

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OUR sees over 50% Increase in Customer Contacts in 2020

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2021 April 28): The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) recorded a 51% increase in customer complaints in 2020 compared to 2019.

There were 6,345 contacts during the year, compared to 4,190 in the prior year.

Matters pertaining to the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) received the highest number of complaints when compared to other utility companies, as indicated in the table below. There were 2,448 complaints about JPS in 2020, up from 1,571 in 2019, registering a 56% increase. The National Water Commission (NWC) received the second highest number of complaints: 1,253 in 2020, compared to 984 in 2019, a 27% increase over the year.

Table: Contact Summary January - December 2020 vs 2019

Service Providers	Review Periods				Total 2020	Total 2019	Change	% Change
	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sept	Oct - Dec				
JPS	303	898	740	507	2448	1571	877	56%
NWC	234	375	367	277	1253	984	269	27%
C&WJ (FLOW)	268	357	301	241	1167	713	454	64%
Columbus Communications (Flow)	115	181	246	337	879	486	393	81%
Digicel	71	70	76	80	297	236	61	26%
Small Telecommunications Providers	8	11	5	3	27	41	-14	-34%
Small Water Providers	5	11	3	2	21	42	-21	-50%
Other/ Not Utility Provider Related	29	71	82	71	253	117	136	116%
Total	1033	1974	1820	1518	6345	4190	2155	51%

Billing matters accounted for 49% of the contacts during the year, and reflected a 61% increase over 2019 as there were 3,109 complaints received regarding billing in 2020, compared to 1,927 in 2019. JPS and NWC accounted for the highest billing related complaints.

The total sum secured for some utility consumers through the intervention of OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit in 2020 was \$59,261,019. JPS accounted for 98% of this amount, while the remaining 2% of credits was shared among C&WJ, Columbus Communications (Flow), Digicel and the NWC.

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The data are contained in the OUR's Quarterly Performance Report for the 2020 October – December period.

During this quarter, there was a general decline in complaints over the prior quarter. The OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) received 1,518 contacts, which represents a 17% decrease over the preceding period. The data showed decreases in some categories of customer contact, compared to the preceding period, with the most significant relating to: Service Connection (-46%), Billing Matters (-32%), Terms and Conditions of Service (-30%) and Disconnection (-26%).

The OUR's latest Quarterly Performance Report can be found on its website: www.our.org.jm

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