

O.U.R. First Regulator to Achieve ISO 9001:2008 Certification

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2015 December 9, 2015): The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has become the first Jamaican regulator to gain ISO 9001:2008 certification. The organization joins a group of respected organizations bearing this seal of certification.

The certification of conformity to the ISO 9001 Standards was presented on Tuesday, December 8, 2015 to the OUR's Director General, Albert Gordon by the Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Hon. Anthony Hylton, at the National Certification Body of Jamaica's (NCBJ's) CEO Breakfast. NCBJ is the local certification body.

In 2012, the OUR began the process of obtaining ISO certification as a validation of its Quality Management System through a process of rigorous audits, to determine its eligibility for certification. On November 19, 2015 the regulator was recommended for ISO 9001:2008 certification.

"ISO Certification for the OUR is not mission accomplished, but mission beginning. It is a continuous process, It is expected to improve our efficiency and effectiveness as an organization" said an elated OUR Director General, Albert Gordon in accepting the certificate of conformity. "Establishing and maintaining a Quality Management System has become a way of life for the OUR" said Mr Gordon. Noting that the OUR has become an evangelist for a good Quality Management System, Mr Gordon says the regulator will seek to motivate the utility companies it regulates to adopt quality management standards.

"Many organizations have begun to implement the standards and seek registration as an indication of the efficiency of their operations. Implementation of a Quality Management System (QMS) will force the organization to be disciplined in the adherence to standard operating procedures, and to ensure that these procedures are reviewed periodically to continually improve the performance of the organization," he said.

Minister Hylton, in congratulating the OUR on its achievement, challenged businesses, especially those in the micro and small business sectors to get ISO certified. He lamented that there were only forty (40) companies in Jamaica which have obtained ISO certification, and said that the low number was testimony to the fact that businesses have not yet grasped the importance of developing and maintaining world standards for their operations. Minister Hylton says he will be seeking to have his Ministry and all its agencies achieve international standards through ISO certification.

In its goal to become ISO certified, the OUR realigned the processes of the organization towards customer satisfaction, implemented process standards and audits to ensure the adherence to best practices, used a vigorous project management system to measure performance, and improved its document management and records control.

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BACKGROUND:

The NCBJ is accredited by ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) to offer internationally recognised certification to QMS Standards (ISO 9001). The certification provided by NCBJ is equivalent to all leading Certification Bodies throughout the world.

The ISO 9001:2008 QMS Standards has gained acceptance worldwide, and organizations are seeing the value in complying with its requirements. Many organizations are becoming proactive in implementing the standards and seeking registration as an indication of the efficiency of their operations.

Implementation of a Quality Management System forces a discipline of adherence to standard operating procedures, and ensures that these procedures are reviewed periodically to continually improve the performance of the organization.

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