



INSIDE THE OUR

Office of Utilities Regulation
Regulating Utilities For The Benefit Of All



OCTOBER 2014

WHAT'S NEW



OUR Invites Applications for Number Portability Services

As plans advance for the introduction of Number Portability, the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has invited entities interested in a Telecommunications Service Provider Licence to provide Number Portability Administration Services to submit their applications.

Number Portability falls under the remit of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining and under the Telecommunications Act, it is the Minister who places the obligation on telecommunications providers to provide Number Portability services. However, section 37(1) of the Telecommunications Act 2000, vests the OUR with the responsibility to advise the Minister on the making of rules imposing on public telecommunications carriers the responsibility to offer Number Portability. The Minister has set a target date of May 31, 2015 for its implementation.

The successful applicant, as the Number Portability Administrator, will operate a Number Portability Central Reference Database and an automated Order Handling process for inter-operator communications. That entity will also manage and coordinate activities related to number portability in accordance with the industry code of practice and operational guidelines for the number portability process, to facilitate the provision of number portability service by public telecommunications carriers in Jamaica.

What is Number Portability?

Number Portability will mean that consumers will be able to retain their existing telephone numbers across networks—choosing a service provider based on service, quality, and price, rather than on a desire to retain a particular telephone number. Consumers will be able to change service providers while avoiding the inconvenience, costs and risks associated with changing numbers. Number Portability will promote competition by eliminating real or perceived barriers to customers switching service providers, making it easier for entry into the market by new players.



IXP Equipment: The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) staff members (l-r) Andrew Williams, (Database Developer); Otis Anderson (Acting IT Manager) and Donovan Smith, (Acting I.T. Director) setting up the IXP equipment before sending to E-Government, which is the site hosting the IXP equipment.

Jamaica Internet Exchange Point (IXP)

What is it?

An IXP allows local Internet service providers to exchange Internet traffic between their networks at a reduced cost. Currently, all Jamaican Internet traffic is routed through the United States, which comes at an extra cost to the country.

BENEFITS of an IXP

- Two primary advantages for participant Internet Service Providers (ISP) and their members are lower costs and improved quality of service.
- A local IXP reduces the number of network hops to exchange traffic. Without a local IXP all inter ISP traffic whose source and destination was Jamaica, has to traverse from here to USA and then back before it can be delivered. This utilized expensive International under-sea fiber optic bandwidth to and from USA making data delivery expensive. It is cheaper, faster and more reliable than the traditional way of exchanging traffic outside of the country.
- An IXP significantly reduces network latency by eliminating the need for domestic-bound traffic to be routed via international links before being delivered.
- The IXP also prevents sensitive local traffic such as banking traffic from crossing international borders.
- Local institutions and economic sector can incorporate the IXP into the delivery of their services. In Kenya, for instance, the Kenya Internet Exchange Point (KIXP) has increased the speed at which Kenyans can access online tax and customs services offered by the Kenya Revenue Authority. In Nigeria, the presence of the Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN) incentivized financial institutions to begin hosting their online banking platforms locally.
- An IXP also can be a convenient hub for hosting critical infrastructure within a country: it is a place where many different organizations can come together to interconnect technologies. Practically anybody who relies on network traffic (telecoms operators, access providers, social networks, publishers, broadcasters, Internet content providers) can use this shared service platform where traffic flows faster and more efficiently.

COMING SOON... JPS Rate Determination



In accordance with the Amended and Restated All-Island Electric Licence 2011, the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) filed its application for new non-fuel tariff rates on April 9, 2014. The current non-fuel tariff rates, fixed by the OUR effective October 1, 2009 are set to expire upon approval of the new rates. To obtain new non-fuel tariff rates the Licence stipulates that JPS must submit a filing with the OUR by the succeeding fifth anniversary of the last submission.

The OUR's rate determination process is designed to review and determine the rate for a given service. The process begins with pre-tariff consultations and ends with submission for gazetting. During the process of arriving at the rate determination, the OUR identified key tariff issues, prepared position papers; reviewed utility position papers and submissions, conducted pre-application consultation, reviewed the tariff application, conducted research/ benchmarking, reviewed the draft determination, and submitted it for gazetting.

In this case the OUR received and acknowledged JPS' application on April 9, 2014 and following an initial review and the acceptance of filing there were two weeks of islandwide consultations. The consultations served the purpose of: increasing public awareness of the elements of the utility's tariff application; allowing the utility involved to present its positions regarding new and critical components of the application; clarifying and informing the public as to the role of the stakeholders and the processes involved in arriving at a determination; and getting feedback from the public and other interested stakeholders on relevant elements of the application in order to inform analysis.

Approved Guaranteed Standards for NWC 2013 - 2018

DID YOU KNOW...?

...THE NWC MUST MAKE AND KEEP AN APPOINTMENT AT CUSTOMER'S REQUEST AND MUST NOTIFY CUSTOMER WITHIN REASONABLE TIME PRIOR TO APPOINTED TIME, IF THE APPOINTMENT WILL NOT BE KEPT...

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