
Office of Utilities Regulation

DIRECTIVE

DIRECTIVE TO THE JAMAICA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY LIMITED TO ADHERE
TO EXISITING BILLING QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

2021 April 30

DOCUMENT TITLE AND APPROVAL PAGE

1. DOCUMENT NUMBER: 2021/ELE/005/DIR.001

2. DOCUMENT TITLE:
Directive to Jamaica Public Service Company Limited to adhere to existing billing quality control procedures.

3. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

To direct the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited to comply with the established billing quality control measures, specifically, notifying customers of excepted readings.

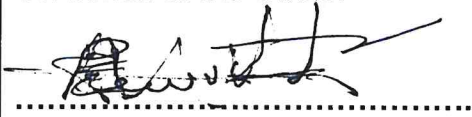
4. ANTECEDENT PUBLICATIONS

Publication Number	Publication Title	Publication Date
2020/GEN/027/REP.001	OUR's Investigation into Customer Complaints of High Billing by the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited	2020 October 8
Ele 2005/01	Decision: Enquiry into Billing System of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited	2005 February 22

5. Approval

This document is approved by the Office of Utilities Regulation and the decisions therein become effective on 2021 April 30.

On behalf of the Office:



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Ansord E. Hewitt
Director-General

Date: 2021 April 30

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

DIRECTIVE 2021/ELE/005/DIR.001

(Issued pursuant to Section 4 and 10 of the Office of Utilities Regulation Act)

IN THE MATTER OF:

THE OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION ACT

AND

THE ELECTRICITY LICENCE, 2016

AND

**THE OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION'S
INVESTIGATION INTO CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS OF
HIGH BILLING BY THE JAMAICA PUBLIC SERVICE
COMPANY LIMITED**

TO: THE JAMAICA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY LIMITED

WHEREAS:

- (1) The Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) is a company duly incorporated under the laws of Jamaica and is a licensed provider of electricity services and authorized to generate, transmit, distribute and supply electricity for public and private purposes.
- (2) Pursuant to section 4 of the Office of Utilities Regulation Act ("the OUR Act") the Office of Utilities Regulation ("OUR" or "Office") exercises regulatory authority regarding the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity.

- (3) Section 4(1) of the OUR Act also empowers the Office to carry out investigations in relation to the provision of prescribed utility services. Section 4(1) provides in part as follows:

“4(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the functions of the Office shall be to -

...

- (e) Subject to Section 8A carry out, on its own initiative or at the request of any person, such investigations in relation to the provision of prescribed utility services as will enable it to determine whether the interests of consumers are adequately protected.”*

- (4) Pursuant to section 4(2)(a) of the OUR Act, the Office may give direction to a licensee so as to ensure that the needs of the consumers are being met. Section 4(2)(a) states:

“(2) The Office may, where it considers necessary give direction to any licensee or specified organization with a view to ensuring that –

- (a) The needs of consumers of the services provided by the licensee or specified organizations are met; ...”*

- (5) Section 4(3)(b) of the OUR Act further enables the OUR to take such measures as it deems necessary to protect consumer interests. The section reads:

“(3) In the performance of its functions under this Act the Office shall undertake such measures as it considers necessary or desirable to –

...

- (b) protect the interests of consumers in relation to the supply of a prescribed utility service”*

- (6) Section 10 of the OUR Act empowers the Office to request information from a licensee in relation to its operations. Section 10(1) states:

“10. (1) The Office may require a licensee or specified organization to furnish such information or submit such returns at such intervals as the Office may require in relation to the operations of that licensee or specified organization.”

- (7) In exercise of its powers of investigation, the Office of Utilities Regulation conducted an investigation into JPS customers’ complaints of high bill/consumption since the 2020 April billing period. The finding of this investigation was issued in a document titled: *OUR’s Investigation into Customer Complaints of High Billing by the Jamaica*

Public Company Limited (Document No. 2020/GEN/027/REP.001) dated 2020 October 8 (Investigation Report).

- (8) From its investigations, the Office found that, inter alia, JPS was non-compliant with the previously issued OUR decision relating to the Exceptions Criteria, set out in the OUR's *Decision: Enquiry into Billing System of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited* (Document No. Ele 2005/01) dated 2005 February 22 (the Exceptions Criteria), which requires JPS to reject any reading that falls outside +/- 30% of average previous consumption for residential customers and stipulates that the reading should not be applied to accounts until it is confirmed to be accurate. Additionally, JPS is required to notify the affected customers of the significant variance in consumption.
- (9) It was identified during the investigation that for the period 2014 August to 2020 June, JPS had not complied with the requirement to notify customers of the significant variance in consumption.
- (10) JPS has, via email correspondence dated 2020 September 30, advised that it resumed sending notification to customers with significant variance in consumption by way of SMS messages since 2020 July.
- (11) The Office is of the view that JPS' compliance with the aforementioned billing quality control procedure might have dampened the extent of the bill shock experienced by its customers.

Based on the foregoing, and in exercise of its powers to give directions to licensees, require information and take measures, the Office **HEREBY DIRECTS** JPS:

TO SUBMIT, on a quarterly basis, an Exceptions Report which shall include data on the number of exceptions and confirmation of the method/s used to notify customers of significant variance in their consumption. The submission of the report shall commence on the first reporting period following the date of this Directive. In keeping with the established regulatory reporting requirement, the report shall be submitted within twenty (20) working days following the end of the reporting period. Accordingly, the initial report will become due twenty (20) working days following 2021 June 30.

TAKE NOTICE that failure by JPS to comply with this Directive as indicated and within the time specified herein, will render it liable to further enforcement action pursuant to sections 9 and 10 of the OUR Act with respect to any aspect of the provisions of the Directive set out above that are not complied with by the Licensee.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that this Directive becomes effective on the thirtieth (30th) day of 2021 April.

BY ORDER OF THE OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ansord E. Hewitt', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Ansord E. Hewitt
Director-General

(2021 April 30)