

OUR
OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday January 25, 2013

Digicel Responds to OUR

(KINGSTON, Jamaica, Friday January 25, 2013): Digicel has responded to queries made by the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) regarding customer complaints about their inability to make calls successfully through the telecommunications provider's network.

Customers complained about calls going straight to voicemail without the call party's phone registering a ring, incurring a charge to the calling customer, without giving them the option to terminate the call.

Digicel, in response to the OUR's letter, explained that a team of technical experts, including key network suppliers had investigated all aspects of its new network and voice mail system. Under the system, implemented on December 13, 2012, calls are diverted to voicemail if the other party's device is 'engaged' at the time of the call. The device is considered 'engaged' when the recipient is on another call, starting or ending a data session, or sending and receiving SMS.

Charges are incurred once customers' calls have been connected to voicemail, regardless of whether or not they leave a message. The rate the customer is charged is dependent on the plan the customer has chosen.

The mobile provider says under the old system 30% fewer calls were reaching voicemail and pointed out that the network performance in transferring calls to the voicemail system is broadly the same before and after the introduction of the new system.

Actions and Remedies:

In their apology, Digicel said it recognised that some of the changes it implemented were not agreeable to customers and has decided to revert to the familiar voicemail welcome and retrieval greetings. They will also remove the complex tutorial.

The company has also agreed to embark on a ‘voicemail information campaign’ in the press and social media. This will include details on how to set up or disable voicemail, as well as confirm the charging policy of the voicemail system.

Time frame:

- Digicel is to implement the changes to the voicemail system by February 1, 2013.
- The voicemail information campaign will start on February 1, 2013.

The OUR thanks all customers for their vigilance in demanding quality service from their utility providers.

Background:

Digicel was given until January 24, 2013 to address customers’ concerns and was asked by the OUR to include in its response:

- The actions being taken to address the issues and what remedies are offered to the affected consumers;
- A timeframe within which normality will be restored as well as a plan of action to address such concerns to limit future occurrences;
- The company’s policy for the treatment of calls as well as the implications that such a policy has on the termination, billing and customer notification in respect of such calls.

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