

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Billing Issues continue to top list of Customer Complaints to the OUR

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2022 October 20): Billing issues continue to be the category with the highest number of complaints to the Office of Utilities Regulation's (OUR's) Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU).

In the OUR's latest Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) for the April-June 2022 quarter, of the 1,268 customer contacts to the CAU during the period, 50% related to billing matters which included high consumption, disputed charges, adjustments to customers' accounts, and estimated billing.

Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) and the National Water Commission (NWC) continued to account for the most billing contacts with 359 (28%) and 222 (18%) respectively. Columbus Communications Jamaica Limited (trading as FLOW) accounted for 32 (3%) while Cable & Wireless Jamaica Limited (also trading as FLOW), Digicel (Jamaica) Limited, and contacts not utility-related, accounted for the remaining 19 (1%).

Similar data were reflected for the January-March 2022 quarter which showed that of the 1,579 contacts to the CAU during that period, 51% pertained to billing matters.

OUR's Consumer Affairs Specialist, Collette Goode said, *"The data captured in our latest QPR is not surprising as billing continues to be the predominant area of concern for utility customers who contact us. We make every effort to assist the customers by investigating their complaints after they have exhausted the complaints handling procedure at their utility provider."*

The OUR's latest QPR also detailed the Guaranteed Standards (GS) performance of JPS and NWC during the April-June 2022 period. JPS, in its compliance report on its GS performance, indicated that it committed just over 12,500 breaches during the quarter. This is a 39% decrease compared with the preceding period.

These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$30.2 million, all of which were applied automatically to the affected customers' accounts.

The NWC's GS compliance report for the review period indicates that 1,545 breaches were committed during the review period. Like JPS, NWC is reporting a decrease in the number of breaches committed. For them, it is 36% less than the preceding period.

Billing Issues continue to top list of Customer Complaints to the OUR .../2

These breaches had a potential payout of approximately \$6.1 million while actual payments amounted to \$876,342.00, or 14% of total potential payments, and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 86% of potential payments not made, represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

The OUR's Quarterly Performance Report for April-June 2022 can be [found on its website; www.our.org.im](http://www.our.org.im).

-30-

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