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# Office of Utilities Regulation

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Consumer Affairs Unit

## Quarterly Performance Report

2021 July - September

Publication Date: 2021 December 13



**OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION**

36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10

**Consumer Affairs Unit Quarterly Performance Report**

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## **The Role and Objectives of the OUR**

The Office of Utilities Regulation Act of 1995 established the Office of Utilities Regulation (**OUR**) as a body corporate. Under the Act, the OUR is charged with regulating the provision of utility services in the electricity, telecommunications and water and sewerage sectors. The objectives are to:

- Ensure that consumers of utility services enjoy an acceptable quality of service at a reasonable cost;
- Establish and maintain transparent, consistent and objective rules for the regulation of utility service providers;
- Promote the long-term efficient provision of utility services for national development consistent with Government policy;
- Provide an avenue of appeal for consumers who have grievances with the utility service providers;
- Work with other related agencies to promote a sustainable environment; and act independently and impartially.

## **The Consumer and Public Affairs Department**

Through the Consumer and Public Affairs (CPA) Department, the OUR discharges its mandate to protect utility consumers. The Consumer Affairs Unit, the Public Affairs Unit (PAU) and the OUR Information Centre (OURIC) all comprise the CPA Department. This Department is the section of the OUR that directly interfaces with utility consumers and one of its main responsibilities is to investigate appeals of decisions made by utility service providers brought by aggrieved consumers.

## **The Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU)**

Among other things, the CAU receives, records and processes utility consumer complaints and appeals, monitors trends in consumer complaints and provides the Office with advice on measures to be taken to improve consumers' welfare.

The CAU uses as a primary input to its policy development and advice to the Office, the results of analyses of the complaints received from customers about the services provided by the utility companies. Feedback from consumers at town meetings, public fora and the media are also key sources for opinions and activities of utility services.

A consumer survey which seeks consumer feedback on a range of consumer issues is conducted every 18 - 24 months. Additionally, a public education programme is pursued which includes organizing consultations with stakeholders on pertinent regulatory matters.

The PAU manages the public education programme, media relations and the website while the Information Centre (OURIC), *inter alia*, provides information in keeping with the requirements of the Access to Information Act. The OUR, through the CPA department also funds the activities of the Consumer Advisory Committee on Utilities (CACU) which was established to operate as an independent advocacy group providing critical feedback and support for consumer issues.

### **The Intent and Purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report**

The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is prepared by the Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) and provides the public with information and analysis about the contacts received from utility providers. The information includes: the number of customer contacts received over the review period; JPS and NWC's performance against the Guaranteed Standards; utilities' responsiveness to our appeals process; and the performance of the Unit against the Appeals Process timelines.

The QPR is intended to be a fair, reasonable and transparent report of the above-mentioned activities. The statistics for each reporting period is gathered from our Customer Information Database and is reflective of the contacts received from utility consumers island-wide. These contacts are received via various channels, namely: letters, telephone, walk-in, e-mails, fax and social media.

### **Methods of Calculation**

The methods of calculation used include summation, quarterly and year-on-year comparisons. The resort latterly to normalize the numbers of contacts by expressing this as per the customer base reflects our allowance for fair comparisons. Consequently, the report cites the number of contacts per 100,000 of the service provider's customer base. Even so, it is recognized that the telecommunications sector with its heterogeneous customer bases presents a peculiarity for comparison with the water and electricity utilities that have more homogenous customer bases. The information should be interpreted as a sample or statistical representation of the intake to the Unit.

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## Executive Summary

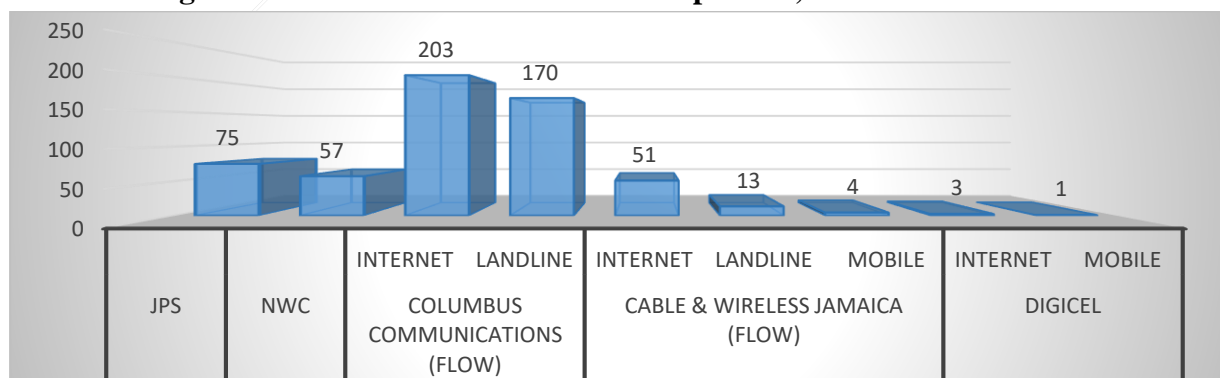
The number of contacts received by the CAU during the July – September period decreased by 23%, to 1173, when compared with the preceding period. The data shows that the most significant decreases were seen in the complaint categories of: *Disconnection* (-42%), *Billing Matters* (-33%), *Terms and Conditions of Service* (-14%), *Rebate/Refund* (-9%), and *Poor Service Quality* (-4%). The complaint category of *Interruption of Service* saw the most significant increase of 63% over the preceding period.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service provider<sup>1</sup>:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 496 (42%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 273 (23%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 107 (9%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 202 (17%)
- Digicel – 46 (4%)
- Private water and/or sewerage providers Can-Cara Development Ltd. and Runaway Bay Water Company Ltd; small telecommunications providers Dekal Wireless and Other (Not Utility Provider Related) – 49 (5%).

While JPS at 496, accounted for the most contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest number – at 248 per 100,000 – in proportion to its internet customer base.

**Figure 1: Distribution of OUR contacts per 100,000 of customer base**

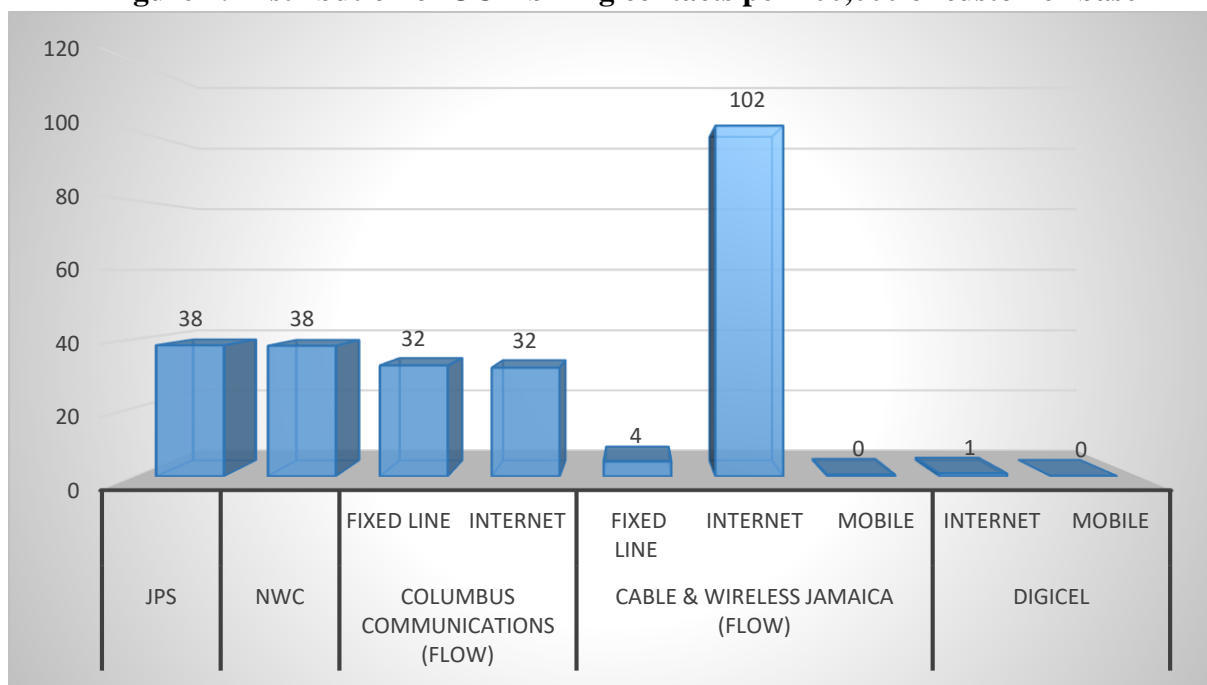


<sup>1</sup> Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 5 on page 25.

Billing matters, at 43%, continued to be the main reason utility consumers contact the CAU, representing a seven-percentage point decrease over the preceding period. JPS and NWC with 253 (22%) and 181 (15%) of contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing-related matters.

As shown in Figure 2, C&WJ (Flow) internet service, at 102, accounted for the highest number of billing-related contacts per 100,000 of its customer base. JPS and NWC each followed with 38 contacts per 100,000 of their customer bases respectively.

**Figure 2: Distribution of OUR billing contacts per 100,000 of customer base**



Service interruption issues, at 20% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact to the CAU.



## Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

### (i) Acknowledgements

Nine (9) new appeals were accepted for investigation, with JPS and NWC accounting for two (2) and seven (7) respectively. Requests for information (case letters) were sent for all new appeals accepted.

Based on the established Service Level Agreements (SLAs), both JPS and NWC agreed to acknowledge the OUR's case letters within five (5) business days. As is shown in Table 1, JPS was fully compliant while the NWC attained an 86% rating to submit their acknowledgements within the agreed timeline.

**Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)**

<i>Quarters (2021)</i>	<b>JPS</b>	<b>NWC</b>
<i>January - March</i>	100%	82%
<i>April - June</i>	100%	100%
<i>July - September</i>	100%	86%

### (ii) Response to Case Letters

Service providers are required to provide responses to case letters within 30 business days. As is seen in Table 2, JPS attained a perfect score while the NWC attained a score of 43%, having submitted only three of the seven responses within the agreed timeline.

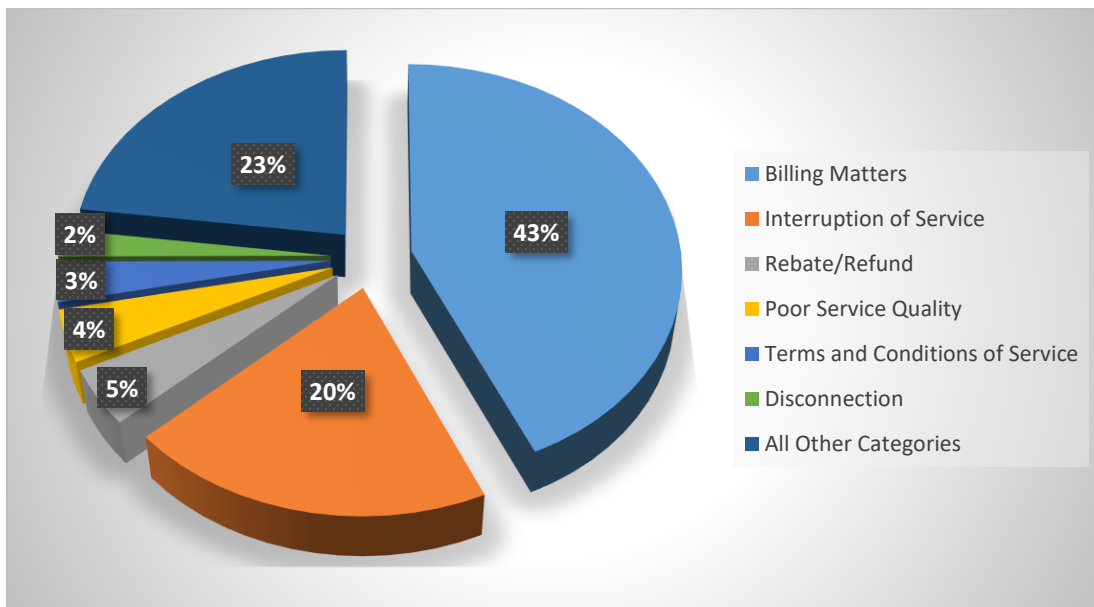
**Table 2: Response to case letters within standard (30 business days)**

<i>Quarters (2021)</i>	<b>JPS</b>	<b>NWC</b>
<i>January – March</i>	100%	60%
<i>April - June</i>	75%	100%
<i>July – September</i>	100%	43%

## Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU related to billing, interruption of service, rebate/refund, poor service quality, terms and conditions of service and disconnection. (Figure 3). Further details on all contacts distributed per category are provided in Table 6.

**Figure 3: Main Concerns**



### (i) Billing

Billing matters continued to be the main reason for customer contact, accounting for 43% of total contacts. These matters included high consumption, disputed charges, adjustments to customers' accounts and estimated billing.

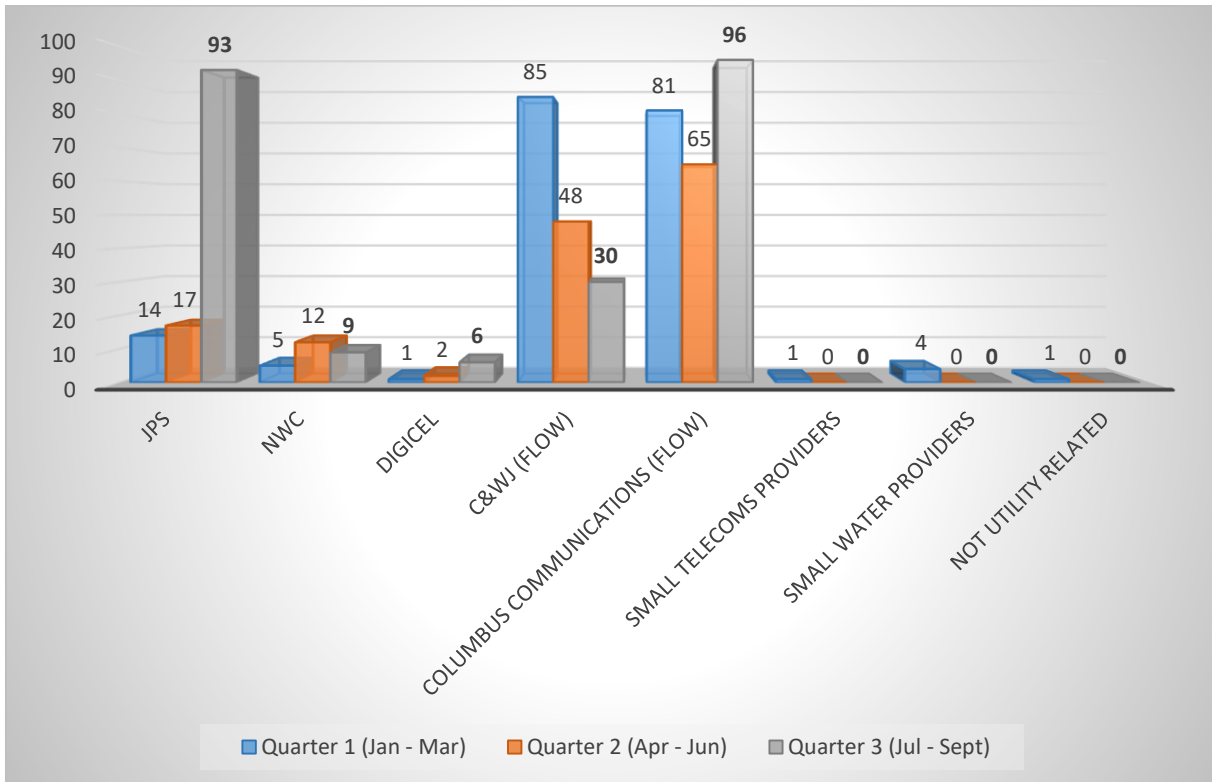
JPS and NWC continued to account for the most billing contacts with 253 (22%) and 181 (15%) respectively. Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 33 (3%) while C&WJ (Flow), Digicel, Private Water Providers and contacts not utility related, accounted for the remaining 41 (3%).

### (ii) Interruption of Service

Service interruption contacts increased by eleven-percentage points, to 20%, when compared with the preceding quarter. As seen in Figure 4, Columbus Communications (Flow) and JPS with 96

(8%) and 93 (8%) respectively, accounted for the highest number of related contacts. C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 85 (3%) with Digicel and NWC sharing the remaining 1%.

**Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts**



(iii) Rebate/Refund

Requests for rebates/refunds increased by one percentage point to 5% of total contacts, when compared to the preceding period. Columbus Communications (Flow) and C&WJ (Flow) accounted for 2% and 1% respectively. The remaining 2% was shared among JPS, NWC and Digicel.

(iv) Poor Service Quality

Contacts related to poor service quality increased by one percentage point to 4%, over the preceding period. JPS accounted for 3% while C&WJ (Flow), Columbus Communications (Flow), Digicel and NWC shared the remaining 1%.

(v) Terms and Conditions of Service

Similar to the preceding period, 3% of contacts pertained to changes made by service providers to the Terms and Conditions of Service (Contract Terms). Columbus Communication (Flow) accounted for 2% while C&WJ (Flow), Digicel, JPS and NWC shared the remaining 1%.

(vi) Disconnection

Contacts relating to disconnection decreased by one percentage point, to 2%, over the previous period. JPS accounted for 1% while Columbus Communications (Flow), C&WJ (Flow), Digicel, and NWC shared the remaining 1%.

## Chapter 3: Guaranteed Standards Performance

### (i) What are the Guaranteed Standards?

The Guaranteed Standards (GS) are performance measures that guide the provision of utility services delivered by the NWC, small water providers and the JPS. If the companies fail to honour the agreement, the affected customer is entitled to compensation, which is applied as a credit to their utility account.

### (ii) How are customers compensated?

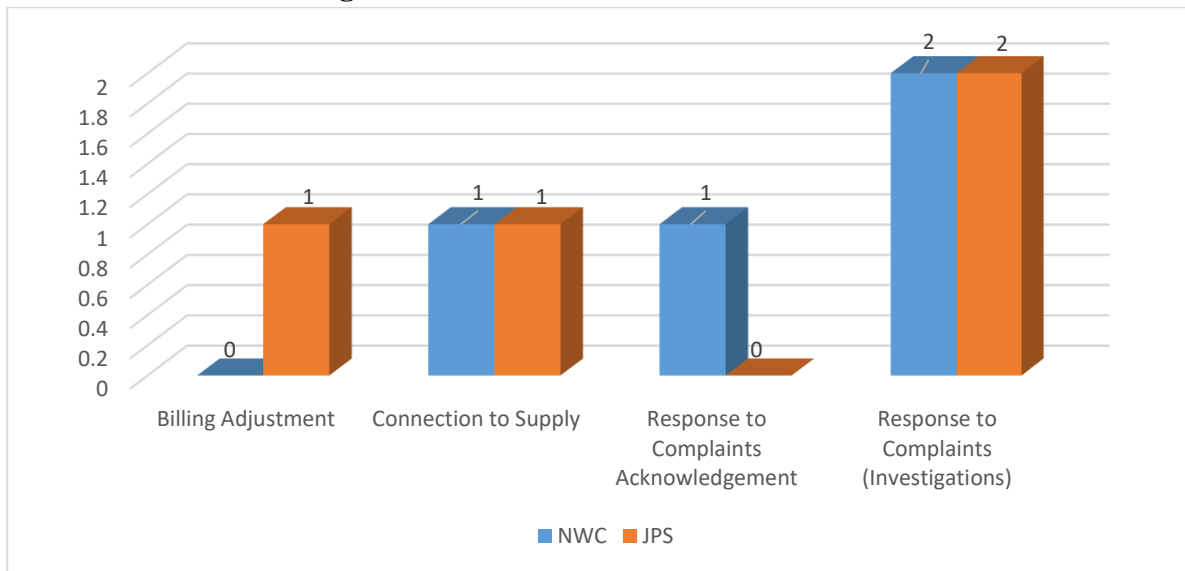
**NWC:** Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to six (6) periods of non-compliance.

**JPS:** Residential customers: equivalent to the reconnection fee; Commercial customers: four (4) times the customer charge. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to eight (8) periods of non-compliance.

### (iii) Quarterly report of breaches

Eight (8) contacts were received from JPS and NWC customers in relation to alleged breaches of the GS, representing one percent (1%) of total contacts received. JPS and NWC each accounted for four (4) contacts.

As is seen in Figure 5, *Response to Complaints* accounted for the highest number of contacts in relation to alleged breaches of the GS for both service providers. They each also had one (1) contact related to alleged breaches of *Connection to Supply*.

**Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts**

The GS reports submitted by the JPS and NWC did not reflect the alleged incidents of breaches reported to the OUR. Accordingly, no compensatory payments were made by the service providers in relation to the contacts received by the OUR regarding GS breaches.

(iv) Utilities' performance on Guaranteed Standards

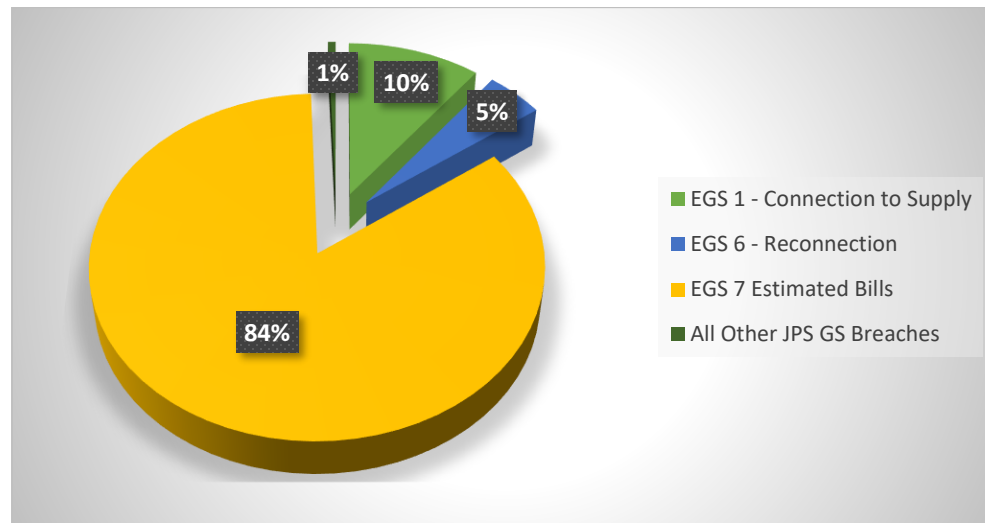
**JPS**

JPS's compliance report on its GS performance indicated that 14,960 breaches were committed during the July - September quarter; representing a 13% increase compared with the preceding period. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$33.85 million. However, no compensatory payments were made for the breaches. The OUR is aware that the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET) has responded to JPS's request for MSET to reconsider its decision regarding *force majeure* relief from the GS, resulting from the island being designated a disaster area due to the impact of Covid-19 since 2020 March. JPS has advised the OUR that based on MSET's response, it will resume making the outstanding compensation payments for GS breaches in 2021 November.

As is shown in Figure 6, *Estimated Bills* (which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty), *Reconnection* (which requires that JPS

restores supply within 24 hours of payment of overdue amounts) and *Connection to Supply* (which prescribes the time within which JPS is to make a simple connection) accounted for the highest incidents of breaches. These standards accounted for approximately 99% of breaches and compensatory payments, respectively.

**Figure 6: JPS Reported GS Breaches**



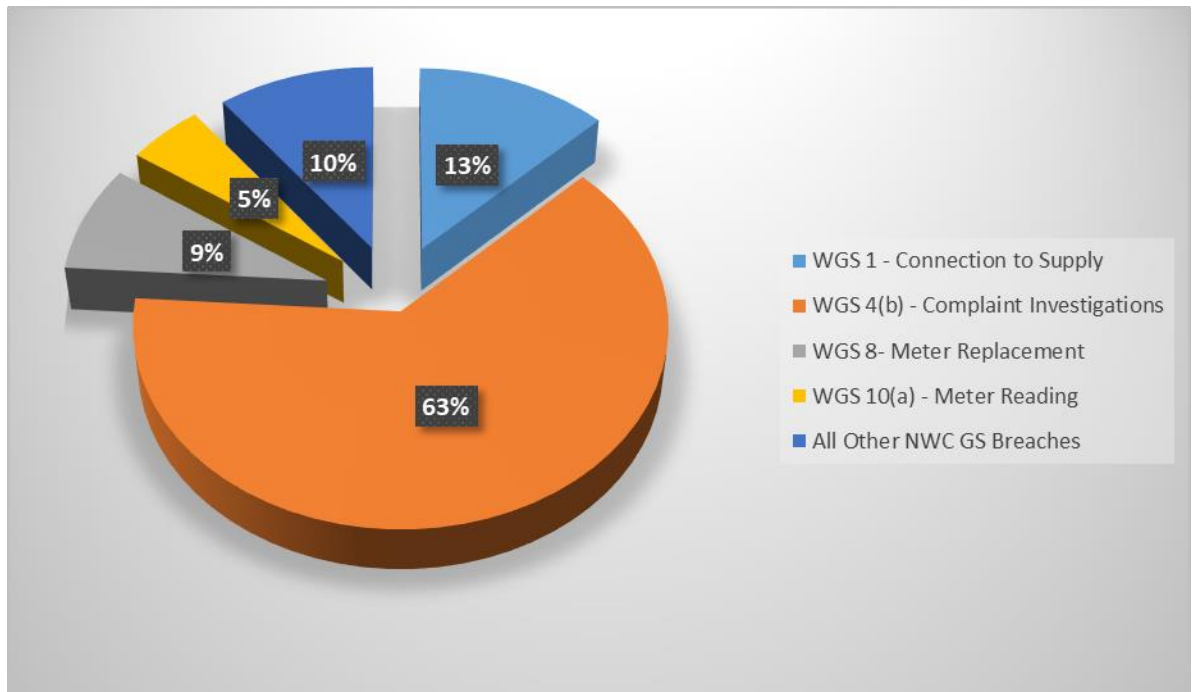
### **NWC**

The NWC's Guaranteed Standards compliance report for the review period indicates that the number of breaches committed decreased by 15%, to 1,031, when compared with the preceding period. These breaches had a potential pay-out of approximately \$4.09 million while actual payments amounted to approximately \$643,606.96 or 16% of total potential payments and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 84% of potential payments not made, represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

As shown in Figure 7, the standards with the highest incidents of breaches for the NWC were: WGS 4 (b) – Complaint Investigations (which requires that NWC completes investigations and responds or provides an update within 30 working days of receipt of a complaint); WGS 1 – Access/Service Connection (which requires NWC to connect a new supply within 10 working days); WGS 8 - Meter Repair/Replacement (which stipulated that defective meters are to be verified, repaired/replaced within 20 working

days); and WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading ((which restricts NWC from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty). These four (4) standards represented 90% of total breaches and 89% of total potential payments.

**Figure 7: NWC Reported GS Breaches**





## Chapter 4: Customer Contact Centre/Call Centre Performance Reports

In recognition of the important role of Customer Contact Centres (Call Centres) in customer service delivery, the OUR has deemed it necessary to include a report on the performance of the JPS and NWC Call Centres. Here, focus is placed on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that indicate general customer satisfaction levels for NWC and JPS in this area.

### NWC:

The NWC Call Centre report for the review period indicated a mixture of improvement and decline in performance when compared with the preceding period. As seen in Table 3, Average Talk Time decreased by one minute and ten seconds, the Percentage of Abandoned Calls decreased by nine percentage points and Percentage Service Level increased by ten percentage points. However, it took call centre agents an additional 0:4:24 to complete handling calls and customers waited an additional 0:16:15 in queue to speak with a call centre agent.

**Table 3: NWC's Call Centre Performance**

#### Performance 2021

<i>KPIs</i>	<b>KPI Definition</b>	<b>Apr-Jun</b>	<b>Jul-Sept</b>
<i>Average Speed of Answer</i>	Average time for answering calls	Not provided	<b>0:01:39</b>
<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:06:51	<b>0:05:41</b>
<i>Average Length of Calls (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time	0:06:51	<b>0:11:15</b>
<i>Maximum Delay</i>	Maximum time that caller waited in queue	0:18:10	<b>0:34:25</b>

<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	25%	<b>16%</b>
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds	56%	<b>66%</b>

**JPS:**

The review of JPS' Call Centre report for the review period indicate a slight improvement in performance for the standards on which the company is required to submit reports, when compared to the preceding period. As seen in Table 4, *Average Speed of Answer* and *Average Handle Time* declined by 50 seconds and three seconds respectively. Improvements were also seen in the *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* which fell by three percentage points, to 35%, and *Percentage Service Level* which increased by eight percentage points to 41%. However, it took Call Centre agents an additional 18 seconds on average, to talk with customers during the review period.

While the slight improvement in Call Centre performance during the review is noted, JPS's performance over the three periods in 2021 continues to indicate that the company is not attaining the performance targets established for its Call Centre.

In addition, JPS has been asked to confirm the performance for *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* and *Service Level Answer* for the 2021 January to March period. This request is due to identified inconsistencies with the summary information for all quarters provided in 2021 November and the January to March performance report submitted in 2021 April.

**Table 4: JPS Call Centre Performance***Performance 2021*

<i>KPIs</i>	KPI Definition	Jan - Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept
<i>Average Speed of Answer</i>	Average time for answering calls <sup>2</sup>	0:04:00	0:06:61	0:06:12

<sup>2</sup> Within 20 seconds, as per the international standard

<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:05:50	0:06:11	0:06:29
<i>Average Length of Calls (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time <sup>3</sup>	0:07:31	0:07:45	0:07:42
<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced <sup>4</sup>	17%	38%	35%
<i>Service Level Answer</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds <sup>5</sup>	65%	33%	41%

<sup>3</sup> Goal of no more than 5 minutes set by JPS

<sup>4</sup> Less than or equal to 8%

<sup>5</sup> Goal of 82% set by JPS

## Chapter 5: Notification of Planned Outages Report

As part of their agreed Quality of Service Standards, the JPS and NWC are required to submit reports relating to their performance in notifying customers within a specified timeline about planned outages. This standard is a part of the Overall Standards for JPS (EOS 1) and the Performance Targets for the NWC.

### **JPS:**

JPS has failed to submit its EOS 1 report for the review period within the established timeline for the inclusion of a summary report. In keeping with the established reporting requirements, JPS's EOS 1 report was due on 2021 November 1, with an extended deadline to 2021 November 15.

### **NWC:**

The NWC performance targets provide for a 98% attainment rate for 12 hours' advance notification of planned service interruptions of a duration of no more than 4 hours. However, where a planned interruption is expected to be for more than four hours, the NWC is required to give advanced notice of at least 24 hours, at a 90% attainment rate.

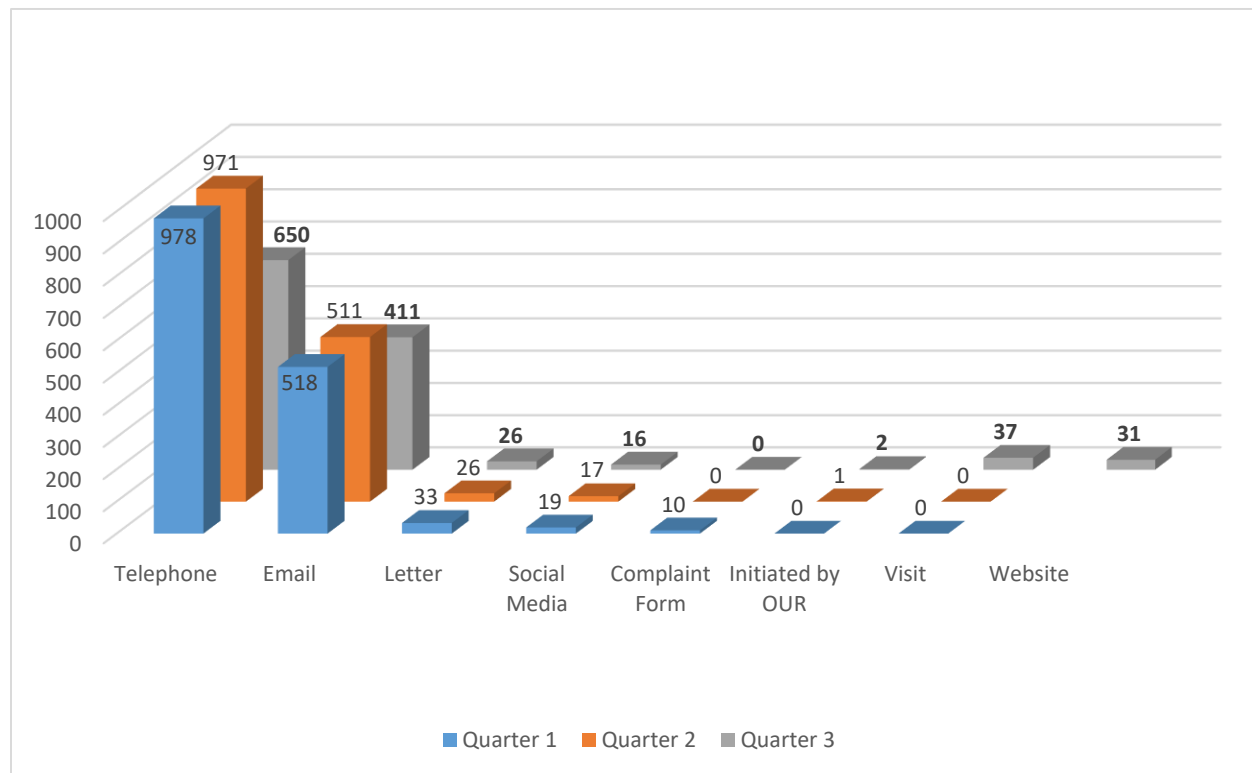
Based on NWC's notifications to the public, the compliance rating was met as the two (2) advisories issued during the review period provided at least 12 hours' advanced notification of planned outages of a duration of no more than 4 hours.

For notifications greater than four hours, the NWC attained a compliance rating of 73% to provide at least 24 hours' advance notice, which was 17% short of the established 90% compliance target. Of the 26 related notifications received, 19 complied with the stated target.

## Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

At 55%, the telephone continued to be the most frequently used method for customers contacting the OUR. Emails followed with 35% while visits and the website each accounted for 3%. Letters and social media contacts accounted for 3% and 1% respectively. Figure 8 provides further details.

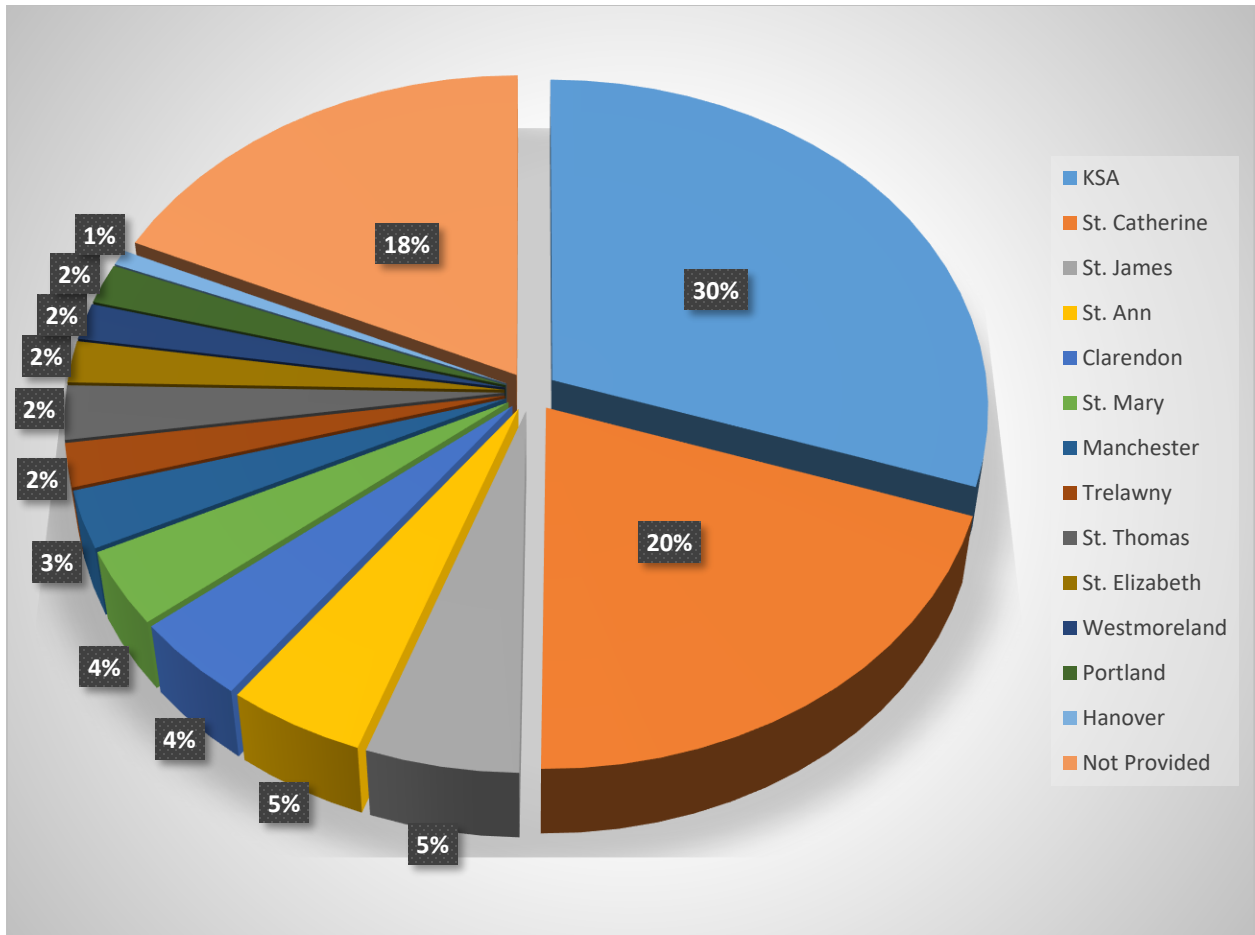
**Figure 8: Methods of Contact**



### Geographical Distribution of Contacts

Kingston and St. Andrew, at 30%, continued to account for the highest number of total contacts. St. Catherine followed with 20%, while St. James and St. Ann each accounted for 5% of contacts. Clarendon and St. Mary each recorded 4% and Manchester accounted for 3%. All other parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Eighteen percent (18%) of the contacts received provided no information on their location/parish or the information was not recorded. Details are provided in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Geographic Distribution of Contacts**



## Chapter 6: Appeals Performance

### (i) Closure of Appeals <sup>6</sup>

The OUR closed eleven (11) appeals during the review period. Of these, ten (or 91%) were resolved in favour of the service provider while a compromise was reached for one (or 9%). Eight (or 73%) of the closed appeals were resolved within the established sixty-five (65) working days while 2 (27%) exceeded the established timeline.

### (ii) Outstanding Appeals<sup>7</sup>

At the end of the review period, six (6) appeals remained outstanding, in that they exceeded the established 65 business days for resolution. Four of the outstanding appeals were awaiting OUR's action while the remaining two are awaiting responses from the NWC.

JPS accounts for four (4) of the outstanding appeals which relate to two (2) cases of equipment damage, one (1) property damage and one (1) billing related matter. The two (2) outstanding NWC appeals are billing matters.

### Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Of the nine (9) new appeals that were accepted for investigation, all relevant information for five (5) were received within the established timeline; two (2) responses were received outside of the established timeline while the response for the remaining two (2) appeals are outstanding.

All relevant information was received for seven (7) appeals, for which final decisions were made and communicated to customers (by way of Final Letters) for six (or 86%) within the established 65 working days. Further details on the CAU's performance on some key Appeals Process activities are provided in Table 9, Appendix I.

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<sup>6</sup> Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 7 on page 26

<sup>7</sup> Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 87 on page 26

## Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

### (i) Credits/Compensation

During the review period, \$2,999.49 was secured for a Columbus Communications (Flow) customer resulting from the intervention of the Consumer Affairs Unit.

### (ii) Implementation of First Call Resolution Rate for JPS and NWC Call Centres Extended

The OUR, in its Determination Notice titled *Enhancing Customer Satisfaction through Customer Contact Centre Standards for the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited and the National Water Commission*, decided that both service providers must include First Call Resolution Rate (FCR) in the standards that are measured and reported on. Both service providers were required to make the necessary preparations for the implementation of FCR on 2021 October 1.

However, based on discussions and communications with JPS and NWC, neither service provider was ready for the 2021 October 1 implementation date due to varying challenges. Specifically, the NWC in letter dated 2021 June 23, requested an extension of the deadline to implement FCR as a result of challenges being experienced with the relocation of its Call Centre operations in-house.

In light of the aforementioned and taking into consideration the activities that need to be undertaken for the implementation of FCR, the OUR has agreed to extend the deadline to 2022 April 1. During the period 2021 November 1 – 2022 March 31, both service providers and the OUR will:

- Undertake a trial phase for FCR
- Conduct a review of the trial phase
- Address any identified challenges with FCR
- Decide on the performance target for FCR



## Appendices:

### Appendix I: List of Tables: 2021 July - September

Table 5: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities)

	Description	JPS	NWC	C&WJ (FLOW)			Columbus		Digicel		Private Telecoms Provider	Private Water Provider	OUR/Other (Not Utility Provider)	Total
				Internet	Landline	Mobile	Internet	Landline	Internet	Mobile				
<b>A</b>	<b>Contacts for the Quarter</b>													
(i)	New Appeals	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
(ii)	New Complaints	100	29	28	20	19	128	38	16	7	0	0	5	390
(iii)	New Enquires	44	25	6	0	6	1	0	4	2	0	2	8	98
(iv)	New Opinions	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	6
(v)	New Referrals	348	211	6	11	11	31	4	5	9	1	1	32	670
	<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1173</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Closure/Resolution of Appeals:</b>													
(i)	Compromise	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
	<b>Total Closures</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Total Appeals from Previous Periods:</b>													
	<b>Outstanding Appeals with OUR</b>													
(i)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
(ii)	Outstanding Appeals with Utility (Awaiting Responses)	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	<b>Total Outstanding Appeals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

Table 6: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers								OUR/Other (not utility related)	Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&WJ (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Private Telecoms Providers (Dekal Wireless)	Private Water/Sewerage Providers (include: Can-Cara, Runaway Bay Water Company Ltd.)			
Billing Matters	253	181	12	22	33	1	3	3	508	
Broken Main	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	
Customer Service	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Defective Street Lights	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Disconnection	14	3	2	1	5	0	0	0	25	
Equipment Damage	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	
Guaranteed Standards	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	
Guaranteed Standards Query	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Health & Safety	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	
Illegal Connections	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	
Interruption of Service	93	9	6	30	96	0	0	0	234	
Irregular Supply	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	
Leak at Meter	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	
Metering	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Number Portability	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	5	
Other	29	24	4	18	15	0	0	42	132	
Payment Arrangement	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Prepaid Phone Credit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Phone Credit Depletion	0	0	1	12	0	0	0	0	13	
Poor Service Quality	33	5	4	1	5	0	0	0	48	
Property Damage	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Pre-paid Metering Service	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	
Reconnection	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	6	
Rebate/Refund	4	8	5	9	26	0	0	0	52	
Service Connection	8	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	16	
Terms and Condition of Service	4	2	7	11	13	0	0	0	37	
Unable to get through to Provider	3	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	9	
Unavailability of Facility	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1173</b>	

Table 7: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	2	5	7
Equipment Damage	4	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>

Table 8: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	1	2	3
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>

Table 9: CAU's Performance on Service Standards (New Appeals)

Activity	Service Standards	% Compliance	Comment
Acknowledgement of Appeals	Within 2 business days of receipt of customer's correspondence	100%	All nine (9) new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within 5 business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	100%	All nine (9) Case Letters were dispatched within the stipulated 5 business days.
Correspondence Copied to Customer	Customer is to be copied on all correspondence submitted to the utilities pertaining to their complaint	100%	
Final Response	Within the established timeline of receipt of all necessary information from relevant parties	86%	Final responses were prepared and dispatched within the established timeline for six (6) new appeals for which all relevant information was received.

## Appendix II: List of Figures

- Figure 1: Distribution of Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 2: Distribution of Billing Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 3: Main Customer Concerns
- Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts
- Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts
- Figure 6: JPS Reported GS Breaches
- Figure 7: NWC Reported GS Breaches
- Figure 8: Methods of Contact
- Figure 9: Geographic Distribution of Contacts

### Appendix III: Definition Of Terms Used In Documenting Customer Contacts

Appeal:	Any contact in which the utility company has completed an investigation into a customer's complaint, the customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome and writes to the OUR asking for an independent investigation of the matter.
Complaint:	Any contact from consumers who feel that particular action(s) of a utility service provider might have been in breach of their Terms and Conditions or might have been unfair to them. The OUR provides investigation for complaints as is necessary. Acceptance of complaints does not require submission of a written response from the service provider.
Customer Contact:	Any contact made to the OUR to register an appeal, inquiry, opinion, etc. Contact can be made through the telephone, post, electronic channels (emails, website, and Facebook page) and visits.
Enquiry:	Any contact requiring verification/confirmation of information relating to the OUR, a utility service, policy and/or practice, etc.
Equipment Damage:	Damage caused to customers' equipment as a result of alleged action or inaction of their service provider.
Interruption of Service:	Where no service is provided, usually for an extended period.
Irregular supply:	Where service is not provided regularly and in keeping with the Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract.
Opinion:	Any contact expressing a view about the actions, practice or terms of service, etc. of a utility company or the OUR.
Referral:	Any contact advised by the OUR to consult the relevant utility company because the complainant had not initially utilized or exhausted the complaint procedure within the relevant utility company.
Refund:	Amounts credited to customers' accounts for breaches of the service provider's Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract
Resolution:	Where the OUR communicates its decision on customers' appeals and complaints
Resolution Rate:	The percentage of resolutions that are made within the established timelines

#### Appendix IV: Statement on Confidentiality of Telecommunications Service Provider Information

Information on the customer base of the telecommunication companies was used in some of the calculations contained in the QPR, pursuant to Section 7A of the Telecommunication Act – Amended. The referenced section states, in part:

“...the following information is not required to be regarded and dealt with as secret and confidential namely -

- (a) information that will facilitate customers in their choice of facilities or specified services and the development of the telecommunications industry; and
- (b) information relating to the –
  - (i) quality of service measurements;
  - (ii) prices charged to customers or to other licensees;
  - (iii) network coverage of licensees;
  - (iv) market share of licensees;
  - (v) volume of services of licensees however measured
  - (vi) subscriber base of licensees; and
  - (vii) capacity and usage of international submarine cables

## Appendix V: Appeals Process

The activities of utility companies are guided by “terms and conditions” within their license and/or Act. There are occasions, however, when consumers feel that particular action(s) of a utility company might have been in breach of the utility’s “terms and conditions” or might have been unfair to them. In such circumstances, the OUR is an avenue for recourse in having any such wrong investigated and addressed through our appeals process.

Prior to submitting an appeal to the OUR, consumers are expected and encouraged to first take the complaint, or issues giving rise to the complaint, up to the level of a senior officer at the respective utility company. The hearing of grievances is a consumer’s right and utilities are obliged to review such matters with the aim of having the issue addressed or clarified.

## Appendix VI: CAU Internal Performance Standards

### Process Timeline for General Appeals

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 (Two) working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 (Five) working days
Receive JPS’ Response/Update	30 working days <sup>8</sup>
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	10 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days <sup>9</sup>
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 (Five) working days
Supervisor’s Review of Final Letter	2 (Two) working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
<b>Total</b>	<b>65 working days</b>

<sup>8</sup> Where, based on exceptional circumstances, JPS requires additional time to provide the response to a Case Letter, same is to be communicated to the OUR within five (5) working days of the Case Letter date. The rationale for the additional time must be outlined in the request. The OUR will provide a response to the request within two (2) working days.

<sup>9</sup> Subsequent to the review of the providers’ response to OUR’s Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.

### Special Appeals

There are appeals that, based on the nature of the issue, may require expertise and/or resources that do not reside in the designated units of the OUR and JPS to effectively resolve same. Accordingly, the classification of “Special Appeals” was revised to provide additional time to both parties to complete their investigation of these matters.

Where necessary, an additional fifteen (15) working days is allotted to JPS to respond to Follow-up Case Letters sent by the OUR. These appeals will thereafter be reclassified as Special Appeals. The OUR has also reduced its consultation time to review Special Appeals from twenty (20) to fifteen (15) working days. Accordingly, the total time allotted to complete the review of a Special Appeal for JPS is at 95 working days

### Recommended Service Levels

1. JPS is expected to respond to **OUR’s Case Letters** regarding customer’s appeals within **thirty (30) working days** of receipt. The company is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days of receipt.
2. JPS is expected to respond to the OUR’s follow-up case letter within five (5) working days of receipt for General appeals. However, where necessary, JPS shall notify the OUR within five (5) working days of receipt of the Follow-up Case letter that additional time is required to provide the response. Such Appeals shall then be reclassified as a Special Appeal with the JPS being allotted a total of twenty (20) working days to provide the response, from the date of the Follow-up Case Letter.
3. The OUR’s Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **eighteen (18) working days** of receipt of utilities’ response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). JPS will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.
4. The OUR is expected to complete investigations of JPS appeals within the following timelines:
  - **Sixty-five (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
  - **Ninety-five (95) working days** for Equipment Damage Appeals (which do not require external consultation)
5. The Utility company is to extend the hold on the customer’s account for thirty **(30) days** subsequent to receiving OUR’s final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

### Appendix VII: Process Timelines for NWC Appeals

<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Timelines</u></b>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 working days

Receive NWC's Response/Update	30 working days
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	10 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	5 working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 working days <sup>10</sup>
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 working days
Supervisor's Review of Final Letter	2 working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
<b>Total</b>	<b>65 working days</b>

### Special Appeals

There are appeals that, based on the nature of the issue, may require expertise and/or resources that do not reside in the designated units of the OUR and NWC to effectively resolve same. Accordingly, the classification of "Special Appeals" was revised to provide additional time to both parties to complete their investigation of these matters.

Where necessary, an additional five (5) working days is allotted to the NWC to respond to Follow-up Case Letters sent by the OUR. These appeals will thereafter be reclassified as Special Appeals. The OUR has also reduced its time to review Special Appeal from twenty (20) to fifteen (15) working days; thereby retaining the completion timeline for Special Appeals at 85 working days.

### Other Appeals Activities:

Monthly reports detailing the appeals for which the responses are outstanding will be generated and sent to the NWC. Where the responses/updates are not received within ten (10) working days of submission of the report, the matter will be escalated to the Vice President – Investment and Performance Monitoring, NWC, for action. Similarly, the CAU will provide NWC with a monthly update on appeals for which our responses are outstanding.

As a consequence, the following are the proposed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to which the utility companies will be accountable. It is being recommended that the following be agreed upon by all parties and published:

<sup>10</sup> Subsequent to the review of the providers' response to OUR's Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.



## Recommended Service Levels

NWC is expected to respond to **OUR's Case Letters** regarding customer's appeals within **thirty (30) working days** of receipt. The Commission is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days.

NWC is expected to respond to the **OUR's follow-up case letter** within **FIVE (5) working days of receipt for General appeals**. However, where necessary, the NWC shall notify the OUR within FIVE (5) working days of receipt of the Follow-up Case letter that additional time is required to provide the response. Such Appeals shall then be reclassified as a Special Appeal with the NWC being allotted a total of ten (10) working days to provide the response, from the date of the Follow-up Case Letter.

The OUR's Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **EIGHTEEN (18) working days** of receipt of the NWC's response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). The NWC will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.

The OUR is expected to complete investigations of NWC appeals within the following timelines:

- **SIXTY-FIVE (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
- **EIGHTY-FIVE (85) working days** for SPECIAL APPEALS (Appeals which require external consultation)

The Utility company is to extend the hold on the customer's account for thirty **(30) days** subsequent to receiving OUR's final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

## Appendix VIII: List of Acronyms

Can Cara	-	Can Cara Development Limited (Water & Sewerage Provider)
CPA	-	Consumer and Public Affairs Department (OUR)
CAU	-	Consumer Affairs Unit (OUR)
DEML	-	Dynamic Environmental Management Limited (Water and Sewerage Provider)
Dekal	-	Dekal Wireless Ltd. (Telecommunications Provider)
Flow Service	-	Columbus Communications Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) - Telecommunication Provider
FLOW	-	Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (C&WJ) Flow
JPS	-	Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (Electricity Provider)
KSA	-	Kingston & St. Andrew
NWC	-	National Water Commission (Water & Sewerage Provider)
OUR	-	Office of Utilities Regulation
OURIC	-	Office of Utilities Regulation Information Centre
The Office	-	Comprises 6 members and is headed by a Chairman with the Director General serving as an <i>ex officio</i> member