

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$37 Million compensation paid out to Utility Customers 2019 April-June

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2019 September 27): The almost \$37 million payout to utility customers by utility providers between 2019 April and June, came from compensation from Guaranteed Standards breaches, or because of the intervention of the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit.

The OUR's latest Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) shows that the payout was \$36,973,011.41 for the quarter under review.

JPS's compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards performance shows that 17,205 breaches were committed, which represents a 4% decrease in the number compared to the preceding quarter. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$34.58 million, all of which was made by way of automatic compensation.

Estimated Bills (EGS 7 - which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty, where there is access to its meter), **Connection to Supply** (EGS 1 - which allows JPS five working days within which to make a simple connection) and **Reconnection** (EGS 6 - which requires that JPS restores supply within 24 hours of payment of overdue amounts) accounted for the highest incidents of breaches. These standards accounted for approximately 94%, 3% and 2% of breaches and 93%, 4% and 2% of compensatory payments, respectively.

NWC's compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards performance shows that 387 breaches were committed, representing a 27% decrease compared with the preceding period. These breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$1.34 million while actual payments were \$329,000. The actual payments represented 25% of total potential payments and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The potential payments represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted to the utility for validation.

NWC Guaranteed Standard WGS 1 - **Access** (which requires that new service connections are made within 10 working days); WGS 7 – **Meter Installation** (which stipulates that meters should be installed within 30 working days upon request) and WGS 10(a) – **Meter Reading** (which restricts the NWC from sending more than two consecutive estimates, where it has access to its meter) – were the three standards most frequently breached. These represented 80% of total breaches and 77% of potential payments.

Intervention by the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit secured \$1,053,011.41 in credits (or other forms of compensation) for utility customers. Of this, JPS, NWC and Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 86%, 12%, and 2% respectively.

The Quarterly Performance Report also includes information on: JPS and NWC Customer Contact Centre (Call Centre) Performance Reports, JPS's and NWC's Performance on Notifications of Planned Service Disruptions, and the OUR's performance on its Appeals Process for aggrieved utility customers seeking redress or investigation into their complaints.

The detailed OUR's Quarterly Performance Report for 2019 April - June can be accessed on the OUR's website: www.our.org.jm.

___END___

Contact: Gordon Brown – Public Affairs Coordinator: 876-968-6053