

Media Release

NWC Records Most Complaints for Q1 2024

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2-24 July 17): The National Water Commission (NWC) was the utility that recorded the most complaints received by the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) from customers during the 2024 January–March quarter.

OUR's Quarterly Performance Report for 2024 January – March indicates that its Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) received 736 contacts, an 18% decrease over the preceding quarter.

Of this number, 285 (39%) pertained to NWC matters, 262 (36%) related to JPS issues, 88 (12%) were for Columbus Communications Jamaica Limited (FLOW), and 47 (6%) for Cable and Wireless Jamaica Limited (also referred to as FLOW).

The remaining contacts were split between Digicel 3%, private water and sewerage service providers, private telecommunications service providers and 'Other' (Not Utility Provider Related, e.g. cable service) (4%).

The most significant decreases were in the categories of Irregular Supply, which went down by 70%; Poor Service Quality, by 53% and complaints about Interruption of Service, by 24%. Disconnection was the only main category, with an increase in contacts of 20%.

During the review period, billing matters, at 54%, remained the main reason utility consumers contacted the CAU, representing a ten-percentage point increase compared to the preceding period. Contacts relating to NWC and JPS, at 217 (29%) and 142 (19%), respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing-related matters.

Compensation for Service Breaches

During the quarter, just under \$53.4M was paid out to affected utility customers for service breaches.

JPS's compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards (GS) performance indicated that it committed 21,669 breaches, representing a 6% increase compared to the preceding period. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$48.4 million, which were applied automatically to the affected customers' accounts.

The NWC's GS report for the review period indicates that 3,066 breaches were committed during the review period, representing a 35% increase over the prior quarter. These breaches had a potential payout of approximately \$14.2 million. However, only approximately \$4.4 million, or 31% of total potential payments, were made through automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 69% of potential payments not made include those breaches for which the affected customers did not submit the required claim forms for validation.

.../MORE

QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

OUR RULES: The management and staff of the OUR are committed to Regulating Utility services in accordance with our Legislative powers and to the Enhancement of customer Satisfaction through continual improvement of our quality management system.

ISO 9001:2015 certified

Apart from the GS compensation, \$561,273.93 was secured for utility consumers through the OUR's intervention during the review period. NWC accounted for \$511,194.98 (91%) of this sum. The remaining \$50,078.95 (9%) was shared between FLOW and JPS.

The OUR's Quarterly Performance Report can be found on its website: www.our.org.jm.

-30-

Contact: OUR's Public Affairs Unit – publicaffairs@our.org.jm or 876-968-6053

QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

OUR RULES: The management and staff of the OUR are committed to Regulating Utility services in accordance with our Legislative powers and to the Enhancement of customer Satisfaction through continual improvement of our quality management system.

ISO 9001:2015 certified