
Office of Utilities Regulation

Consumer Affairs Unit

Quarterly Performance Report

2017 October - December

Publication Date: March 31, 2018



36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10

Consumer Affairs Unit Quarterly Performance Report

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The Role and Objectives of the OUR

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

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

The Consumer and Public Affairs Department

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

The Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU)

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

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

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

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

The Intent and Purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report

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

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

Methods of Calculation

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

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Executive Summary

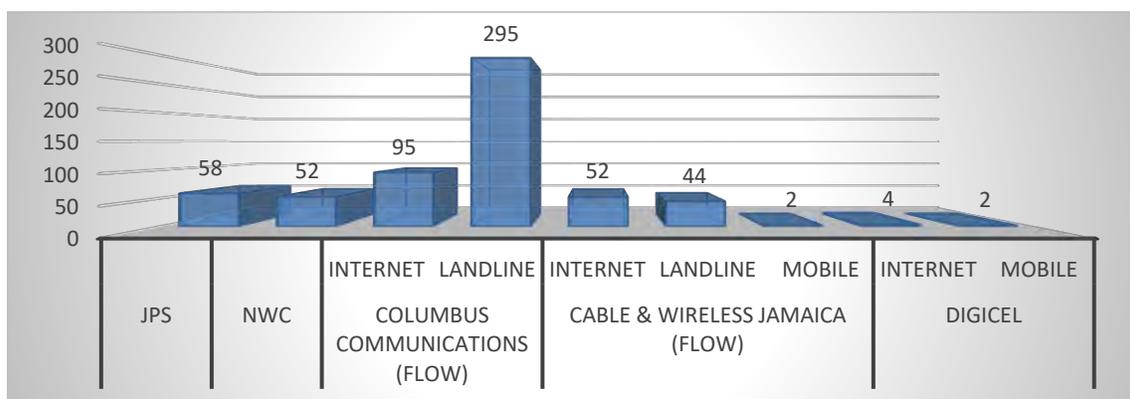
The 2017 October - December period saw the CAU receiving 1,047 contacts, representing the highest number of contacts received in any one quarter throughout the year. With the exception of equipment damage contacts, there was a general increase in all other main complaint categories. Service interruption, unavailability of service and disconnection showed the greatest increases over the preceding period at 64%, 45% and 33% respectively.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service providers ¹:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 369 (35%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 250 (24%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 159 (15%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 148 (14%)
- Digicel – 92 (9%)
- Small water providers CanCara Development Ltd., Dynamic Environmental Management Ltd. (DEML) and St. Jago Hills Development Company; small telecommunications provider Dekal Wireless; and, Other (Not Utility Provider Related) – 29 (3%).

While JPS at 369 accounted for the highest number for total contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest number of contacts – at 295 per 100,000 – in proportion to its landline customer base.

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



¹ Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 4 on page 24

For 2017, a total of 3,723 contacts were received, which represents a 1% decrease over the prior year. As is seen in Table 1, JPS and NWC - at 35% and 26% respectively - accounted for the highest number of total contacts received for 2017.

Table 1: Service Provider Contact Summary (January – December 2017)

Service Providers	Review Periods				Total
	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec	
JPS	276	270	379	369	1294
NWC	258	224	241	250	973
C&WJ (Flow)	128	137	82	159	506
Columbus Communications (Flow)	100	71	124	148	443
Digicel	57	94	112	92	355
Small Telecommunications Providers	11	12	13	10	46
Small Water Providers	8	9	4	4	25
Other/ Not Utility Provider Related	<u>27</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>	81
Total	865	838	973	1047	3723

Matters relating to billing represented 46%, which, although showing a three percentage point decline when compared to the preceding period, continued to be the main reason for utility consumers contacting the CAU. As a percentage of total contacts, JPS (at 23%) accounted for the highest number of billing related matters with the NWC following with 15%.

While JPS and NWC accounted for the highest number of billing contacts as a percentage of the total number of contacts, Figure 2 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) at 53, accounted for the greatest number of billing related contacts per 100,000 of its customer base in relation to its fixed line service. JPS and NWC followed with 39 and 33 contacts respectively. For 2017, billing matters accounted for 48% of total contacts received.

Mystery Shopping

The findings of a Mystery Shopping exercise conducted by the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has revealed that none of the utility service providers are delivering an above average in-store customer experience and that there was a 30% customer satisfaction gap.

The survey was carried out across four (4) utility operators: the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS), the National Water Commission, Digicel and FLOW by Market Research Services Ltd. between July and August 2017. Among the objectives of the study were to ascertain the levels of customer satisfaction; the major areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with customer service and to determine the level of satisfaction with the customer service offered by the operators.

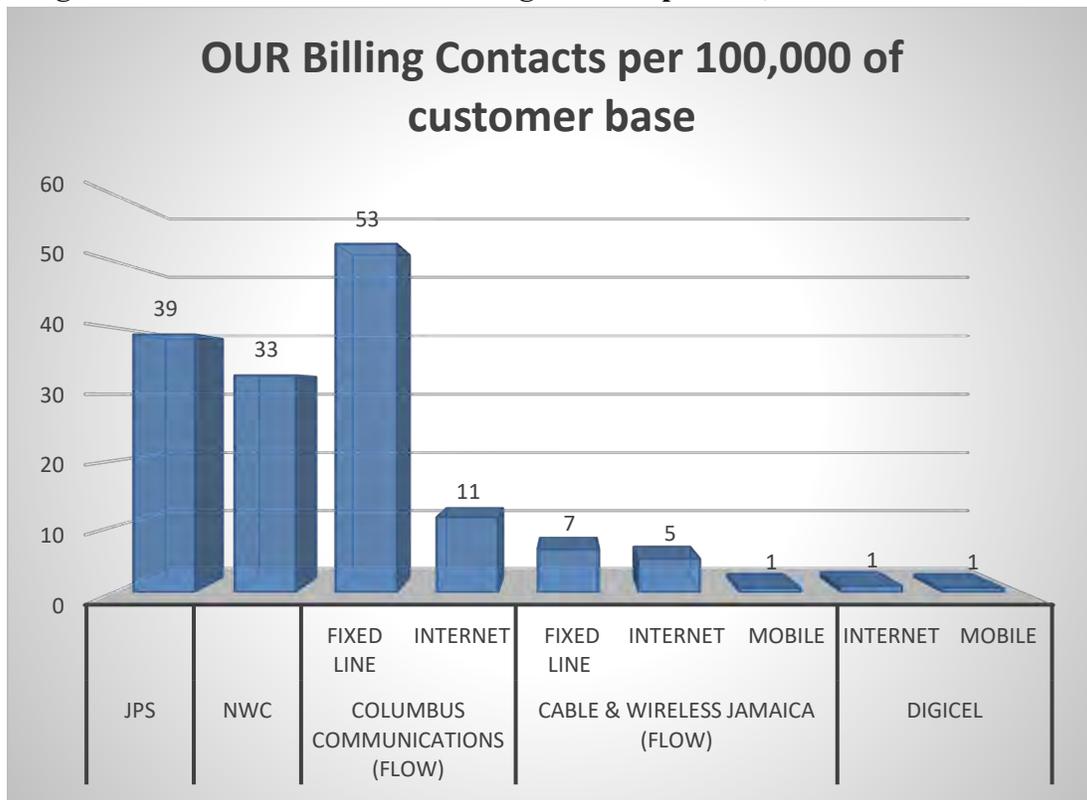
Utility companies were scored on the physical space in their stores, customer service and customer service representatives' knowledge of specific services that the company provided.

Telecommunications provider, FLOW topped the overall scores with 71%, with JPS coming a close second with 70%. Digicel garnered a combined total of 69%, and NWC, 67%. JPS topped the utility companies on the issue of customer service, with a score of 80%, followed by NWC which scored 77%, FLOW 71% and Digicel 68%. A breakdown of the findings showed that JPS got top marks for its physical space with a score of 97%, followed by FLOW at 76%, Digicel 71% and NWC 64%.

Service above expectations and acknowledging customers upon entry were consistently featured among the weaknesses identified across nearly all service providers. The research encouraged the providers to place more emphasis on customer experience in terms of individual attention received as well as the acknowledgment that the customers receive upon entry into the retail spaces.

Providers were also urged to work extensively on consistency in how they addressed customers' access to the Terms & Conditions, Code of Practice and Customer Charter as well as information regarding products such as *Digi Play* and *Triple Play*. Attention to these areas are likely to have a positive impact on the scores obtained moving from average performances, the research noted.

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



In keeping with the usual trend, service interruption issues, which represented 23% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact during the reporting period. Throughout 2017, service interruption complaints accounted for 17% of total contacts.

Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

(i) Acknowledgements

Over the review period, sixteen (16) new appeals were accepted for investigation of which JPS and NWC accounted for ten (10) and six (6) respectively. Requests for information, via case letters, were sent to the respective service providers for all new appeals accepted.

Both JPS and NWC agreed to acknowledge our case letters within five (5) business days. As is shown in Table 2, JPS achieved a compliance rating of 30% as, of the ten case letters sent, acknowledgements were only received for three. The NWC achieved a compliance rating of 65% as while acknowledgements were received for five of the six case letters sent, only four were received within the five business days' timeline.

The 2017 compliance for acknowledgements from both service providers needs improvements with the highest being the 65% achieved by the NWC in this review period (see Table 2). These percentages indicates low performance in JPS and NWC's responsiveness in relation to acknowledging the OUR's correspondence and within the agreed timeline.

Table 2: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)

<i>Quarters (2017)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January – March</i>	38%	55%
<i>April – June</i>	0%	60%
<i>July – September</i>	25%	0%
<i>October - December</i>	30%	65%

(ii) Response to Case Letters

JPS and NWC are required to provide responses to our case letters within 30 business days. Of the ten case letters sent to JPS, responses were due for nine at the end of the review period. While all nine responses were received, only seven (78%) were received within the stipulated timeline.

For the NWC, of the six case letters, responses were due for five at the end of the review period. While all five responses were received, only three were (60%) within the stipulated timeline.

Table 3: Responses within standard (30 business days)

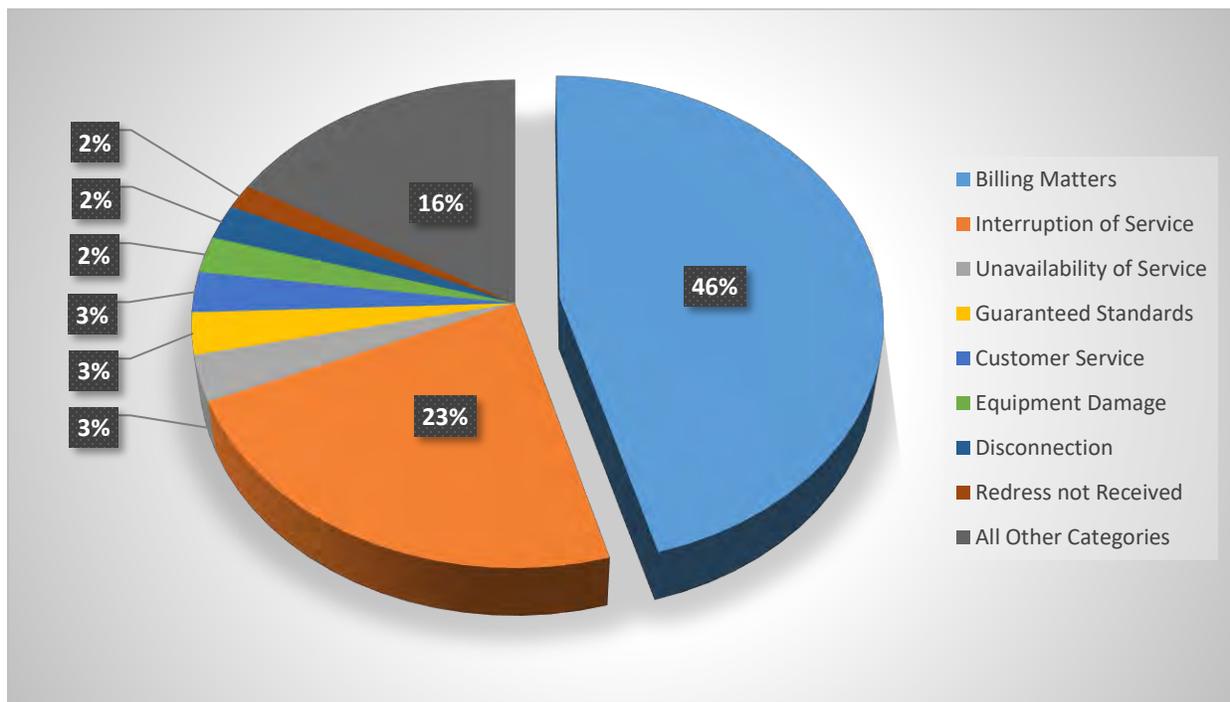
<i>Quarters (2017)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January – March</i>	86%	90%
<i>April – June</i>	100%	100%
<i>July - September</i>	50%	67%
<i>October to December</i>	78%	60%

As is seen in Table 3, both JPS and NWC showed a higher compliance rating, in relation to meeting the response timeline within the first half of 2017 when compared with the second half. Both service providers will be reminded of the importance of acknowledging and providing the requested information within the agreed timeline.

Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

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

Figure 3: Main Concerns



(i) Billing

Similar to the preceding 2017 quarters, billing matters continued to be the predominant reason for customers contact during the October – December quarter and represented 46% of total contacts received. The billing issues complained about included adjustments to customers’ accounts, billing punctuality, high consumption, disputed charges and estimated billing.

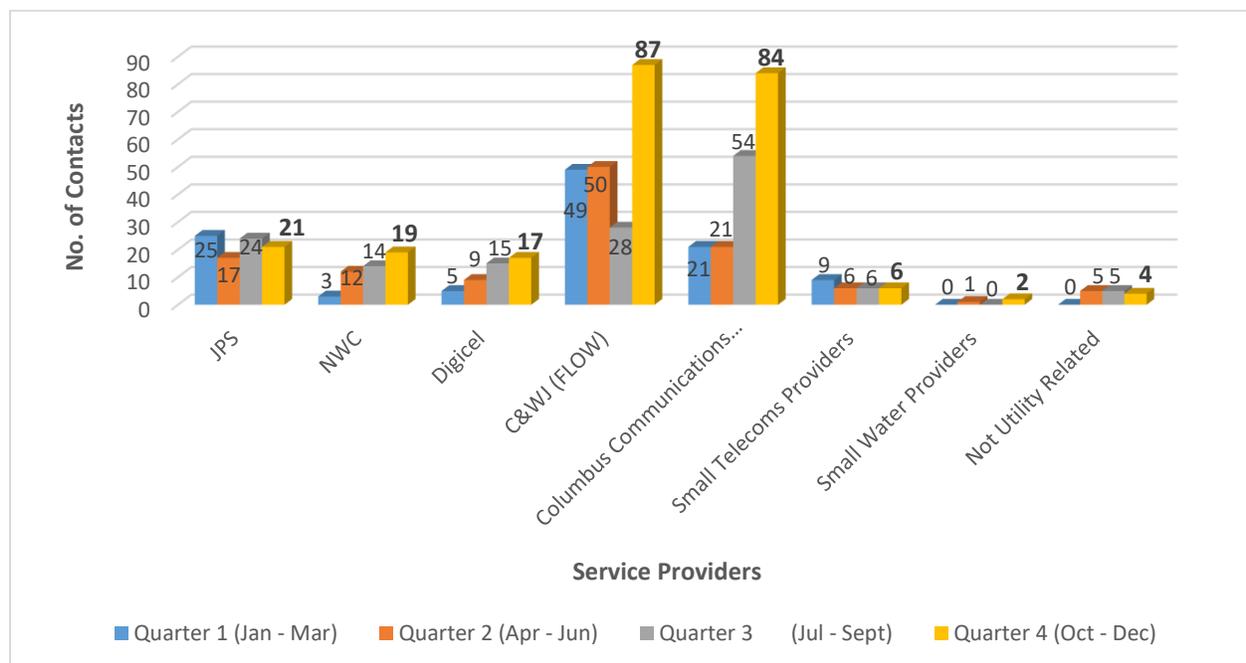
A total of 1,047 contacts were received of which 478 (46%) related to billing matters. Of the 1047 contacts, billing matters for JPS and NWC accounted for 241 (23%) and 156 (14%) respectively. C&WJ accounted for 30 (3%) while Columbus Communications (Flow) and Digicel accounted for

23 (2%) and 24 (2%) respectively. Small Water Providers and contacts in the category of “Other/Not Utility Related” accounted for the remaining 4 (1%) of billing matter contacts.

(ii) **Interruption of Service**

Service interruptions contacts, at 23%, realized an eight percentage point increase when compared with the preceding quarter. As is seen in Figure 4, C&WJ (Flow) with 87 (8%) and Columbus Communications (Flow) with 84 (8%) contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number for service interruption issues. Digicel, JPS and NWC each accounted for 2% while Dekal Wireless (small telecommunications provider) had a share of 1%.

Figure 4: Quarterly service interruption contacts



Throughout 2017, service interruption issues, at 17%, represented the second highest reason for customer contacts to the CAU. This follows the trend of the previous year and indicates a two percentage point decrease in similar contacts over 2016.

(iii) **Equipment damage**

There was a two percentage point decrease, to 2%, in equipment damage issues over the previous quarter. Twenty-five (25) related contacts were received, with JPS accounting for 24, and one (1) for services provided by Columbus Communications (Flow).

(iv) Customer Service

Poor quality of customer service, at 2%, realized a one percentage point decline when compared to the preceding quarter. Major telecommunications providers Digicel and C&WJ (Flow) each accounted for 1% of the contacts received.

(v) Disconnection

Contacts relating to disconnections remained at 2% when compared to the preceding quarter. Both JPS and NWC each had a share of 1%.

(vi) Unavailability of Service

C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) each accounted for 1% of contacts related to unavailability of service. The service providers indicated that they had no available facility with which to provide the requested service in the areas from which the contacts were received.

(vii) Redress Not Received

Two percent (2%) of the contacts received related to customers not receiving the applicable compensation from their service providers. Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 1% while the remaining 1% was shared among C&WJ (Flow), JPS and 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?

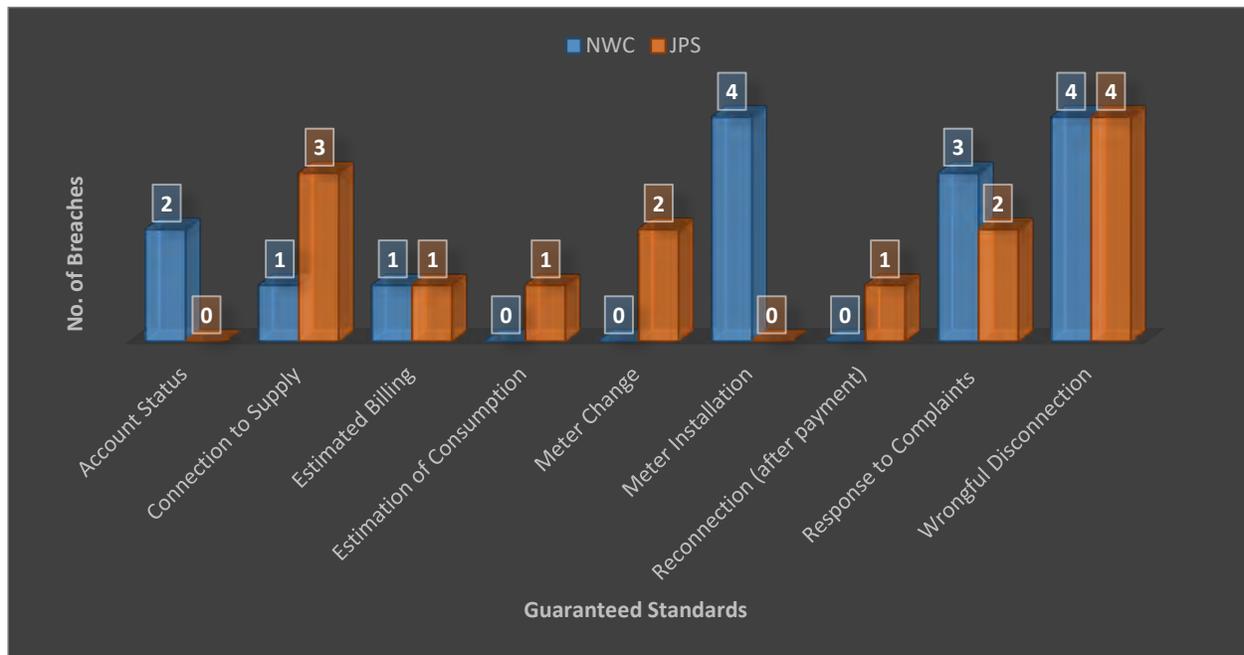
NWC: Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract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

Twenty-nine (29) contacts were received in relation to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards from customers of the JPS and the NWC. Similar to the preceding two quarters, this represented three percent (3%) of total contacts received during the review period. JPS and NWC accounted for 14 and 15 contacts respectively, relating to alleged breaches of the Guaranteed Standards.

As is seen in Figure 5, the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged Guaranteed Standards breaches for JPS related to *Wrongful Disconnection and Connection to Supply*. In the case of the NWC, the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged breaches related to *Wrongful Disconnection and Meter Installation*.

Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts

(iv) Utilities' performance on Guaranteed Standards

JPS

JPS' compliance report on its performance on the Guaranteed Standards indicated that a total of 19,241 breaches were committed during the review period; which represents a 42% increase in the number of breaches over the preceding quarter. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of \$38,935,841, all of which was paid out by way of automatic compensation.

The standards with the highest incidents of breaches related to: Estimated Bills (which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty) and Estimation of Consumption (which prescribes the methodology to be used by JPS when computing estimated consumption). These standards account for 82% and 14% of total breaches and compensatory payments respectively.

For the year 2017, JPS committed a total 75,571 breaches which attracted potential compensation of approximately \$151.8 million. Actual payments amounted to

approximately \$124 million, representing 82% of total potential amounts, which was paid out through automatic compensation. The remaining 18% of compensation not paid related to the few breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

NWC

The Guaranteed Standards Compliance Report, for the review period, indicates that there were 483 breaches, representing a 28% decline in the number of breaches over the preceding period. These 483 breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$1,535,416.48 while actual payments amounted to \$1,135,642.16, representing 74% of total potential payments, which were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 26% 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, WGS 1 – Access and WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading. These represented 59% and 18% and 15% of total breaches respectively.

In 2017, the NWC committed a total of 2,561 breaches of the Guaranteed Standards which attracted potential compensation of approximately \$8.1 million. Actual payments amounted to approximately \$3.84 million, representing 47% of total potential amounts with the remaining 53% not being paid as the required claim forms were not submitted.

For the NWC, WGS 10a - Meter Readings (at 23%), WGS 8 – Repair and Replacement of Meters (at 21%), WGS 10(b) – Exceptional Meter Reading (at 19%) and WGS 1 – Access (at 18%) accounted for the highest incidents of breaches throughout 2017. Combined, these three standards represented 80% of total breaches and 78% of total potential compensation.

JPS and NWC attained overall compliance ratings of approximately 95% and 96% on their performance against the Guaranteed Standards, respectively. These compliance ratings indicate that both providers are generally providing the level of service prescribed.

For the JPS and NWC, the compliance ratings are assessed based on their performance in taking action to remedy a breach within the specified timeline. Both providers are therefore required to collect data on all incidents of breaches and measure their performance against the corrective action taken, as is stipulated by each standard. Accordingly, based on the 2017 reports, JPS in 95% and NWC in 96% of the incidents of breaches were compliant, in that the necessary corrective action was taken.

Chapter 4: Customer Contact Centre/Call Centre Performance Reports

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

Table 3: NWC's Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	KPI Definition	Performance
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds ²	74%
<i>Maximum Delay</i>	Maximum time that a caller waited in queue	Eleven minutes and twenty-eight seconds (11:28)
<i>Average Length of Calls (Call Handle Time)</i>	Average Length of Calls	Two minutes and twenty-one seconds (2:21)
<i>Percentage of Abandon Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	13%

JPS:

The report received from JPS on its performance against the Quality of Service Standard which relates to Call Centre Responsiveness (EOS 10), indicates a compliance rating of 94.5%. This standard measures the percentage of calls that are answered within 20 seconds.

² This represents the measure used by the NWC

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 58.7% compliance rating in meeting this standard. The Company has advised that it will be implementing measures to ensure that its compliance rating improves.

NWC:

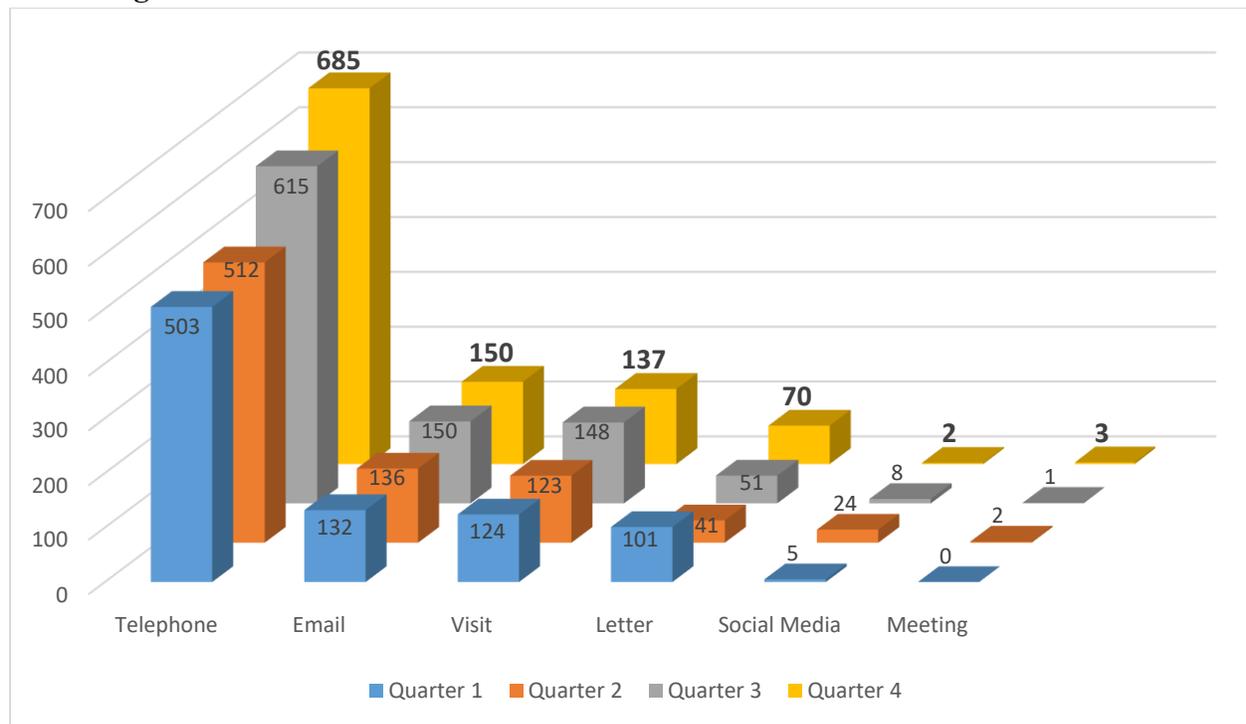
For the NWC, its Performance Target provides for 12 hours advance notification of planned service interruptions of a duration of no more than 4 hours. However, where a planned interruption is expected to be for more than four hours, the NWC is required to give an advanced notice of at least 24 hours.

Based on a review of the information received, the NWC is compliant with this standard as it provided at least 24 hours' advance notice prior to disruptions of a duration greater than 4 hours.

Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

The telephone, at 65% of the total contacts, continued to be the most frequently used method for customer contact with the CAU. Emails, visits and letter represented 14%, 13% and 7% of total contacts respectively. Social media and outreach meetings accounted for the remaining 1% of contacts. Figure 6 provides further details.

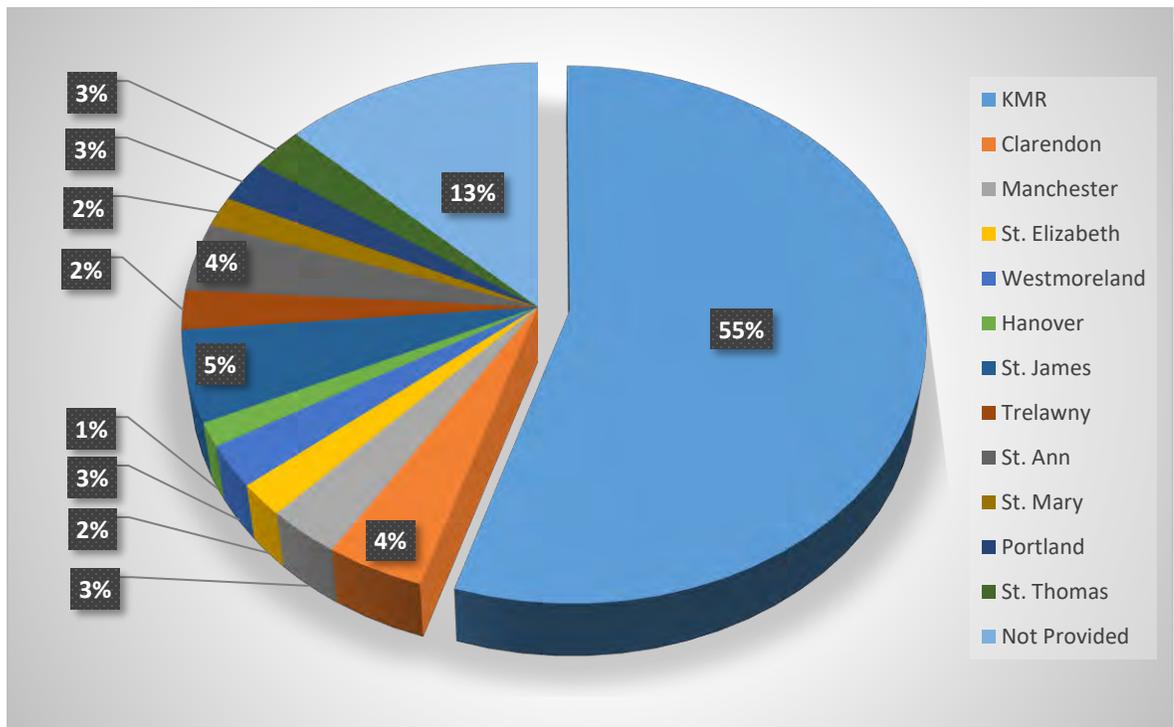
Figure 6: Methods of Contact



Geographical Distribution of Contacts

The Kingston Metropolitan Region (KMR) at 55%, which represents a six percentage point decline when compared to the preceding quarter, continued to account for the highest number of total contacts. At 5%, St. James accounted for the second highest number of total contacts. Clarendon and St. Ann followed with 4% each while Manchester, Westmoreland, and Portland each had a share of 3%. The remaining parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Thirteen percent (13%) of the contacts received provided no information on their location/parish or the information was not recorded. Details are provided in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Geographic Distribution of Contacts



Chapter 6: Appeals Performance

(i) Closure of Appeals³

Eight (8) appeals were closed over the reporting period. Of those closed, seventy-five percent (75%) were in favour of the service providers, while the remaining twenty-five percent (25%) was shared between those resolved in the customer's favour and those for which a compromise was reached.

All eight closed appeals were resolved within the OUR's-established standard of sixty (65) working days.

(ii) Outstanding Appeals⁴

Nine (9) appeals remained outstanding at the end of the review period, in that they exceeded the established 65 business days for resolution. Of these appeals, four (4) are awaiting responses from the service providers while the remaining five (5) are for action to be taken by the CAU/OUR.

Of the nine outstanding appeals, JPS accounted for five (5) equipment damage, one (1) property damage and one (1) billing related matter. The NWC accounted for the two (2) remaining outstanding appeal which are billing related.

Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Of the sixteen (16) new appeals which were accepted for investigation, 14 provider responses were due at the end of the review period. All 14 responses due were received with ten (10) being within the established 30 working days' timeline.

Twelve (12) of the 14 appeals for which all relevant information was received were resolved within the 65 working days' timeline. Similar to the preceding quarter, this indicates a resolution rate of 86%. Further details on the CAU's performance on some key appeals process activity are provided in Table 9.

³ Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 7

⁴ Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 8

Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

(i) Credits/Compensation

An amount of \$50,923.18 was secured for utility customers through our appeals process, during the review period. NWC, at 83%, accounted for the greatest share of the credits secured with Digicel accounted for the remaining 17%.

For the calendar year 2017, the total amounts secured for utility consumers was \$1,543,876.97. JPS and NWC accounted for 18% and 80% of total credits respectively with the remaining 2% being secured from C&WJ (FLOW) and Columbus Communications (Flow).

(ii) Public Consultations for Small Water and Sewerage Providers

During the review period, the CAU participated in the public consultations related to tariff applications received from Can Cara Development Ltd. (CDL) and Landmark Developers Ltd. (LDL). The application from CDL was for an increase in rates for water and sewerage services for its customers in St. Catherine and Montego Bay. The application from LDL was for rates to be determined for sewerage service provided to Liberty Estates in St. Mary.

The main issues raised by customers at the meetings related to: poor management of lift stations; service interruptions; disconnection of sewer mains; repairs, replacements and road restoration; and customer service practices.

In an effort to resolve the issues highlighted at the meetings, both CDL and LDL were directed to develop and document processes and procedures for each of the issues raised. The providers are to submit all documents within six (6) months of their respective Determination Notices which were issued in 2018 January.

The OUR intends to monitor to ensure that both providers operate within the confines of the documented procedures so as to ensure that customers are provided with an acceptable level of service.

List of Tables 2017 October - December

Table 4: 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	Digisplay	Internet	Mobile				
A	Contacts for the Quarter														
(i)	New Appeals	10	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
(ii)	New Complaints	30	18	12	24	9	6	10	1	8	6	0	0	4	128
(iii)	New Enquires	25	23	1	2	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	57
(iv)	New Opinions	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(v)	New Referrals	304	203	28	76	6	68	62	6	29	39	10	3	11	845
	Total Contacts	369	250	41	102	16	75	73	7	39	46	10	4	15	1047
B	Closure/Resolution of Appeals:														
(i)	Mutually Resolved/Compromise	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Customer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(iii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Total Closures	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
C	Total Appeals from Previous Periods:														
	Outstanding Appeals with OUR														
(i)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
(ii)	Outstanding Appeals with Utility (Awaiting Responses)	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Total Outstanding Appeals	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9

Table 5: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers								Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	Columbus Communications (Flow)	C&WJ (FLOW)	Small Telecoms Providers (Dekal Wireless)	Small Water Providers (CanCara, DEML, St. Jago Hills)	OUR/Other (not utility related)	
Billing Matters	241	156	24	23	30	0	1	3	478
Broken Main	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Customer Service	0	5	12	4	7	0	0	0	28
Defective Street Lights	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Disconnection	11	8	0	0	4	1	0	0	24
DigiPlay	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Equipment Damage	24	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	25
Guaranteed Standards	14	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
Guaranteed Standards Query	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Health & Safety	10	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	12
Illegal Connections	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Interruption of Service	21	19	17	84	87	6	2	4	240
Irregular Supply	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Leak at Meter	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Metering	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Number Portability	0	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	6
Other	10	4	11	1	6	0	0	6	38
Payment Arrangement	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Phone Cards	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Poor Service Quality	3	4	4	5	5	1	0	0	22
Property Damage	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
RAMI Service Connection & CDU		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reconnection	2	1	1		1	0	0	0	5
Redress not Received	1	2	3	6	5	0	0	0	17
Removal of Utility Pole	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Security Deposit		0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Service Connection	5	0	1	7	2	1	0	0	16
Unable to get through to Provider	0	0	5	0		0	0	0	5
Unavailability of Service - No Facility	0	2	4	15	8	1	1	1	32
Total	369	250	92	148	159	10	4	15	1047

Table 6: Distribution of Contacts January – December 2017

Complaint Category	Review Periods (2017)				
	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sept	Curent Quarter (Oct. - Dec.)	Total (Jan - Dec 2017)
Billing Matters	417	411	477	478	1783
Broken Main	4	1	5	6	16
Customer Service	18	0	25	28	71
Defective Street Lights	3	2	5	4	14
Digiplay	0	14	9	3	26
Disconnection	32	34	18	24	108
Equipment Damage	25	21	35	25	106
Guaranteed Standards	28	27	29	29	113
Guaranteed Standards Query	10	3	9	4	26
Health & Safety	5	6	14	12	37
Illegal Connections	7	7	7	7	28
Interruption of Service	112	121	146	240	619
Irregular Supply	5	9	7	15	36
Leak at Meter	2	7	9	5	23
Metering	11	7	5	5	28
Number Portability	7	3	8	6	24
Other	104	85	62	38	289
Payment Arrangement	4	0	8	4	16
Phone Cards	2	7	3	3	15
Poor Service Quality	5	18	20	22	65
Property Damage	5	4	3	7	19
RAMI Service Connection & CDU	1	2	1	0	4
Reconnection	10	3	10	5	28
Redress not Received	12	13	15	17	57
Removal of Pole	0	0	3	4	7
Security Deposit	0	1	0	3	4
Service Connection	14	14	18	16	62
Unable to get through to Service Provider	4	0	0	5	9
Unavailability of Service	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>90</u>
Total	865	838	973	1047	3723

Table 7: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Complaint Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matter	1	3	4
Equipment Damage	4	0	4
Total	5	3	8

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Table 8: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Complaint Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	1	2	3
Equipment Damage	5	0	5
Property Damage	1	0	1
Total	7	2	9

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	81%	Thirteen (13) of the 16 new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within 5 business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	88%	Fourteen (14) of the 16 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	86%	Fourteen (14) provider responses were received for which twelve (12) final responses were prepared and dispatched within the established timeline.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Definition Of Terms Used In Documenting Customer Contacts

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

Appendix 2: Statement on Confidentiality of Telecommunications Service Provider Information

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

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

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

Appendix 3: Appeals Process

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

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

Appendix 4: CAU Internal Performance Standards

Process Timeline for Equipment Damage Appeals

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

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

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

Recommended Service Levels

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

Appendix 5: Process Timelines for NWC Appeals

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

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

Other Appeals Activities:

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

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

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

Recommended Service Levels

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 6: List of Acronyms

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

- OUR - Office of Utilities Regulation
- OURIC - Office of Utilities Regulation Information Centre
- The Office - The Director General and both Deputy Directors General