

---

# Office of Utilities Regulation

---

Consumer Affairs Unit

## Quarterly Performance Report

2019 January - March

Publication Date: 2019 June 18



**OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION**

36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10

Consumer Affairs Unit Quarterly Performance Report

Document Number: 2019/GEN/008/QPR.002

Publication Date: 2019 June 18

## Table of Contents

The Role and Objectives of the OUR.....	4
The Consumer and Public Affairs Department .....	4
The Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) .....	4
The Intent and Purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report.....	5
Methods of Calculation.....	5
Executive Summary .....	7
Chapter 1: Utilities’ Responsiveness .....	9
(i) Acknowledgements.....	9
(ii) Response to Case Letters .....	9
Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns.....	10
(i) Billing .....	10
(ii) Interruption of Service .....	10
(iii) Equipment Damage.....	11
(iv) Disconnection .....	11
(v) Service Connection .....	11
(vi) Refund.....	11
(vii) Poor Service Quality .....	12
Chapter 3: Guaranteed Standards Performance .....	13
(i) What are the Guaranteed Standards? .....	13
(ii) How are customers compensated? .....	13
(iii) Quarterly report of breaches .....	13
(iv) Utilities’ performance on Guaranteed Standards .....	14
Chapter 4: Customer Contact Centre/Call Centre Performance Reports .....	16
Chapter 5: Notification of Planned Outages Report .....	18
Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution.....	20
Chapter 6: Appeals Performance .....	22
(i) Closure of Appeals .....	22
(ii) Outstanding Appeals.....	22
<b>Appeals Process Resolution Rate .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights .....	23
(i) Credits/Compensation.....	23

(ii) Service Disruption Issues in St. Jago Hills .....	23
List of Tables 2018 July - September .....	24
Table 5: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities).....	24
Table 6: Distribution of Contacts by Categories.....	24
Table 7: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities.....	25
Table 8: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding).....	25
Table 9: CAU’s Performance on Service Standards (Appeals) .....	26
List of Figures .....	26
Appendices.....	27
Appendix I: Definition Of Terms Used In Documenting Customer Contacts .....	27
Appendix 2: Statement on Confidentiality of Telecommunications Service Provider Information ...	28
Appendix 3: Appeals Process .....	29
Appendix 4: CAU Internal Performance Standards.....	29
Appendix 5: Process Timelines for NWC Appeals.....	30
Appendix 6: List of Acronyms.....	32

## **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](mailto:collette.goode@our.org.jm)

OR

Yvonne Nicholson – Director, Consumer & Public Affairs

Email: [yvonne.nicholson@our.org.jm](mailto:yvonne.nicholson@our.org.jm)

## Executive Summary

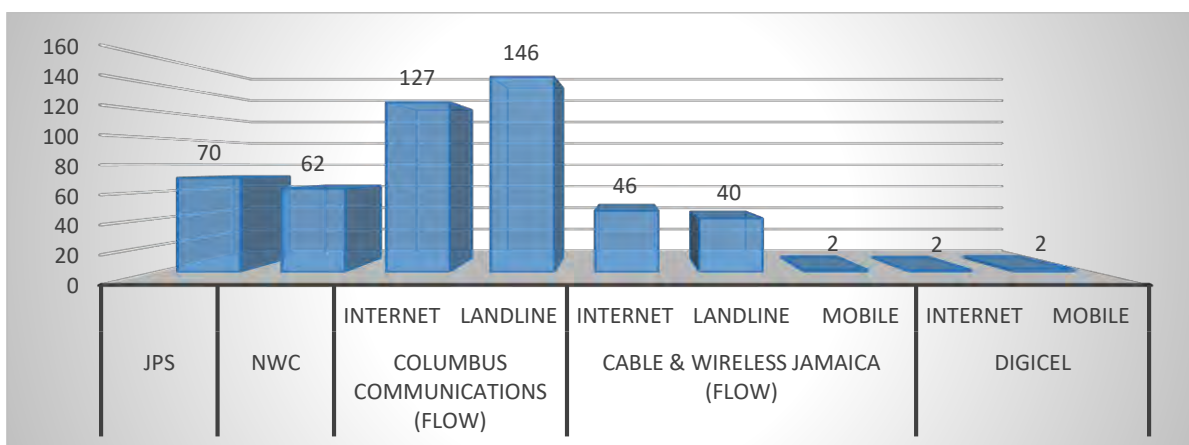
For the 2019 January - March period, the CAU received 1,133 contacts, which represents a 14% increase over the preceding period. Contacts relating to Refund (100%), Equipment Damage (88%), Irregular Supply (50%) and Interruption of Service (40%), accounted for the most significant increases over the preceding period.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service providers<sup>1</sup>:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 443 (39%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 298 (26%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 143 (13%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 136 (12%)
- Digicel – 67 (6%)
- Private water and/or sewerage providers CanCara Development Ltd., Drax Hall Utilities Ltd., Dynamic Environmental Management Ltd. (DEML) and Runaway Bay Water Company Ltd.; small telecommunications providers, Dekal Wireless, and Xtrinet; and, Other (Not Utility Provider Related) – 46 (4%).

While JPS at 443, accounted for the most contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest number of contacts – at 146 per 100,000 – in proportion to its landline customer base.

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

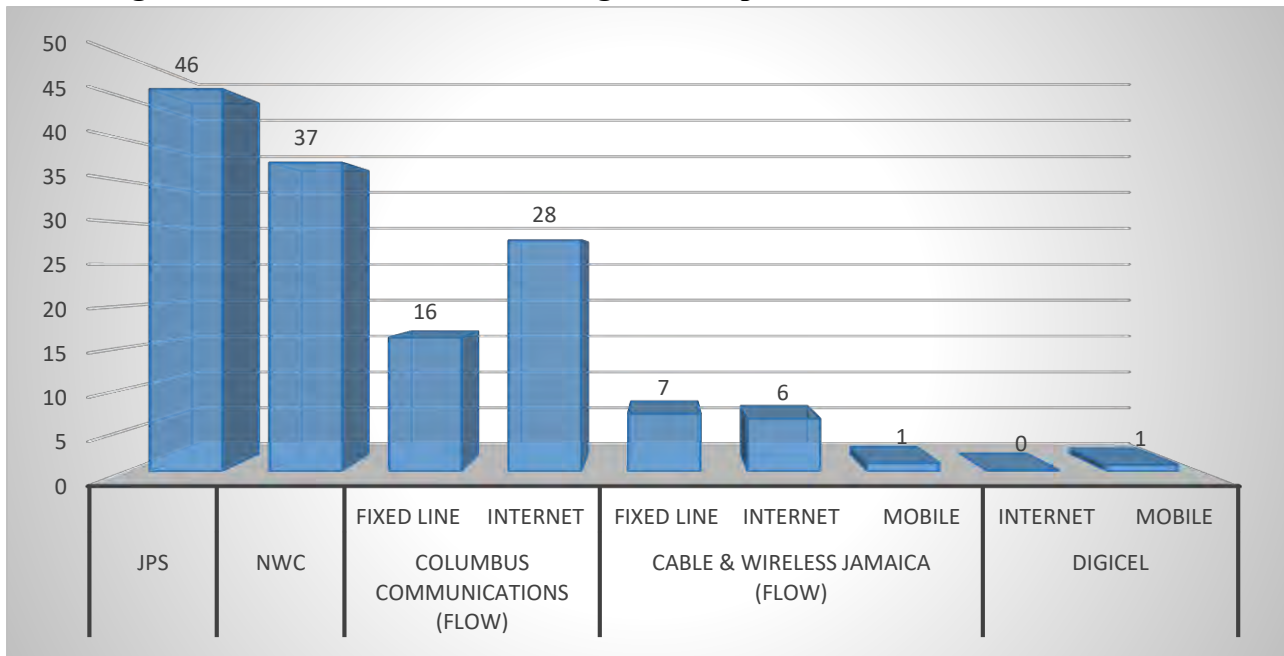


<sup>1</sup> Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 5 on page 24.

With a 5% increase over the preceding period, billing matters continued to be the main reason for utility consumers contacting the CAU. JPS and NWC with 285 (25%) and 177 (16%) of contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing related matters.

As is shown in Figure 2, JPS, at 46, 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 37 and 28 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 20% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact to the CAU.



## Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

### (i) Acknowledgements

Fifteen (15) new appeals were accepted for investigation during the 2019 January – March period. Private water provider DEML accounted for one (1) while JPS and NWC accounted for eight (8) and six (6) 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 shown in Table 1, all three service providers attained a commendable compliance rating of 100% for acknowledgements.

**Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)**

<i>Quarters (2019)</i>	<b>DEML</b>	<b>JPS</b>	<b>NWC</b>
<i>January - March</i>	100%	100%	100%

### (ii) Response to Case Letters

Service providers are required to provide responses to our case letters within 30 business days. As seen in Table 2, DEML was compliant as it provided the response within the agreed timeline. Of the eight and six case letters sent to JPS and NWC respectively, two responses were due from each provider within the reporting period. Only one (50%) JPS response was received within the agreed timeline while the NWC attained a 100% response compliance rating.

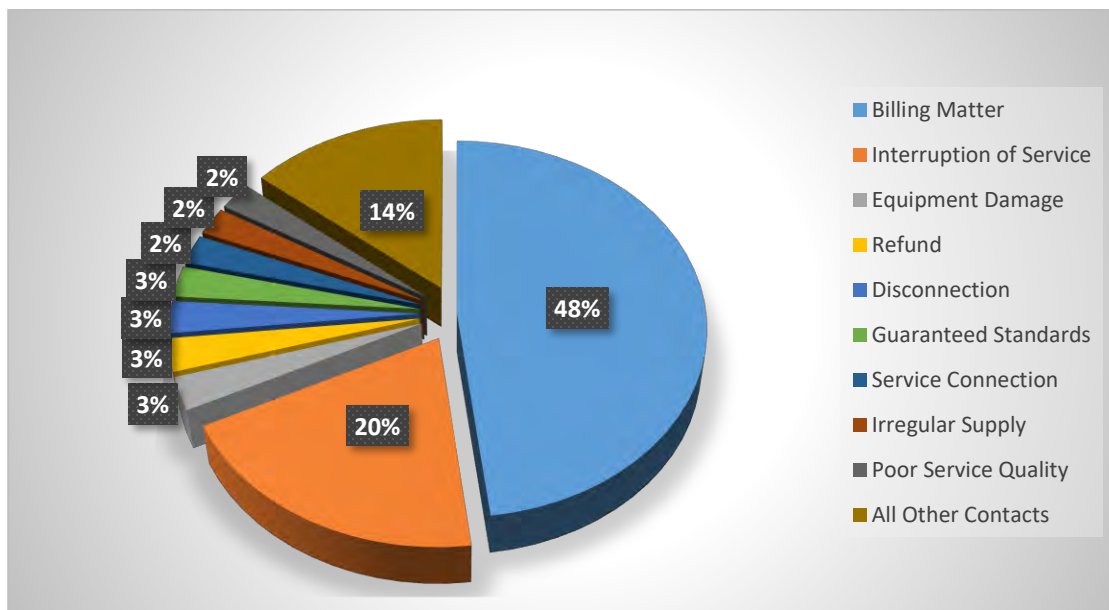
**Table 2: Response to case letters within standard (30 business days)**

<i>Quarters (2019)</i>	<b>DEML</b>	<b>JPS</b>	<b>NWC</b>
<i>January – March</i>	100%	50%	100%

## Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU related to: billing, interruption of service, equipment damage, refund, disconnection, Guaranteed Standards, service connection, irregular supply and poor service quality (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.

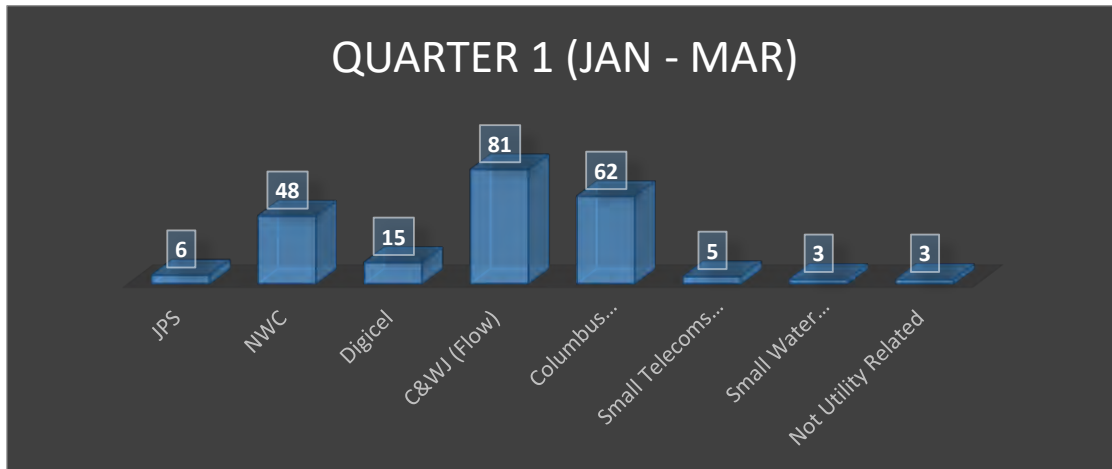
JPS and NWC accounted for the most billing contacts with 285 (25%) and 177 (16%) respectively. C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 29 (3%) while Columbus Communications (Flow), Digicel and Private Water Providers accounted for the remaining 53 (4%).

### (ii) Interruption of Service

Service interruption contacts increased by four percentage points, to 20%, when compared with the preceding quarter. C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) with 81 (7%) and 62 (5%) of total contacts respectively, continued to account for the highest number of related contacts

(Figure 4). NWC followed with 48 (4%) while all other service providers accounted for the remaining 4%.

**Figure 4: Quarterly service interruption contacts**



(iii) **Equipment Damage**

Equipment damage issues accounted for 32 or 3% of total contacts which is a one percentage point increase over the preceding quarter. JPS and C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 31 and 1 related contacts respectively.

(iv) **Disconnection**

Disconnection contacts reduced by one percentage point, to 3%, when compared with the preceding quarter. JPS and NWC accounted for 2% and 1% respectively.

(v) **Service Connection**

Contacts relating to service connection increased by one percentage point, to 3% of total contacts, when compared to the preceding quarter. JPS and C&WJ accounted for 2% and 1% respectively of these complaints.

(vi) **Refund**

Refund accounted for 3% of total contacts with JPS, C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) each having a share of 1%.

(vii) Poor Service Quality

Similar to the preceding period, poor service quality contacts remained at 2% with Digicel and C&WJ (Flow) accounting for an equal share of these contacts.

## 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?

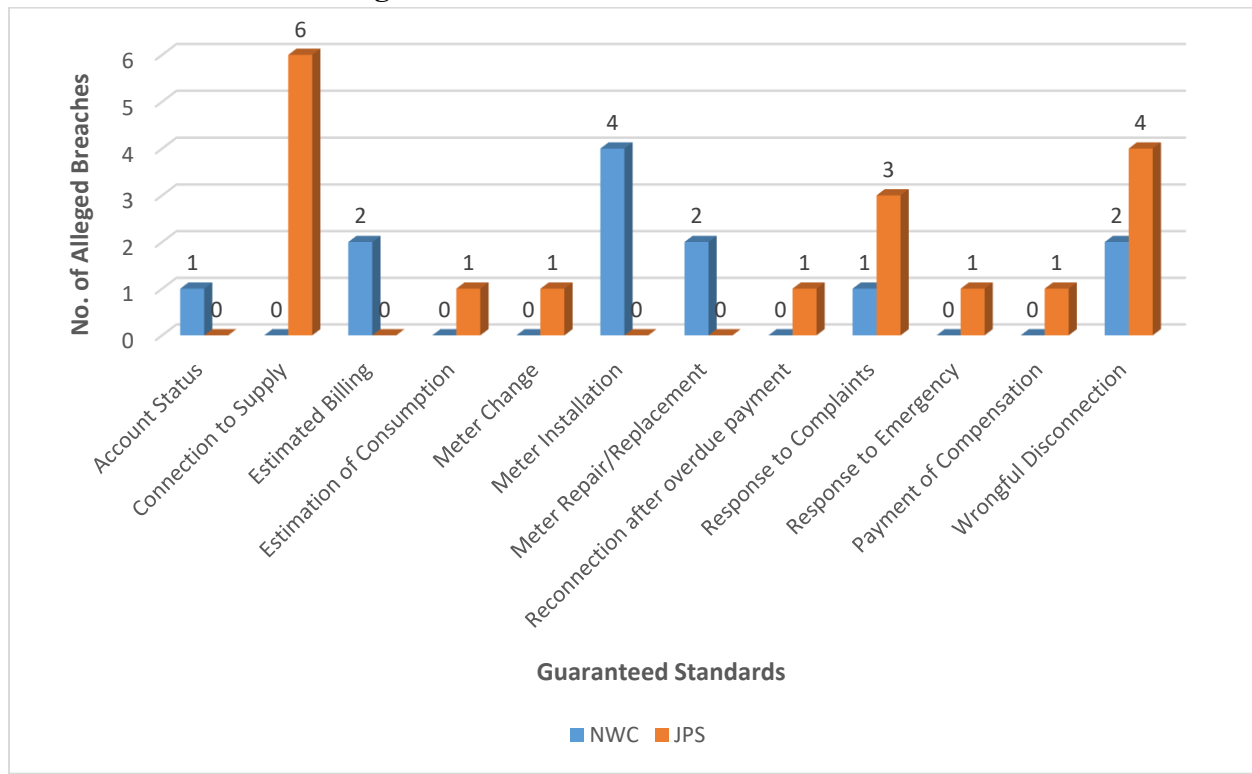
**NWC:** Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will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

Thirty (30) contacts were received by the OUR in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards from customers of the JPS and NWC. This represented three percent (3%) of total contacts received during the review period. The number of alleged Guaranteed Standards breaches per service providers were: JPS – 18 and NWC – 12.

As is seen in Figure 5, *Connection to Supply*, *Wrongful Disconnection* and *Response to Complaints* accounted for the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards for JPS. For the NWC, *Meter Installation*, *Repair/Replacement of Faulty Meter* and *Wrongful Disconnection* accounted for the highest incidents in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards.

**Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts**

The Guaranteed Standards (GS) reports submitted by the JPS did not reflect the alleged incidents of breaches reported to the OUR. However, the GS report submitted by the NWC confirm one of the reported breaches, which was in relation to *Wrongful Disconnection*. Accordingly, no compensatory payments were made by JPS in relation to the contacts received by the OUR while the compensatory payments made by the NWC included the amount for the aforementioned GS breach that was reported to the OUR.

(iv) Utilities' performance on Guaranteed Standards

**JPS**

JPS' compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards' performance indicated that 17,910 breaches were committed; which represents a 4% increase in the number of breaches compared to the preceding quarter. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$37.31 million, all of which was made by way of automatic compensation.

*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, Guaranteed Standards compliance report indicates that a total of 530 breaches were committed during the review period, which represents a 12% decrease when compared with the preceding period. These breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$1.84 million while actual payments amounted to \$1 million. The actual payments represented 54% of total potential payments and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 46% 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 8 – Meter Repair/Replacement (which requires that needed meter repairs or replacements must be completed within 20 working days); and WGS 1 - Access (which requires that new service connections are made within 10 working days); WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading (which restricts the NWC to sending no more than two consecutive estimates, where it has access to its meter); and WGS 7 – Meter Installation (which stipulates that meters should be install within 30 working days upon request). These four standards represented 80% of total breaches and 83% 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 will be 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 an improvement in two of the four areas examined. Performance in the *Percentage Service Level* and *Percentage of Abandon Calls* improved by six and eight percentage points respectively, when compared with the preceding period. The Average Length of Calls increased by one minute and three seconds (0:01:03) compared to the preceding period. Further details on the NWC's performance during the review period is provided in Table 4.

**Table 4: NWC's Call Centre Performance**

<i>KPIs</i>	<b>KPI Definition</b>	<b>Performance (2019)</b>
		<b>Jan - Mar</b>
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds <sup>2</sup>	<b>64%</b>
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Average length of calls	<b>0:05:08</b>
<i>Percentage of Abandon Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	<b>9%</b>

<sup>2</sup> 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 it reported. The JPS report indicates that 96% of calls were answered within 20 seconds, exceeding the international standard of 80%. Additionally, performance on the *Average Length of Calls* was within the target set by the company during the review period. However, JPS' performance of 11% 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**

<b>KPIs</b>	<b>KPI Definition</b>	<b>Performance 2019</b>
		Jan - March
<b>Service Level Answer</b>	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds <sup>3</sup>	96%
<b>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</b>	Average length of calls <sup>4</sup>	4:11
<b>Percentage of Abandon Calls</b>	Percentage of calls not serviced <sup>5</sup>	11%

<sup>3</sup> This represents the measure used by the JPS

<sup>4</sup> Goal of no more than 5 minutes set by JPS

<sup>5</sup> 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 64.5% compliance rating in meeting this standard; which represents a 10.8 percentage point increase over the preceding period. The company has advised that it recognises the need for improvement in this area and will be developing the appropriate procedure which will help improve their performance.

The OUR's Electronic Media Monitoring Report, for the review period, did not indicate that service interruption advisories relating to JPS were carried by main stream media. However, it did highlight complaints of frequent power outages made by residents of Morning Side - St. Elizabeth.

### **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.

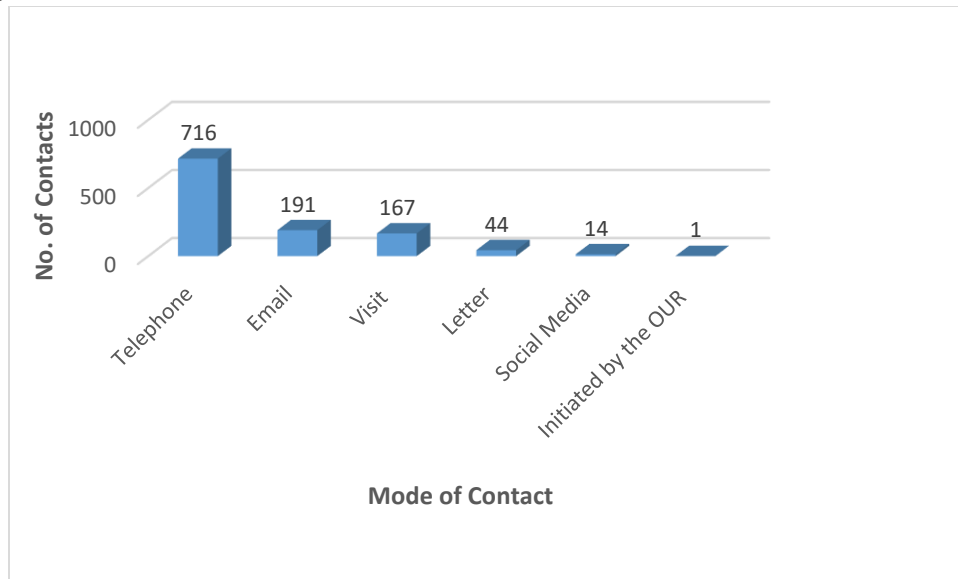
Based on the information reviewed, the NWC attained a 100% compliance rating to provide at least 12 hours' advanced notice for disruptions of a duration no greater than 4 hours. However, in relation to providing at least 24 hours' advance notice for disruptions of a duration greater than 4 hours, the NWC achieved a compliance rating of 73%; which is 17 percentage points less than the aforementioned established target. The 73% also represents a five percentage point increase over the preceding period. Of the 22 related notifications received, 16 were in compliance with the stated target.

The OUR's Electronic Media Monitoring Report for the review period continued to indicate that a number of advisories were issued relating to the NWC's Corporate Area non-revenue water reduction programme, which resulted in service interruptions. Additionally, the report advised of a 50% decline in production at facilities in St. James and Hanover as well as the continued reduction in levels at the Hermitage reservoir. Customers' complaints of no water were reported in areas which included: Seaforth – St. Thomas, Portmore and Zion Hill – St. Catherine.

## Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

The telephone continued to be the most frequently used method for customer contacting the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit, representing 63% of total contacts. Emails and visits followed with 17% and 15% respectively. Letters, social media and contacts initiated by the OUR accounted for the remaining 5% of contacts. Figure 6 provides further details.

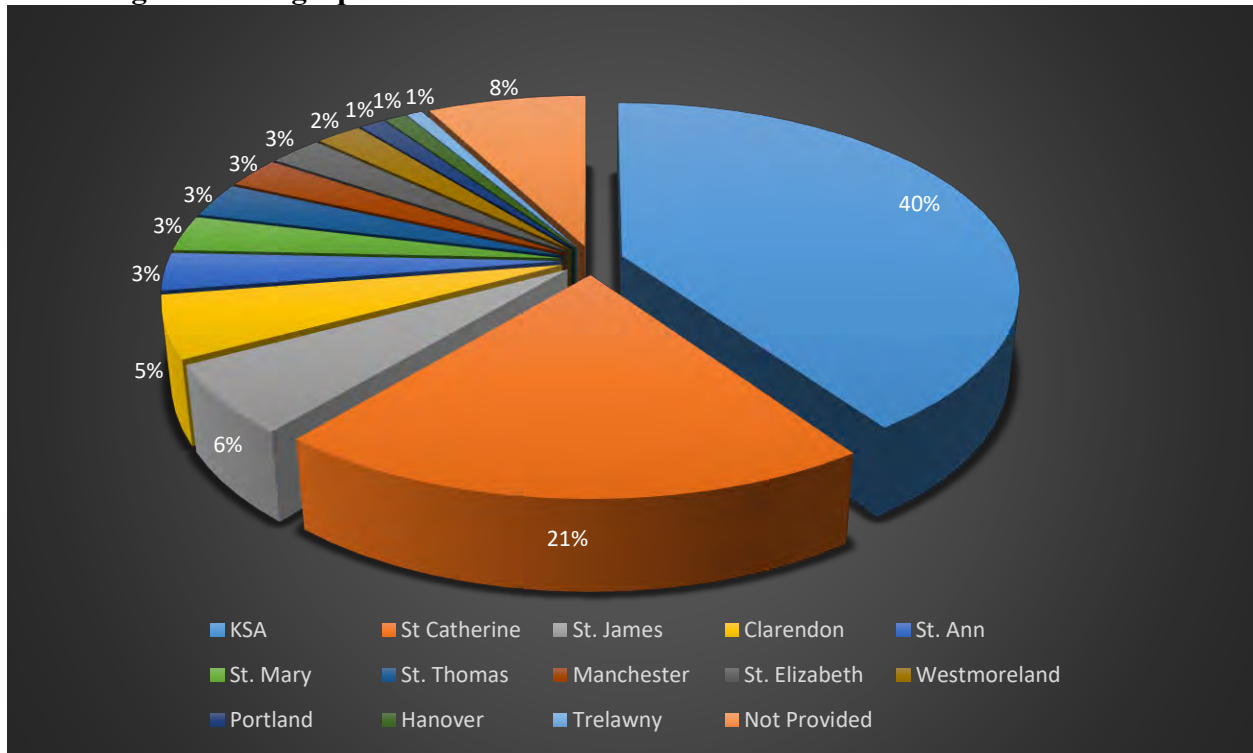
**Figure 6: Methods of Contact**



### Geographical Distribution of Contacts

Kingston and St. Andrew, at 40%, accounted for the highest number of total contacts. St. Catherine followed with 21% while St. James and Clarendon accounted for 6% and 5% respectively. St. Ann, St. Mary, St. Thomas, Manchester and St. Elizabeth each accounted for 3% while the remaining parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Eight percent (8%) 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 Appeals<sup>6</sup>

Thirteen (13) appeals were closed during the review period of which 8 (or 62%) were resolved in favour of the service provider with the remaining 5 (38%) being resolved in favour of the customer.

Of the closed appeals, 62% 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 38% exceeded the timeline.

### (ii) Outstanding Appeals<sup>7</sup>

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, three (3) are awaiting responses from the service provider while the remaining four (4) are awaiting action to be taken by the OUR.

Of the seven outstanding appeals, JPS accounted for two (2) equipment damage, two (2) property damage and two (2) billing related matters. The NWC accounted for the remaining outstanding appeal which is billing related.

### Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Fifteen new appeals were accepted for investigation for which all relevant information for five (5) was due by the end of the review period. All relevant information was received for three (3) of the five 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.

---

<sup>6</sup> Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 7

<sup>7</sup> Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 8

## Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

### (i) Credits/Compensation

An amount of \$1,099,921.36 was secured for utility customers through the intervention of the CAU. Of this amount, JPS, NWC, Columbus Communications (Flow) and Can-Cara accounted for 86%, 9%, 4% and 1% respectively.

### (ii) Service Disruption Issues in St. Jago Hills

Through its Citizens' Association, residents of St. Jago Hills complained to the OUR about an interruption in their water supply which began in 2018 October. The St. Jago Hills community is served by private licenced water provider, St. Jago Hills Development Company Limited (SJHDC). In advising of the service disruption, the Citizens' Association reminded us that this was the second such occurrence in as many years, which has left them without water for a prolonged period.

In response to this complaint, the OUR made contact with the SJHDC requesting information on the cause of the service interruption and the measures being taken to have service restored within the shortest possible time. The OUR also queried whether customers were being billed during periods of service interruptions. SJHDC verbally advised that the disruption was as a result of the failure of the sole generator, used to operate the pump. It further advised that the specific fault with the generator has been identified and the part needed to effect repairs was being sourced.

In a letter dated 2019 January 31, SJHDC advised that having acquired the needed part, work was being carried out to repair the defective pump to facilitate restoration of water by the week ending 2019 February 1. The water provider also advised that customers are not billed whenever service is interrupted for a prolonged period.

Confirmation was received from the Citizens' Association that supply was restored on 2019 February 2. The OUR has since not been advised of any further service interruptions.

## List of Tables 2018 July - September

Table 5: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities)

	Description	JPS	NWC	C&WJ (FLOW)			Columbus		Digicel			Small Telecoms Provider	Small Water Provider	OUR/Other (Not Utility Provider)	Total
				Internet	Landline	Mobile	Internet	Landline	Internet	Landline	Mobile				
<b>A</b>	<b>Contacts for the Quarter</b>														
(i)	New Appeals	8	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	15
(ii)	New Complaints	110	67	14	34	8	49	18	7	4	20	3	1	0	335
(iii)	New Enquires	44	40	1	7	2	7	2	1	0	4	1	1	0	110
(iv)	New Opinions	4	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	9
(v)	New Referrals	277	184	21	49	5	44	15	8	2	21	6	6	26	664
	<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1133</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Closure/Resolution of Appeals:</b>														
(i)	In Favour of Customer	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
	<b>Total Closures</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Total Appeals from Previous Periods:</b>														
	<b>Outstanding Appeals with OUR</b>														
(i)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
(ii)	Outstanding Appeals with Utility (Awaiting Responses)	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	<b>Total Outstanding Appeals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 6: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers									Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&WJ (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Telcoms Providers (Dekal Wireless, XtriNet)	Small Water/Sewerage Providers (CanCara, DEML)	OUR/Other (not utility related)		
Billing Matters	285	177	18	29	26	2	6	1	544	
Broken Main	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Customer Service	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Defective Street Lights	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Disconnection	19	8	0	1	3	0	0	0	31	
Equipment Damage	31	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	32	
Guaranteed Standards	18	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	
Guaranteed Standards Query	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Health & Safety	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	
Illegal Connections	14	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	
Interruption of Service	6	48	15	81	62	5	3	3	223	
Irregular Supply	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	
Leak at Meter	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Metering	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Number Portability	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4	
Other	16	10	15	11	17	1	0	23	93	
Payment Arrangement	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Phone Cards	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Poor Service Quality	4	2	10	5	6	0	0	0	27	
Property Damage	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
RAMI Service Connection & CDU	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
Reconnection	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Refund	6	0	1	10	13	2	0	0	32	
Service Connection	17	1	0	3	7	0	0	0	28	
Unable to get through to Provider	1	2	5	0	1	0	0	0	9	
Unavailability of Service - No Facility	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1133</b>	



Table 7: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Appeal Category	Service Providers			Total
	Can-Cara	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	1	5	5	11
Equipment Matters	0	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>

Table 8: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	2	1	3
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 9: CAU's Performance on Service Standards (Appeals)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Service Standards</b>	<b>% Compliance</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Acknowledgement of Appeals	Within 2 business days of receipt of customer's correspondence	100%	All 15 new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within 5 business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	87%	Thirteen (13) of the 15 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.

### List of Figures

- Figure 1: Distribution of Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 2: Distribution of Billing Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 3: Main Customer Concerns
- Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts
- Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts
- Figure 6: Methods of Contact
- Figure 7: Geographic Distribution of Contacts

## 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 <sup>8</sup>
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.

<sup>8</sup> 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

<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Timelines</u></b>
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 <sup>9</sup>
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 working days
Supervisor's Review of Final Letter	2 working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
<b>Total</b>	<b>65 working days</b>

#### 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.

---

<sup>9</sup> 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