

The Director General's Message

This has been a special year for the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) as it celebrated fifteen years of existence. While this may be considered a relatively short time in the life of an organization, the OUR has developed into a major national institution, and is proud of the contributions it has made to Jamaica's economic and social transformation and development. We have also been steadfast in our efforts to ensure that efficiency, fairness and transparency continue to be the OUR's guiding principles.

During 2012, we made significant strides in keeping with our mandate. As at June this year, customers of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) realized a decline in their energy rates following our annual tariff review. This became possible as a result of the combined efficiencies realized in maintaining systems losses at 17.5% and the service provider achieving the targeted heat rate. The reduction in energy charges was important in moderating other automatic increases such as rising fuel prices. Our review of the Back Billing Policy and Procedures for JPS also saw a reduction – from four to two months – of the allowable period in which the company is allowed to back bill a customer's account. To achieve the objectives of fuel diversification, as outlined in the National Energy Policy, we have requested proposals to procure supplies of up to 115 MW of renewable generating capacity. This additional generating capacity is also intended to further reduce the cost of electricity.

Mobile telephone customers are enjoying lower call rates. This is as a direct result of

the OUR being provided with the necessary powers to set interim termination rates. Additionally, arrangements are far advanced for the introduction of number portability. This will allow telecommunications customers to switch their service provider without having to lose their numbers.

While we look at what we have accomplished, we are cognizant that much work is yet to be done. In keeping with the provisions of its statute, the National Water Commission (NWC) is expected to submit an application for a rate review shortly. As part of our review process, all stakeholders can be assured that opportunities will be provided for their participation as we endeavour to maintain transparency, fairness and efficiency in all our processes. We will also be closely involved in the preparatory work to facilitate the roll-out of broadband across the island.

We will continue to be guided by our mission statement: *"To contribute to national development by creating an environment for the efficient delivery of utility services to the customers whilst ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on investment."*

As we approach the end of another year, we take this opportunity to assure you of our continued commitment to balance the interests of all our stakeholders. We wish that the peace and good cheer of the holiday season will remain with you and your family throughout the coming year.

OUR Long Service Awards Dinner (cont'd)



Guest speaker former Prime Minister P.J. Patterson delivers his address



The first Director General of the OUR, Winston Hay (right), and members of the OUR's Independent Advisory Council on Finance and Administration, Edward Shoucair (centre) and Errol Hudson (left)



The longest serving employees at the OUR pose with P.J. Patterson. They have each been with the OUR for fifteen years. From left: Carolyn Young, Clara Johnson, Venetia Cooke, Ingrid Brown and Mr Shirley Stewart.



Employees who have served ten to fourteen years at the OUR pose with their awards.



Awardees who have served between five and nine years at the OUR



The awardees pose with Director General, Zia Mian

A Morning of Thanksgiving and Praise

Staff members of the OUR went to church on Monday, December 17, 2012. The spiritually fulfilling service, dubbed **A Morning of Thanksgiving and Praise** was held to mark the OUR's 15th Anniversary, as well as to celebrate the Christmas season. It was held in the PCJ Auditorium on Trafalgar Road in New Kingston.

Specially invited guests included two former Directors General, Winston Hay and J. Paul Morgan; Consultant to OUR Preparatory Unit, Earl Richards; and a former Deputy Director General, Courtney Jackson.

In their messages, Messrs Hay, Morgan and Richards reminisced about the OUR in its formative years and some of the challenges that existed. Not without humour, they also provided anecdotes that had the audience in stitches. They also spoke about the OUR's significant achievements in its 15 year history, and some of the employees who played a role in its development. A happy Director General Zia Mian warmly spoke about the good work of the staff members and challenged them to continue being diligent and productive. Dr. Wayne Henry delivered a spirited sermon, imploring OUR members to never forget the true meaning of Christmas.

The audience was treated to stirring and soul-filling performances by the OUR choir, Robert and Geneive Bailey, Brothers in Harmony, and the Praise Academy of Dance. Everyone in attendance agreed that it was a beautiful service which left many feeling blessed to have been a part of such a special occasion.

OUR Long Service Awards Dinner

The OUR held its long service awards on Wednesday, December 19, 2012 at the Mona Visitors Lodge, UWI. Thirty three members of staff who served between five and fifteen years were recognised. Former Prime Minister, the Most Honourable P.J. Patterson was the guest speaker. Here are some of the pictorial highlights.



Director General Zia Mian has former Prime Ministers P.J. Patterson and Edward Seaga, and Mitsy Seaga in stitches.



Deputy Directors General Hopeton Heron (2nd left) and Maurice Charvis (right) pose with their spouses, Gary Barrow, Senior Vice President of Customer Operations and Support Services at JPS, and wife Bernadette Barrow, NCB Assistant General Manager – Retail.