

Appendix 2: Statement on Confidentiality of Telecommunications Service Provider Information

Information on the customer base of the telecommunication companies was used in some of the calculations contained in the QPR, pursuant to Section 7A of the Telecommunication Act – Amended. The referenced section states, in part:

“...the following information is not required to be regarded and dealt with as secret and confidential namely -

- (a) information that will facilitate customers in their choice of facilities or specified services and the development of the telecommunications industry; and
- (b) information relating to the –
 - (i) quality of service measurements;
 - (ii) prices charged to customers or to other licensees;
 - (iii) network coverage of licensees;
 - (iv) market share of licensees;
 - (v) volume of services of licensees however measured
 - (vi) subscriber base of licensees; and
 - (vii) capacity and usage of international submarine cables

Appendix 3: Appeals Process

The activities of utility companies are guided by “terms and conditions” within their license and/or Act. There are occasions, however, when consumers feel that particular action(s) of a utility company might have been in breach of the utility’s “terms and conditions” or might have been unfair to them. In such circumstances, the OUR is an avenue for recourse in having any such wrong investigated and addressed through our appeals process.

Prior to submitting an appeal to the OUR, consumers are expected and encouraged to first take the complaint, or issues giving rise to the complaint, up to the level of a senior officer at the respective utility company. The hearing of grievances is a consumer’s right and utilities are obliged to review such matters with the aim of having the issue addressed or clarified.

Appendix 4: CAU Internal Performance Standards

Process Timeline for Equipment Damage Appeals

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 (Two) working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 (Five) working days
Receive JPS’ Response/Update	15 – 25 working days
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	15 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days ⁵
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 (Five) working days
Supervisor’s Review of Final Letter	2 (Two) working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days (using maximum response time of 25 working days)

Except for the thirty (30) working day response timeline for equipment damage appeals, all other timelines remain the same. As such, the complete process timeline for equipment damage appeals is sixty-five (65) working days.

⁵ Subsequent to the review of the providers’ response to OUR’s Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.

Recommended Service Levels

1. JPS is expected to respond or provide an update to **OUR's Case Letters** regarding customer's appeals (not related to equipment damage) within **FIFTEEN (15) working days** of receipt. The company is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days of receipt.
2. Where only an update is provided within fifteen (15) working days, the complete response is expected to be submitted to the OUR within ten (10) working days of receipt of the update.
3. JPS is expected to provide all information requested regarding equipment damage appeals within thirty (30) working days of receipt of our Case Letter.
4. JPS is expected to respond to the **OUR's follow-up case letter** within **FIVE (5) working days of receipt**.
5. The OUR's Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **TWENTY-THREE (23) working days** of receipt of utilities' response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). JPS will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.
6. The OUR is expected to complete investigations of JPS appeals within the following timelines:
 - **Sixty-five (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
 - **Seventy-Five (70) working days** for Equipment Damage Appeals (which do not require external consultation)
 - **Eighty-five (85) working days** for SPECIAL APPEALS (Appeals which require external consultation)
7. The Utility company is to extend the hold on the customer's account for **THIRTY (30) days** subsequent to receiving OUR's final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

Appendix 5: Process Timelines for NWC Appeals

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 working days
Receive NWC's Response/Update	30 working days
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	10 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	

	5 working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 working days ⁶
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 working days
Supervisor's Review of Final Letter	2 working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days

Other Appeals Activities:

- On **day ten (10)** after dispatch of the case letter, the Consumer Affairs Officer (CAO) will remind the service provider of its obligation to send a response within 20 days of receipt of the case letter.
- If the utilities' responses raise further questions or do not adequately address the queries posed by OUR, a *follow-up case letter* is sent to the utilities by OUR within **TEN (10) working days** of receipt of the utility's response.
- Beginning January 2014, monthly reports detailing the appeals for which the responses are outstanding will be generated and sent the NWC. Where the responses/updates are not received within fifteen working days (15) of submission of the report, the matter will be escalated to the Vice-President for Customer Services, NWC, for action.

Similarly, the CAU will provide NWC with a monthly update on appeals for which our responses are outstanding.

As a consequence, the following are the proposed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to which the utility companies will be accountable. It is being recommended that the following be agreed upon by all parties and published:

Recommended Service Levels

NWC is expected to respond to **OUR's Case Letters** regarding customer's appeals within **thirty (30) working days** of receipt. The Commission is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days.

⁶ Subsequent to the review of the providers' response to OUR's Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.

NWC is expected to respond to the **OUR's follow-up case letter** within **FIVE (5) working days of receipt**.

The OUR's Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **EIGHTEEN (18) working days** of receipt of the NWC's response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). The NWC will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.

The OUR is expected to complete investigations of NWC appeals within the following timelines:

- **SIXTY-FIVE (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
- **EIGHTY-FIVE (85) working days** for SPECIAL APPEALS (Appeals which require external consultation)

The Utility company is to extend the hold on the customer's account for **FIFTEEN (15) working days** subsequent to receiving OUR's final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

Appendix 6: List of Acronyms

Can Cara	-	Can Cara Development Limited (Water & Sewerage Provider)
CPA	-	Consumer and Public Affairs Department (OUR)
CAU	-	Consumer Affairs Unit (OUR)
DEML	-	Dynamic Environmental Management Limited (Water and Sewerage Provider)
Dekal	-	Dekal Wireless Ltd. (Telecommunications Provider)
Flow Service	-	Columbus Communications Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) - Telecommunication Provider
FLOW	-	Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (C&WJ) Flow
JPS	-	Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (Electricity Provider)
KMR	-	Kingston Metropolitan Region (Kingston, St. Andrew & St. Catherine)
NWC	-	National Water Commission (Water & Sewerage Provider)

- OUR - Office of Utilities Regulation
- OURIC - Office of Utilities Regulation Information Centre
- The Office - Comprised of 6 members and is headed by a Chairman with the Director General serving as an Ex officio member