
Office of Utilities Regulation

Consumer Affairs Unit

Quarterly Performance Report

2019 April - June

Publication Date: September 10, 2019



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

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:

Collette Goode, Consumer Affairs Specialist – Policy

Email: collette.goode@our.org.jm

OR

Yvonne Nicholson – Director, Consumer & Public Affairs

Email: yvonne.nicholson@our.org.jm

Executive Summary

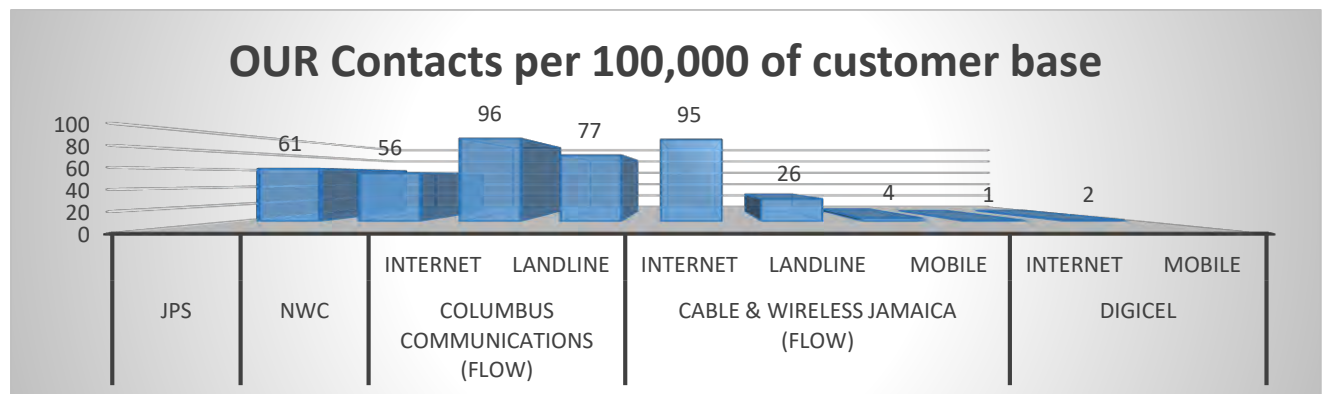
The CAU received 1,026 contacts during the 2019 April – June quarter, which represents a 9% decline in the number received during the preceding period. Further analysis of the data showed that contacts relating to Irregular Supply (44%), Service Connection (36%), Equipment Damage (28%) and Service Interruption (17%), accounted for the most significant decline when compared with the January – March period.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service providers¹:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 387 (38%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 270 (26%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 165 (16%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 95 (9%)
- Digicel – 51 (5%)
- Private water and/or sewerage providers Can Cara Development Ltd., Dynamic Environmental Management Ltd. (DEML), Hampstead Citizens Association Benevolent Society and Landmark Developers Ltd; small telecommunications providers, Dekal Wireless, and, Other (Not Utility Provider Related) – 58 (6%).

While JPS at 387, accounted for the most contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest number of contacts – at 96 per 100,000 – in proportion to its internet customer base.

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

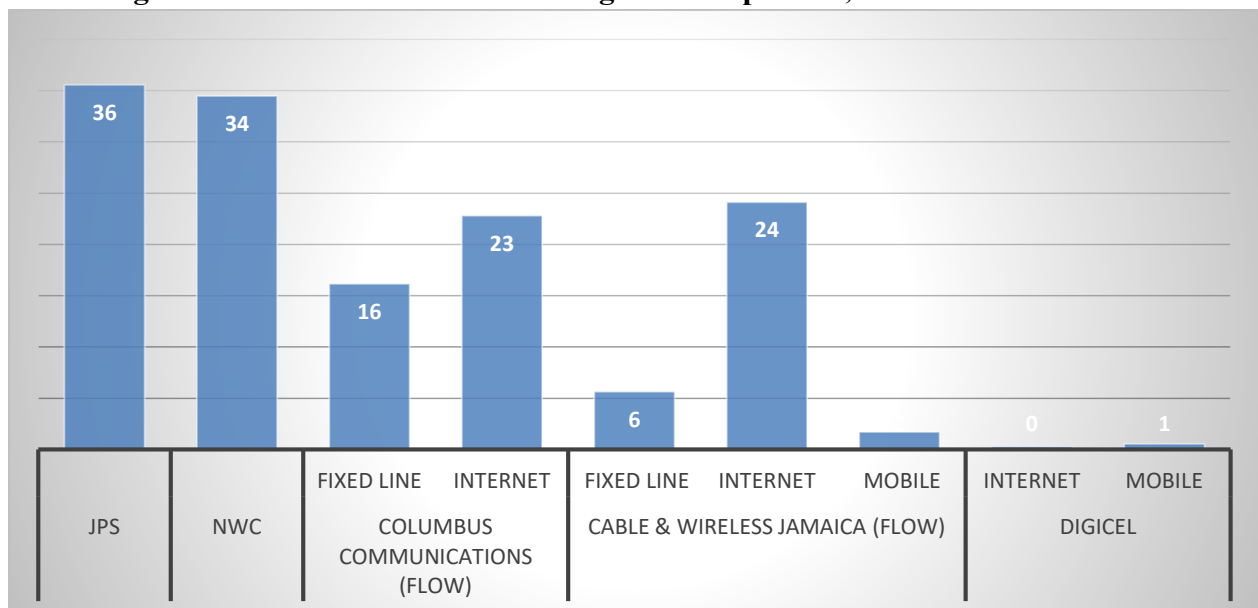


¹ Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 5 on page 24.

While registering a 10% decrease in contacts from the preceding period, billing matters continued to be the main reason for utility consumers contacting the CAU. JPS and NWC with 220 (21%) and 164 (16%) of contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing related matters.

As is shown in Figure 2, JPS, at 36, accounted for the highest number of billing related contacts per 100,000 of its customer base. NWC and Columbus Communication's internet service followed with 34 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, at 18% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact to the CAU.

Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

(i) Acknowledgements

During the 2019 April – June period, eleven (11) new appeals were accepted for investigation with JPS and NWC accounting for six (6) and five (5) respectively. Requests for information, (case letters), were sent for all new appeals accepted.

Based on the established Service Level Agreements (SLAs), both JPS and NWC agreed to acknowledge our case letters within five (5) business days. As is shown in Table 1, both JPS and NWC attained a compliance rating of 100% for acknowledgements.

Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)

<i>Quarters (2019)</i>	DEML	JPS	NWC
<i>January - March</i>	100%	100%	80%
<i>April - June</i>	N/A	100%	100%

(ii) Response to Case Letters

Similar to acknowledgements, both JPS and NWC achieved a 100% compliance rating in meeting the agreed 30 business day timeline to respond to our Case Letters (see Table 2). For the six Case Letters sent to JPS, responses were due for five which were all received within the stipulated timeline. The three responses which were due from the NWC within the review period were submitted within the stipulated timeline.

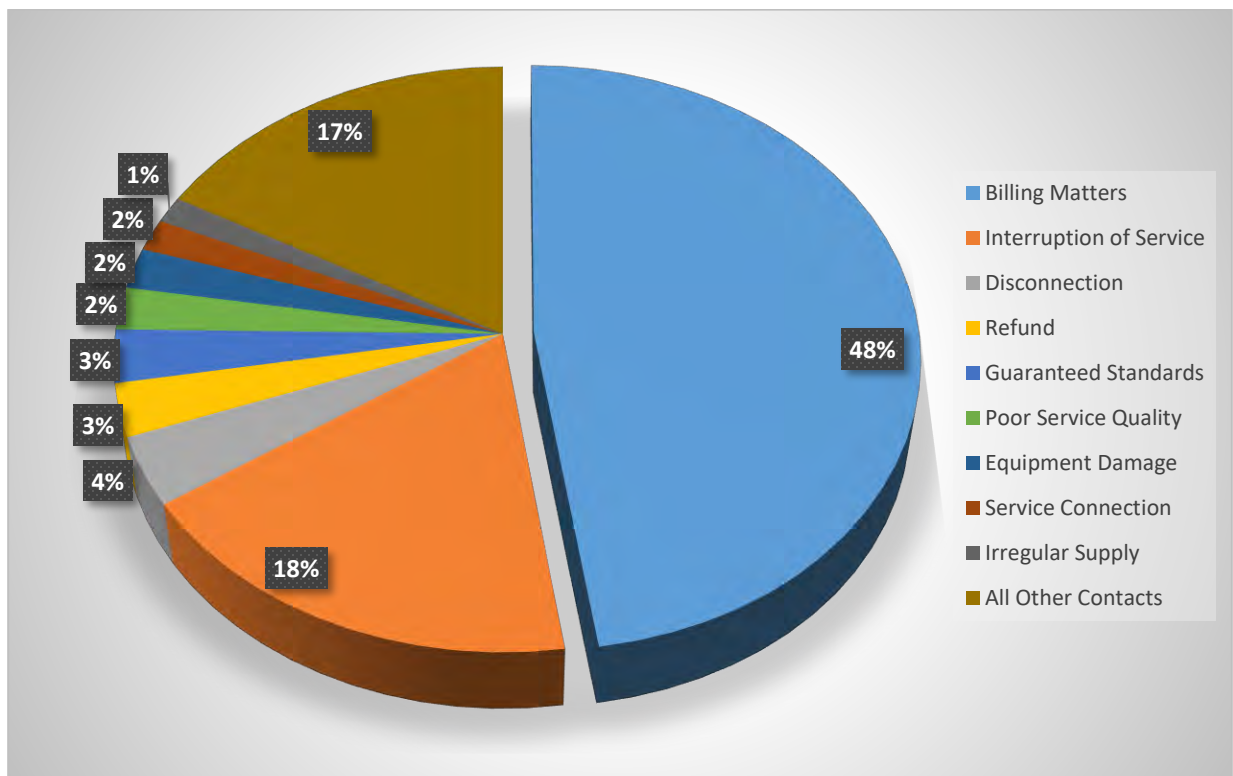
Table 2: Response to case letters within standard (30 business days)

<i>Quarters (2019)</i>	DEML	JPS	NWC
<i>January – March</i>	100%	0%	100%
<i>April - June</i>	N/A	100%	100%

Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU related to: billing, interruption of service, disconnection, refund, Guaranteed Standards, poor service quality, equipment damage, service connection and irregular supply (Figure 3). Further details on all contacts distributed per category is provided in Table 6.

Figure 3: Main Concerns



(i) Billing

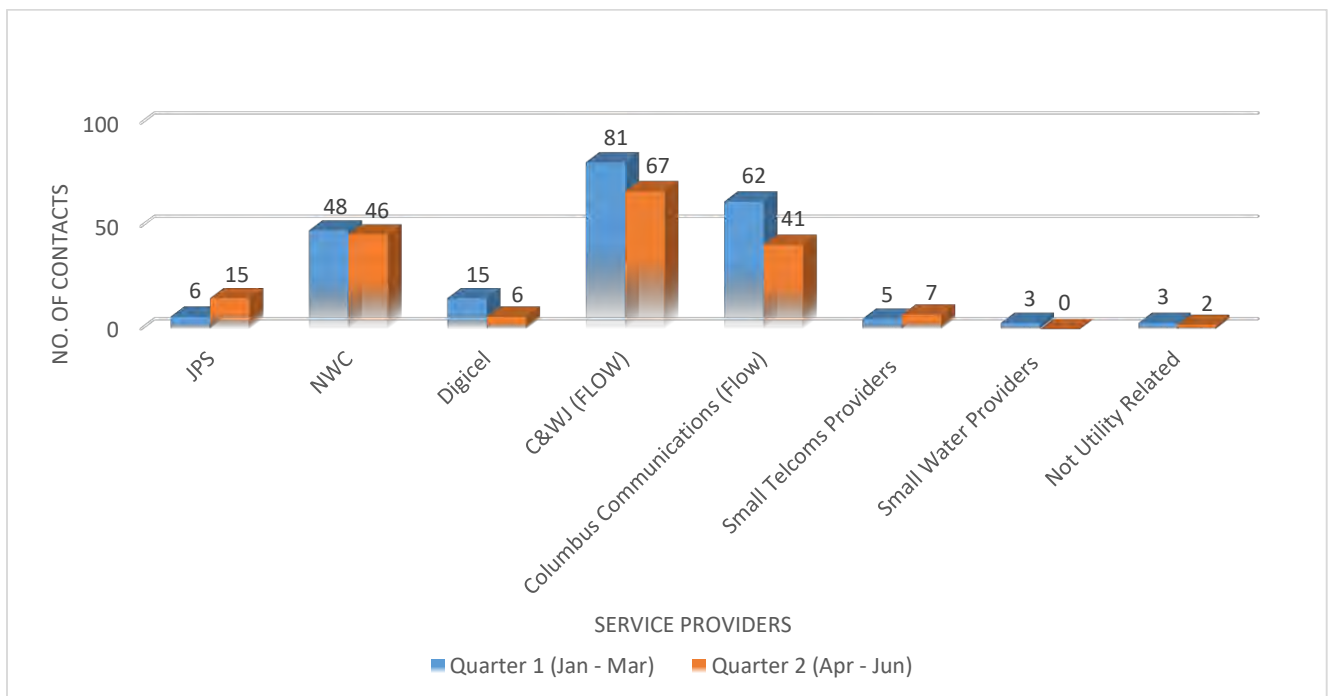
Billing matters continued to be the main reason for customer contact, representing 48% of total contacts received. These matters included adjustments to customers' accounts, billing punctuality, high consumption, disputed charges and estimated billing.

JPS and NWC accounted for the most billing contacts with 220 (21%) and 164 (16%) respectively. C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 46 (4%) while Columbus Communications (Flow), Digicel, Private Water Providers, Small Telecommunications Providers accounted for the remaining 59 (7%).

(ii) Interruption of Service

At 18% of total contacts, service interruption decreased by two percentage points when compared with the preceding quarter. C&WJ (Flow) with 67 (7%), NWC with 46 (4%) and Columbus Communications with 41 (4%) of total contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of related contacts (Figure 4). JPS, Digicel and Private Telecommunications Providers accounted for the remaining 3%.

Figure 4: Quarterly service interruption contacts



(iii) Disconnection

Disconnection contacts increased by one percentage point, to 4%, when compared with the preceding quarter. JPS and C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 2% and 1% respectively while Columbus Communications (Flow), Digicel, NWC, and private telecommunications providers accounted for the remaining 1%.

(iv) Refund

Similar to the preceding quarter, refunds represented 3% of total contacts with C&WJ (Flow) accounting for 2% while Columbus Communications, Digicel and NWC shared the remaining 1%.

(v) Poor Service Quality

Contacts relating to poor service quality increased by one percentage point, to 3%, when compared with the preceding quarter. JPS, C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) each accounting for 1% of these contacts.

(vi) Equipment Damage

Equipment damage issues accounted for 23 or 2% of total contacts which is a one percentage point decrease from the preceding quarter. JPS and Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 22 and one related contacts respectively.

(vii) Service Connection

Contacts relating to service connection decreased by one percentage point, to 2% of total contacts, when compared to the preceding quarter. JPS accounted for 1% while the other providers accounted for less than 1% of these complaints.

(viii) Irregular Supply

Irregular supply contacts accounted for 1% of total contacts and were all related to the NWC.

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?

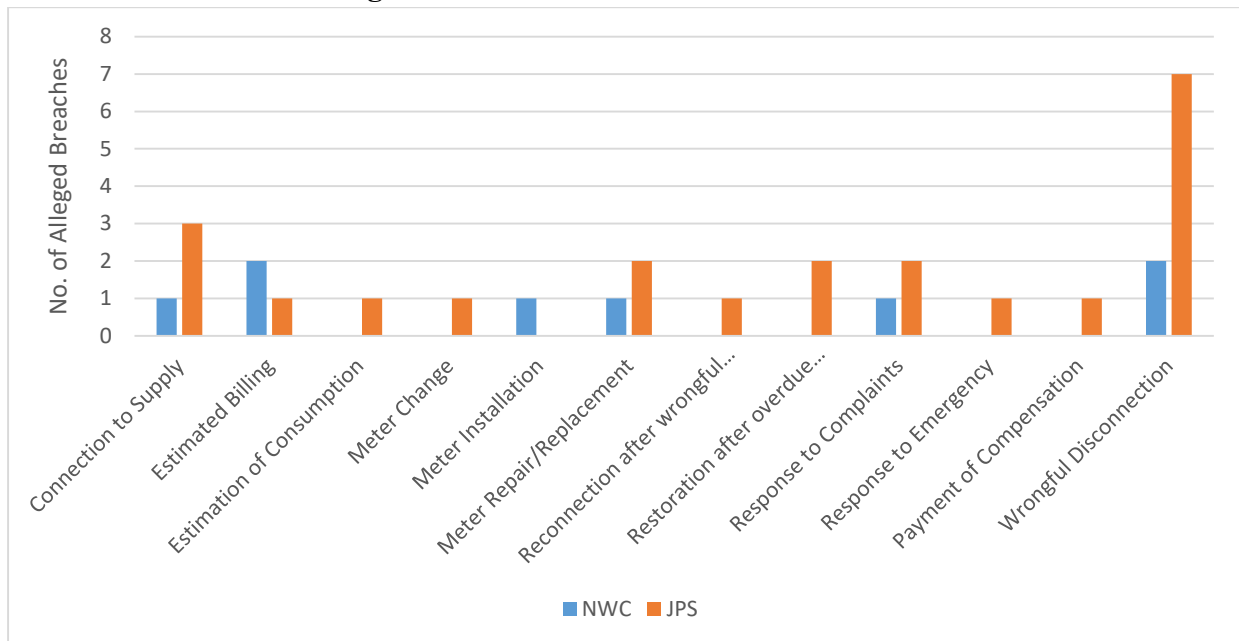
NWC: Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract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

Contacts to the OUR in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards from customers of the JPS and NWC remained at thirty (30) for the review period. This represented three percent (3%) of total contacts received during the review period. JPS and NWC accounted for 22 and 8 contacts respectively, related to alleged Guaranteed Standards breaches.

As is seen in Figure 5, *Connection to Supply* and *Wrongful Disconnection* accounted for the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards for JPS. For the NWC, *Estimated Billing* and *Wrongful Disconnection* accounted for the highest incidents in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards.

Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts

Additionally, the Guaranteed Standards reports submitted by the JPS did not reflect the alleged incidents of breaches reported to the OUR. Accordingly, no compensatory payments were made by JPS in relation to the contacts received by the OUR regarding Guaranteed Standards breaches.

(iv) Utilities' performance on Guaranteed Standards

JPS

Review of JPS' compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards performance indicate that 17,205 breaches were committed, which represents a 4% decrease in the number of breaches compared to the preceding quarter. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$34.58 million, all of which was made by way of automatic compensation.

Similar to the previous quarter, *Estimated Bills* (which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty), *Connection to Supply* (which prescribes the time within which JPS is to make a simple connection) and *Reconnection* (which requires that JPS restores supply with 24 hours of payment of overdue amounts) accounted for the highest incidents of breaches. These standards accounted for

approximately 94%, 3% and 2% of breaches and 93%, 4% and 2% of compensatory payments, respectively.

NWC

The NWC's compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards performance indicates that a total of 387 breaches were committed during the review period, which represents a 27% decrease when compared with the preceding period. These breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$1.34 million while actual payments amounted to \$329,000.00. The actual payments represented 25% of total potential payments and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 75% of potential payments not made represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

The standards with the highest incidents of breaches for the NWC were: WGS 1 - Access (which requires that new service connections are made within 10 working days); WGS 7 – Meter Installation (which stipulates that meters should be install within 30 working days upon request) and WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading (which restricts the NWC to sending no more than two consecutive estimates, where it has access to its meter). These three standards represented 80% of total breaches and 77% of potential payments.

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 is placed on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that indicate general customer satisfaction levels for NWC and JPS.

NWC:

The NWC's Call Centre Report for the review period indicates a general decline in performance in the areas examined. Performance in the *Percentage Service Level* and *Percentage of Abandon Calls* decreased by ten and 2 percentage points respectively, when compared with the preceding period. Additionally, the *Average Length of Calls* increased by 13 seconds (0:05:21) when compared to the preceding period. Further details on the NWC's performance during the review period is provided in Table 3.

Table 3: NWC's Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	KPI Definition	Performance (2019)	
		Apr. - Jun	Jan - Mar
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds ²	54%	64%
<i>Maximum Delay</i>	Maximum time that caller waited in queue	0:19:00	Not Confirmed
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Average length of calls	0:05:21	0:05:08
<i>Percentage of Abandon Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	11%	9%

² This represents the measure used by the NWC

JPS:

As is shown in Table 4, JPS continued to perform credibly in two of the three areas on which a report is provided. The JPS report for the period indicates that 94% of calls were answered within 20 seconds, which has exceeded the international standard of 80%. Additionally, performance on the *Average Length of Calls* was within the target set by the company. However, JPS's performance of 10% on the *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* was outside of the set target of 8% or less during the reporting period.

Table 4: JPS Call Centre Performance

KPIs	KPI Definition	Performance 2019	
		Jan - March	April - June
Service Level Answer	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds ³	96%	94%
Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)	Average length of calls ⁴	4:11	4:27
Percentage of Abandon Calls	Percentage of calls not serviced ⁵	11%	10%

³ This represents the measure used by the JPS

⁴ Goal of no more than 5 minutes set by JPS

⁵ Less than or equal to 8%

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 78.8% compliance rating for this standard; which represents a 14.3 percentage point increase over the preceding period. The company continues to advise that it recognises the need for improvement in this area and will be developing the appropriate procedure which will result in it being able to attain the established 100% compliance target.

The OUR's Electronic Media Monitoring Report, for the review period, shows one instance where JPS advised of possible island-wide service interruption due to needed load shedding activities. The Company advised that the load shedding had become necessary as there was an unexpected shortfall in generating capacity from the Independent Power Producers. In one statement, JPS advised that more than 30,000 of its customers were without electricity for about an hour. The specific parishes affected: Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Catherine.

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 advanced notice of at least 24 hours, at a 90% attainment rate.

Based on NWC's notifications to the public which were reviewed, the NWC attained an 82% compliance rating to provide at least 24 hours' advance notice for disruptions of a duration greater than 4 hours; which is eight percentage points less than the aforementioned established target. The

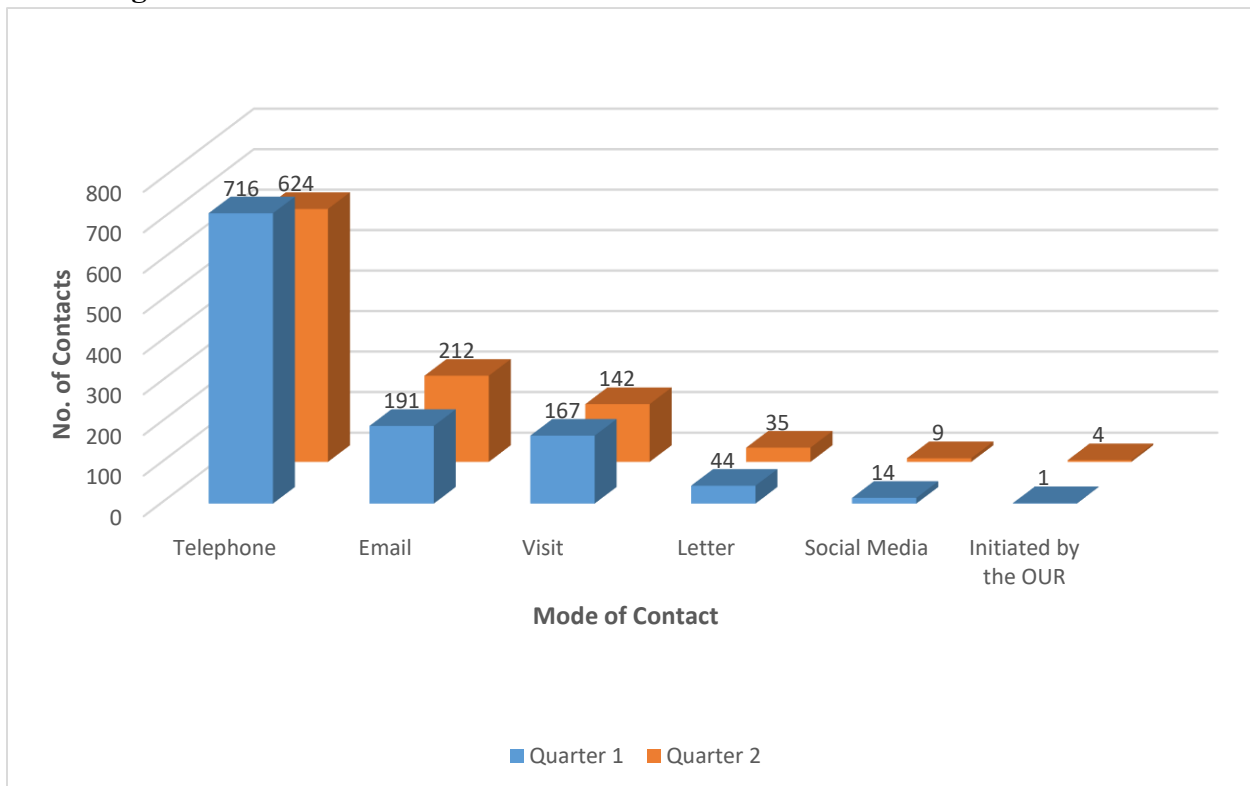
82% also represents a nine percentage point increase over the preceding period. Of the 33 related notifications received, 27 were in compliance with the stated target.

The OUR's Electronic Media Monitoring Report for the review period continued to show that there were water supply disruptions in several communities across the island, as a result of the non-revenue water reduction programme and the drought conditions. Residents continued to lament the lack of piped water. In providing an update on the drought conditions, the NWC provided updates about the water levels at the catchment areas, with the two main ones being in Kingston & St. Andrew.

Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

At 61%, the telephone continued to be the most frequently used method for customer contacting the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit. Emails and visits followed with 21% and 14% respectively. Letters, social media and contacts initiated by the OUR accounted for the remaining 5% of contacts. Figure 6 provides further details.

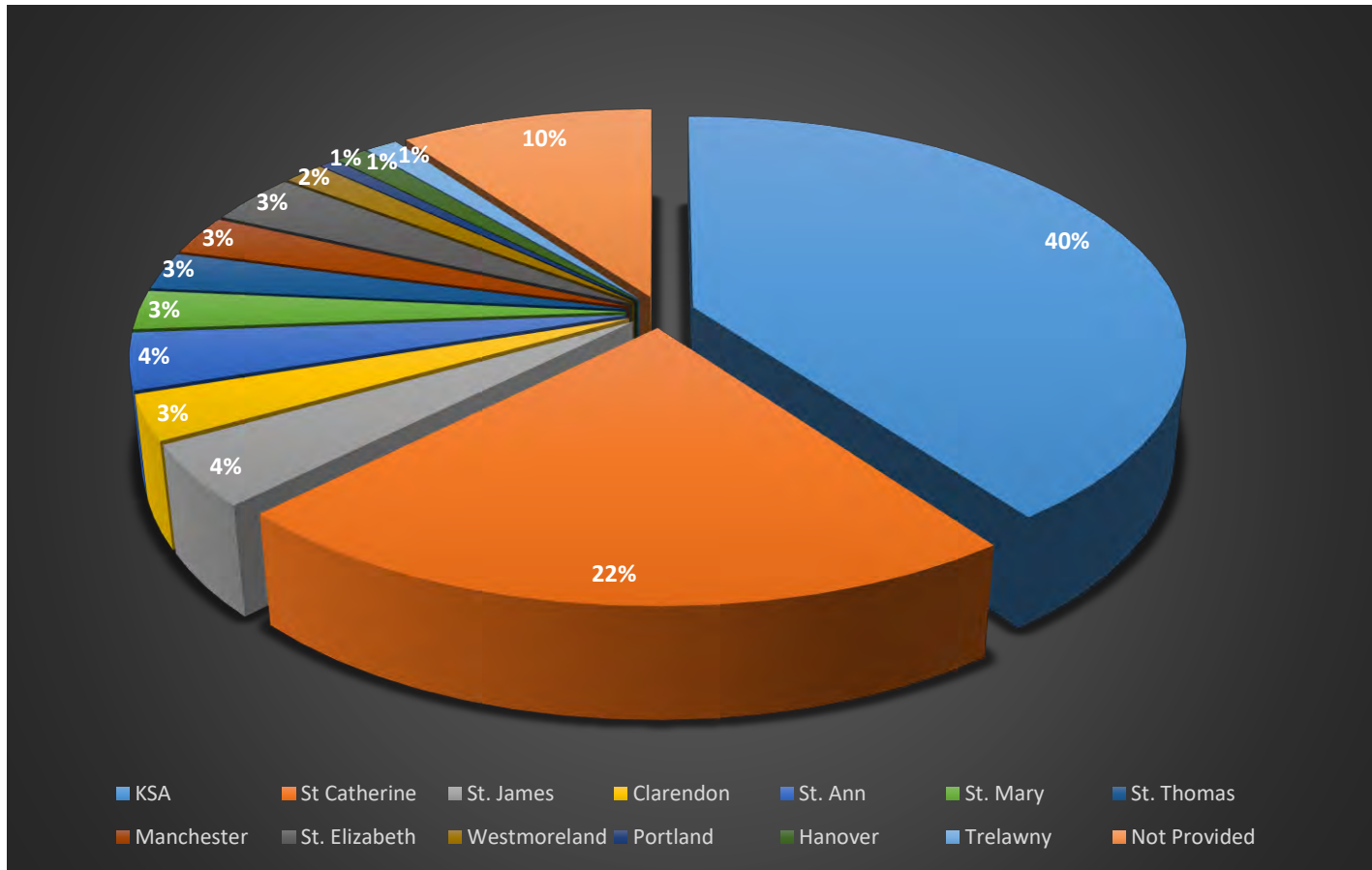
Figure 6: Methods of Contact



Geographical Distribution of Contacts

Kingston and St. Andrew, at 40%, accounted for the highest number of total contacts. St. Catherine followed with 22% while St. James and St. Ann each accounted for 4%. Clarendon, St. Mary, St. Thomas, Manchester and St. Elizabeth each accounted for 3% while the other parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Ten percent (10%) 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 Appeals⁶

Fifteen (15) appeals were closed during the review period of which 8 (or 53%) were resolved in favour of the service provider, 5 (33%) were resolved by way a compromise with the remaining 2 (13%) being resolved in favour of the customer.

Of the closed appeals, 73% were resolved within the OUR's established sixty five (65) and eighty five (85) working days for standard and Special Appeals respectively, while the remaining 27% exceeded the timeline.

(ii) Outstanding Appeals⁷

At the end of the review period, eight (8) appeals remained outstanding, in that they exceeded the established 65 business days for resolution. Of these appeals, three (3) are awaiting responses from the service provider while the remaining five (5) are awaiting action to be taken by the OUR.

The eight (8) outstanding appeals are in relation to JPS, and include two (2) equipment damage, two (2) property damage and four (4) billing related matters.

Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Eleven (11) new appeals were accepted for investigation for which all relevant information for six (6) were due by the end of the review period. All relevant information was received for three (3) of the six appeals, within the established timeline. This facilitated the preparation of Final Letters and closure of the three (100%) appeals for which all relevant information was received. Further details on the CAU's performance on some key appeals process activity are provided in Table 11.

⁶ Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 7

⁷ Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 8

Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

(i) Credits/Compensation

Resulting from our intervention, \$1,053,011.41 was secured for utility customers. Of this, JPS, NWC and Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 86%, 12%, and 2% respectively.

(ii) Mystery Shopping

During the review period, the OUR contracted Market Research Service Limited to conduct its second Mystery Shopping Survey to assess, *inter alia*: the quality of service delivery of the providers, service providers' internal customer service/complaints handling procedures, level of product/service knowledge and customer interaction with customer service representatives.

The survey was conducted between 2019 March 25 and April 24 with visits to the utility service providers' stores as well as contact with their call centres.

The results revealed that there was a decline in performance across all the service providers compared to the 2017 results. Excerpts from the report stated that: *“There is very little to no difference in the overall performance by the utilities. However, Jamaica Public Service (JPS) stands out from the rest with an overall service delivery of 72% compared to FLOW 63% and Digicel and National Water Commission (NWC) at 62% respectively.”* The study also revealed that *“All service providers recorded a decline in performance over 2018 with the least decline recorded by JPS (-2%). Digicel reported the greatest decline (-15%) followed behind by Flow (-10%). NWC reported a 5% fall off over 2018 score.”*

Based on the findings of the Survey, it was recommended that utility providers needed to improve on their service delivery, placing special emphasis on the in-store customer experience. Also, in the case of JPS and NWC, more attention should be given to acknowledgement of customers upon arrival as well as making provisions for persons with disabilities in store.

List of Tables: 2019 April - June

Table 5: 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	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
(ii)	New Complaints	99	51	28	24	10	41	13	5	1	11	4	3	2	292
(iii)	New Enquires	48	31	8	6	3	2	4	1	0	9	4	2	3	121
(iv)	New Opinions	1	0	2	1	2	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	11
(v)	New Referrals	233	183	37	29	15	31	2	7	1	13	11	10	19	591
	Total Contacts	387	270	75	60	30	76	19	14	2	35	19	15	24	1026
B	Closure/Resolution of Appeals:														
(i)	Compromise	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
(ii)	In Favour of Customer	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
(iii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	8
	Total Closures	8	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	15
C	Total Appeals from Previous Periods:														
	Outstanding Appeals with OUR														
(i)	Awaiting Final Letter to Customers	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(ii)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Outstanding Appeals with Utility (Awaiting Responses)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Total Outstanding Appeals	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8

Table 6: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers								Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&WJ (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Small Telecoms Providers (Dekal Wireless, Symbiote)	Water/Sewerage Providers (CanCara, DEML, Hampstead Benevolent Society, Landmark)	OUR/Other (not utility related)	
Billing Matters	220	164	17	46	22	7	10	3	489
Broken Main	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Customer Service	1	1	1	2	2	0	1	0	8
Defective Street Lights	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Disconnection	22	4	1	6	4	2	0	0	39
Equipment Damage	22	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	23
Guaranteed Standards	22	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Guaranteed Standards Query	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Health & Safety	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
Illegal Connections	12	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Interruption of Service	15	46	6	67	41	7	46	2	184
Irregular Supply	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Leak at Meter	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Metering	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Number Portability	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Other	25	12	17	13	4	3	1	17	92
Payment Arrangement	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Phone Cards	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Poor Service Quality	6	0	0	9	9	0	0	0	24
Property Damage	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
RAMI Service Connection & CDU	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Reconnection	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Rebate/Refund	0	3	4	18	5	0	0	0	30
Service Connection	10	1	2	0	5	0	0	0	18
Unable to get through to Provider	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	6
Unavailability of Service - No Facility	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Total	387	270	51	165	95	19	15	24	1026

Table 7: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Appeal Category	Service Providers			Total
	DEML	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	1	5	6	12
Equipment Matters	0	3	0	3
Total	1	8	6	15

Table 8: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	4	0	4
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	2	0	2
Total	8	0	8

Table 9: 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	100%	All 11 new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within 5 business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	100%	All eleven (11) 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%	Final responses were prepared and dispatched within the established timeline for the three appeals for which all relevant information was received.

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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.
Refund:	Amounts credited to customers' accounts for breaches of the service provider's Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract
Interruption of Service:	Where no service is provided, usually for an extended period.
Equipment Damage:	Damage caused to customers' equipment as a result of alleged action or inaction of their service provider.
Irregular supply:	Where service is not provided regularly and in keeping with the Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract.

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 ⁸
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.

⁸ 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 ⁹
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.

⁹ 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)
KSA	-	Kingston & St. Andrew
NWC	-	National Water Commission (Water & Sewerage Provider)

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