



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

“Fifteen Years Of Effective Regulation”

Fifteen years ago the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) began its service to the people of Jamaica.

The Office has had many challenges over the years but first and foremost it has scored many victories in the public's interest. It has managed a liberalised telecommunications market thus facilitating the entrant of new players. It has also recommended the granting of over 400 telecoms licences. More than US\$1 billion has been invested in the sector which speaks to the confidence investors have in the regulatory framework and the regulator's conduct.

In the area of electricity, OUR oversaw the transition of the then state-owned electricity provider to private ownership and is now managing the project to establish 480MW of new generating capacity for load growth and to replace ageing inefficient plants. Provision has also been made for small renewable energy suppliers to sell their excess capacity to the grid.

Good things have also flowed in the water sector with the establishment of cost based tariffs within a regulatory framework which sets out targets, standards and reporting requirements. A mains replacement programme funded by the K-factor initiative is designed to reduce the level of non-revenue water thus resulting in stable tariffs but increased revenue for the state run water provider.

The independence of the Office of Utilities Regulation was challenged in previous years; however, the organisation was vindicated by the highest court (Privy Council) thus re-affirming its independence.

In continuing to act in the public's interest, the OUR has sought to protect consumers in various ways. Having recognised the need for consumer advocacy, the Office established over 10 years ago, the independent consumer advocacy group known as the Consumer Advisory Committee on Utilities (CACU). The primary aim of CACU is to make representation to the regulator on behalf of the consumer.

Through various mechanisms, the regulator has saved the Jamaican utility consumer over \$42 billion. This has been achieved through the tariff review and claims revision processes. With the price cap period still continuing, consumers are to benefit from even more savings. Additionally, as a result of its efforts through the appeals handling process, amounts averaging \$6 million per annum have been credited to utility customers' accounts.

As we look forward to another 15 years and more, the Office of Utilities Regulation will continue to live up to its mission of contributing to national development by creating an environment for the efficient delivery of reliable and affordable utility services to the customer whilst ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investments.

We promise to continue regulating utilities for the benefit of all.



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TELECOMMUNICATIONS ELECTRICITY TRANSPORT WATER & SEWERAGE

Committed To National Development

Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All