

Permissive dialling period for 110 emergency number to end soon

The permissive dialling period of one year to phase out the use of the 110 emergency number ends this month. The one year period began last November when the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) introduced two new emergency numbers for Jamaica. Those numbers are 112 and 911.

Last year, Jamaica became the first country in the English-speaking Caribbean to activate the new Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) spearheaded International Telecommunications Union (ITU) recommendation towards the global harmonization of emergency numbers.

The recommendation meant that effective mid-November last year, the numbers to dial for

calls to emergency services in Jamaica are 112 and 911. These numbers have replaced the 110 emergency number which was used to reach fire, police and ambulance services.

It is important to note that the current police direct emergency number 119 will remain and is not affected by this change.

Jamaicans were given a permissive dialling period of one year in order to phase out the use of the 110 code, and this allowed both the old and new numbers to be dialled to reach the emergency services.

OUR 15th Anniversary Forum (cont'd)



Former Prime Minister Edward Seaga (centre) addressing the topic "Regulators, who needs them?" at the OUR 15th anniversary forum. At left is moderator for that round table discussion Journalist Cliff Hughes and Director General of the OUR Ahmad Zia Mian. Other members of that panel were the Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission Professor Hopeton Dunn and the Executive Director of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) in the USA Charles Acquard.

Ten digit dialling delayed

The introduction of ten digit dialling will not take place this calendar year as the implementation of a new area code for the island has been delayed.

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) which has responsibility for telephone numbering administration and area code relief planning in Jamaica had originally estimated that the expected exhaust period for area code '876' would have been the 4th quarter of this year 2012.

The estimation was arrived at using the Numbering Resource Utilization and Forecast data as well as historical growth data submitted by carriers with their applications for additional numbers. However with the exit of mobile provider Claro, the period to estimated exhaustion of numbers has now been pushed back.

Whenever it's implemented, the additional area code will cover the same geographic area as the existing '876' area code and this will require the dialing of the full 10 digits of telephone numbers for a local call.



President of the Airports Authority of Jamaica Earl Richards (third from left) holds the attention of his discussants during a break at the 15th anniversary forum. From left are the first Director General of the OUR Winston Hay, Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission Professor Hopeton Dunn and current Director General of the OUR Ahmad Zia Mian. Mr. Richards was a member of the preparatory team which established the Office of Utilities Regulation.

OUR observes electricity restoration efforts following Sandy



A JPS worker makes a point about the electricity restoration efforts to OUR Director General Zia Mian (in tie) and JPS President and CEO Kelly Tomblin (in helmet at right). The Director General was out on tour with JPS crews observing electricity restoration efforts in several St. Andrew communities.



OUR Director General Zia Mian (right), JPS President and CEO Kelly Tomblin (left) and Head of Government and Regulatory Affairs at the JPS Sam Davis (centre) unearth what appears to be an illegal connection during a tour of Stony Hill St. Andrew to observe electricity restoration efforts following the passage of Hurricane Sandy.



The OUR's second Director General J. Paul Morgan (left) converses with the Deputy Executive Director of the Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) of Trinidad and Tobago Glenn Khan. Mr. Khan was one of the presenters at the forum and addressed the topic "How can regulation support markets forces and help create an environment conducive to competition?"



OUR Deputy Director General Maurice Charvis (left) in discussion with RJR Hotline host Barbara Gloudon on day two of the forum.

OUR 15th Anniversary Forum



OUR Director General Zia Mian welcomes participants at the OUR's 15th anniversary forum.



Minister of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change, Robert Pickersgill, delivers the opening address on behalf of Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller at the OUR's 15th anniversary Forum held the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston.



A section of the audience which attended the two day forum on November 1-2.