
Office of Utilities Regulation

Consumer Affairs Unit

Quarterly Performance Report

2024 January – March

Publication Date: 2024 June 20



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

The OUR discharges its mandate to protect utility consumers through the Consumer and Public Affairs (CPA) Department. The Consumer Affairs Unit, the Public Affairs Unit (PAU) and the OUR Information Centre (OURIC) 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 improve consumer 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 organising 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. Through the CPA department, the OUR also funds the Consumer Advisory Committee on Utilities (CACU) activities, 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 Unit's performance 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 are gathered from our Customer Information Database and reflect the contacts received from utility consumers island wide. These contacts are received via various channels, namely: letters, telephone, walk-ins, 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 normalise the number of contacts by expressing this as per 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

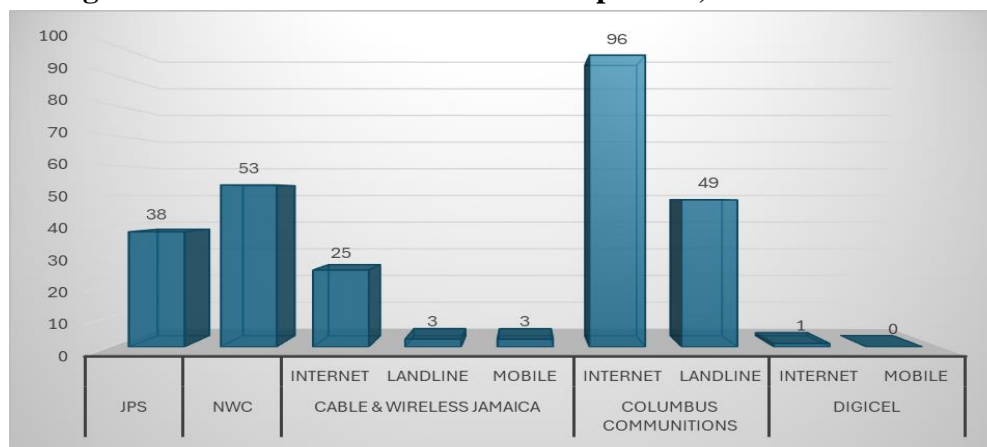
The OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) received 736 contacts during the 2024 January – March period, which is an 18% decrease over the preceding period. The data show that the most significant decreases were in the categories of *Irregular Supply* (-70%), *Poor Service Quality* (-53%), *Interruption of Service* (-24%), and *Guaranteed Standards* (-15%). *Disconnection* was the sole main category with an increase in contacts of 20%.

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service provider¹:

- National Water Commission (NWC) – 285 (39%)
- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 262 (36%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 88 (12%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 47 (6%)
- Digicel – 24 (3%)
- Private Water & Sewerage Service Providers, Private Telecommunications Service Providers and Other (Not Utility Provider Related, e.g. cable service) –30 (4%).

While NWC at 285 accounted for the most contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest numbers – at 96 per 100,000 – in proportion to its internet customer bases respectively.

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

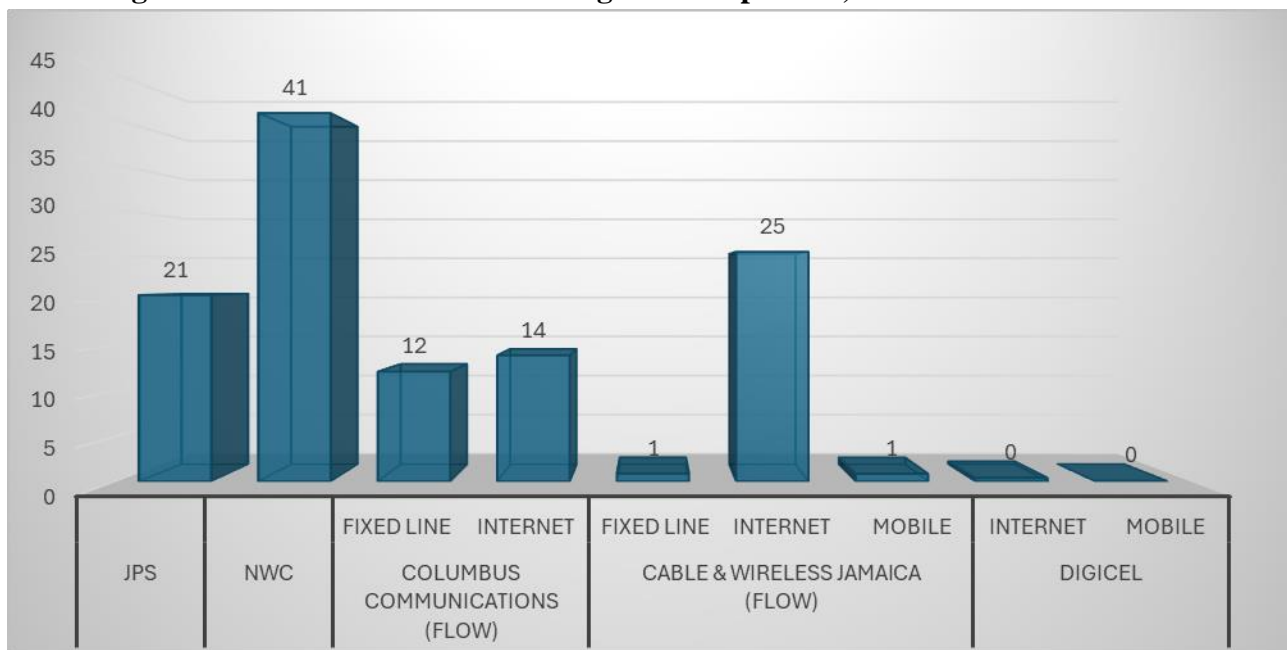


¹ Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 7 on page 26.

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. NWC and JPS, with 217 (29%) and 142 (19%) contacts respectively, accounted for the highest number of billing-related matters.

As shown in Figure 2, NWC at 41 per 100,000 of its customer base accounted for the highest number of billing-related contacts. C&WJ (Flow) at 25 per 100,000 of its internet customer base and JPS at 21 of its customer base followed.

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



Service interruption issues, at 16% of total contacts, remained the second highest reason for customer contact to the CAU for the review period.

Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

(i) Acknowledgements

Twelve (12) new appeals were accepted for investigation during the review period, all of which were NWC matters. Requests for information (case letters) were sent for all new appeals accepted.

Based on the established Service Level Agreements (SLAs), JPS and NWC agreed to acknowledge the OUR's case letters within five (5) business days. As shown in Table 1, the NWC submitted ten out of twelve (83%) acknowledgments which were all received within the agreed timeline. The remaining two acknowledgments were not received.

Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)

<i>Quarters (2024)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January - March</i>	N/A	83%

(ii) Response to Case Letters

Service providers are required to respond to case letters within thirty (30) business days. Six responses were due from the NWC within the review period, however, an extension was requested and agreed upon for one of the six responses. As is shown in Table 2, of the NWC's five responses that were due, three (60%) were received within the agreed timeline and two outside of the timeline.

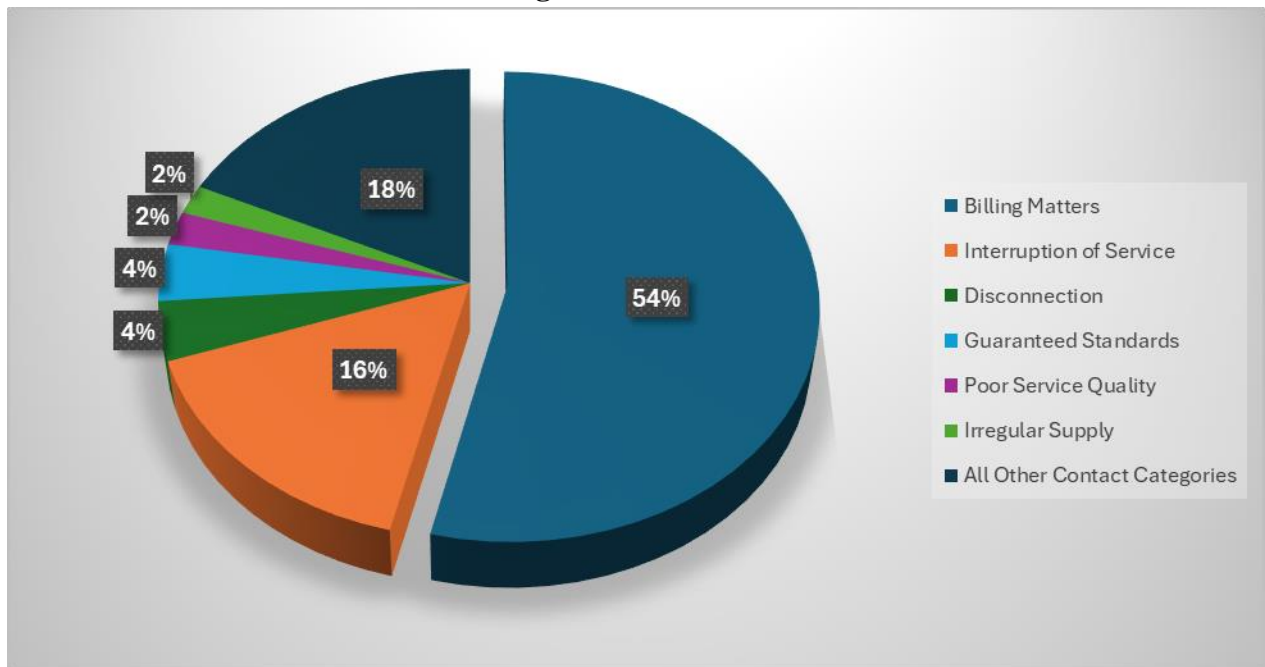
Table 2: Response to case letters within standard (30 business days)

<i>Quarters (2024)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January - March</i>	N/A	60%

Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU during the quarter related to Billing, Interruption of Service, Disconnection, Guaranteed Standards, Poor Service Quality, and Irregular Supply (Figure 3). Further details on all contacts distributed per category are provided in Table 8.

Figure 3: Main Concerns



(i) Billing

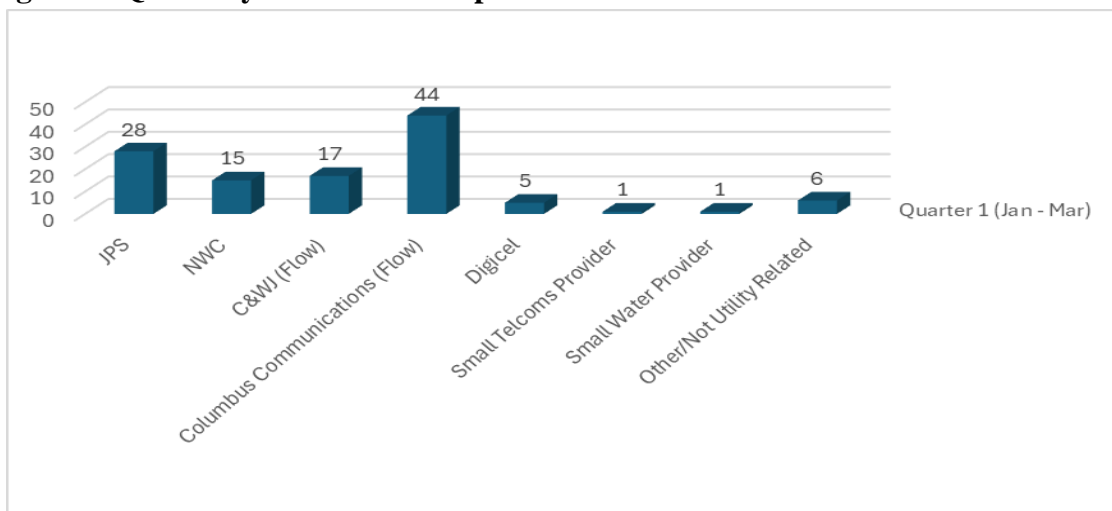
At 54% of total contacts, billing matters remained the main reason for customer contacts received by the CAU. These matters included high consumption, disputed charges, adjustments to customers' accounts, and estimated billing.

NWC and JPS continued to account for the most billing contacts with 217 (29%) and 142 (19%), respectively. Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 14 (2%) while C&WJ (Flow), Digicel, Small Water/Sewerage Service Providers, and Other/Not Utility Related (e.g. cable) accounted for the remaining 17 (4%).

(ii) Interruption of Service

Service interruption contacts decreased by one percentage point, to 16%, when compared to the preceding quarter. As seen in Figure 4, Columbus Communications (Flow) with 44 (6%), and JPS with 28 (4%) accounted for the highest number of related contacts. C&WJ (Flow) and NWC followed with each accounting for 2% of total contacts while Digicel, Small Telecommunications Providers, Small Water and Sewerage Service Providers, Small Telecommunications Providers and Other/Not Utility Related accounted for the remaining 13 (2%) of contacts.

Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts



(iii) Disconnection

Like the preceding quarter, disconnection remained at 4% of total contacts. NWC, JPS, and Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 10 (1%), nine (1%), and eight (1%) of these contacts respectively. C&WJ (Flow) and Digicel accounted for the remaining 3 (1%).

(iv) Poor Service Quality

Poor service quality contacts decreased by two percentage points to 2% over the preceding quarter with JPS and Columbus Communications (Flow) each accounted for 1%.

(v) Irregular Supply

Irregular supply contacts decreased by two percentage points to 2% of total contacts with JPS accounting for 8 (1%) and the NWC 7 (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 JPS, NWC, and small water and sewerage service providers. 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?

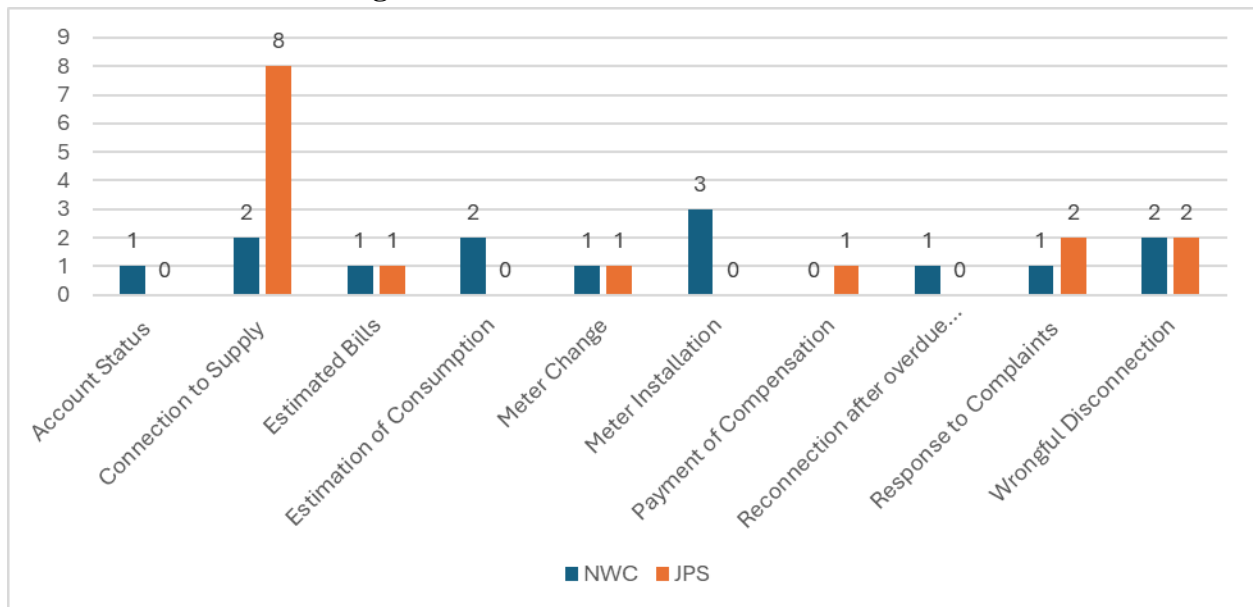
NWC: Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract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

The OUR received twenty-nine (29) contacts from JPS and NWC customers concerning alleged breaches of the GS, representing four percent (4%) of the total contacts received. JPS and NWC accounted for fifteen (15) and fourteen (14) contacts respectively.

As is seen in Figure 5, *Connection to Supply* accounted for the highest number of contacts about alleged breaches of the GS for JPS. For the NWC, *Meter Installation* accounted for the highest number of contacts regarding alleged breaches of the GS.

Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts

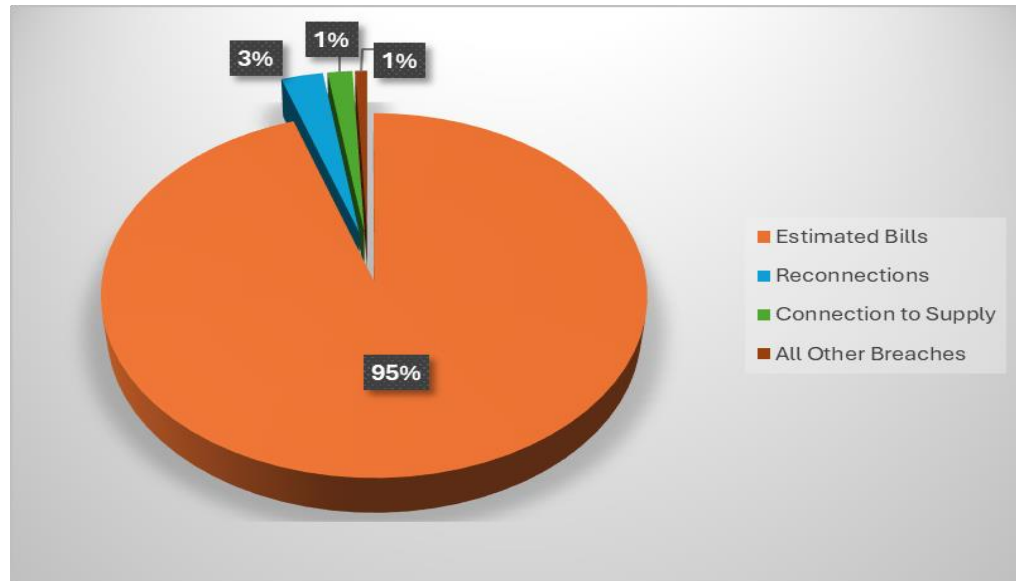
The GS reports submitted by the JPS and NWC did not reflect the alleged incidents of breaches reported to the OUR.

(iv) Utilities' Performance on Guaranteed Standards

JPS

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

Guaranteed Standards related to *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) remained the standards that accounted for the highest incidents of breaches (see Figure 6). These standards accounted for approximately 99% of breaches and compensatory payments.

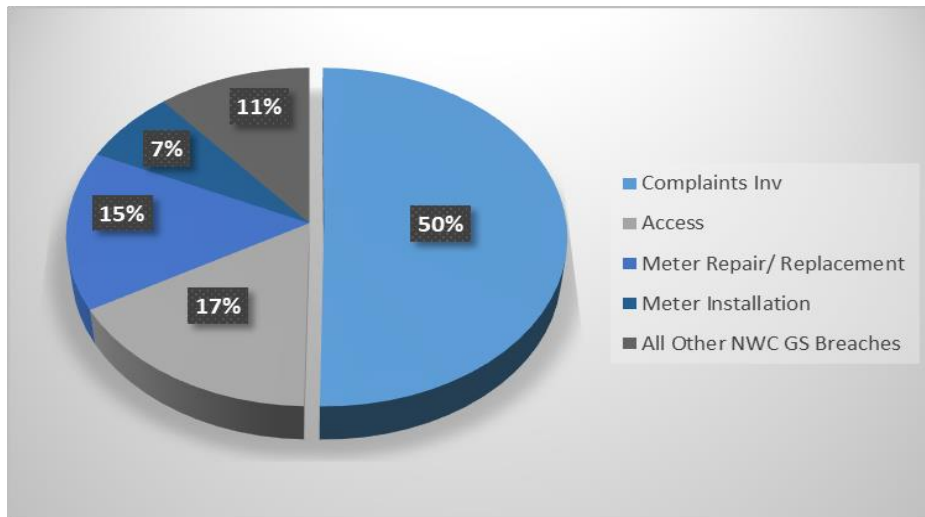
Figure 6: JPS Reported GS Breaches**NWC**

The NWC's Guaranteed Standards compliance report for the review period indicates that 3,066 breaches were committed during the review period, representing a 35% increase when compared with the preceding period. These breaches had a potential payout of approximately \$14.2 million while actual payments amounted to approximately \$4.4 million, or 31% of total potential payments, and were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 69% of potential payments not made include those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted by the affected customers for validation.

As shown in Figure 7, the standards with the highest incidents of breaches for the NWC were: *Complaint Investigations* (which require the NWC to complete investigations and respond or provide an update within 30 working days of receipt of a complaint), *Meter Repair/Replacement* (which stipulates that defective meters are to be verified repaired/replaced within 20 working days), *Meter Reading* (which restricts the NWC from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty), and *Access/New Service Connection* (which requires NWC to connect a new supply within 10 working days). These four (4) standards represented 93% of total breaches.

However, the four standards that accounted for 97% of the total compensation paid were: Payment of Compensation (51%), Meter Repair/Replacement (23%), Meter Reading (19%) and Wrongful Disconnection (4%).

Figure 7: NWC Reported GS Breaches



Private/Small Water and/or Sewerage Service Providers' Guaranteed Standards Report

In keeping with the provisions of their Licenses and OUR Determination Notices, licensed Private/Small Water and/or Sewerage Service Providers (PWSSP) are required to submit quarterly reports on their Quality of Service (QoS) standards performance, which include the Guaranteed and relevant Overall Standards.

As is shown in Table 3, the PWSSP were generally compliant as seven (7) of eight (8), representing 88%, submitted their QoS reports for the review period. However, only two (29%) reports were submitted within the stipulated timeline.

Table 3: Private/Small Water and Sewerage Service Providers' QoS Reporting Requirements and Submissions

Licensees to Submit Quarterly QoS Reports	2024 January to March	
	Due Date	Submission Date
Can-Cara Development Ltd. (CDL)	2024.05.13	2024.05.22
Dynamic Environmental Services Ltd. (DEML)		2024.05.16
Dairy Spring Ltd. (DSL)		2024.05.07
Landmark Developers Limited		Not Received
Runaway Bay Water Company Ltd (RBWC)		2024.05.27
Rosehall Development Ltd. (RDL)		2024.05.20
Richmond Environmental Services Ltd. (RESL)		2024.05.08
Tryall Golf and Beach Club (TGBC)		2024.05.14

Analysis of the quarterly GS reports received from the PWSSP indicates that eight (8) breaches were committed during the review period. For these breaches, potential compensation amounted to approximately \$28,926.80 with no actual payments being made. Details of the GS breaches and compensation for the review period for these service providers are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: GS Breaches and Compensation for Private/Small Water and/or Sewerage Service Providers

Service Providers	Total Breaches	Potential Compensation (\$)	Actual Payments (\$)
Can-Cara Development Ltd.	0	0	0
Dairy Spring Ltd.	0	0	0

DEML	0	0	0
RESL	0	0	0
RDL	0	0	0
RBWC	5	13,806.80	0
TGBC	3	15,120.00	0
Total	8	28,926.80	0

The analysis also showed that RBWC's breaches related to two instances of *GS 3(b) – Response to Complaints*, for which the required claim forms were not received, and three instances of *GS 6 – Meter Reading*, which attracts automatic compensation. RBWC has not applied the relevant automatic compensation for the GS 6 breaches and has been requested to remedy this non-compliance.

The remaining three breaches relate to TGBC and were associated with *GS 6 – Meter Reading* (which requires TGBC to bill accounts monthly based on meter readings, where there is access to the meters). However, for TGBC, the affected customers are required to submit a claim form for the validation and payment of compensation for this breach, which was not done.

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, the focus is placed on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on general customer satisfaction levels for NWC and JPS, which includes their performance on First Call Resolution Rate (FCR).

NWC:

As seen in Table 5, the NWC Call Centre Report for the review period indicates a mixed performance in the KPIs measured, when compared with the preceding quarter. The time taken for the *Average Speed of Answer*, and *Average Talk Time* increased by five and three seconds, respectively. The *Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)* decreased by 26 seconds and the *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* fell by 0.2 percentage points. Like the preceding quarter, the *Percentage Service Level* remained at 93% while the FCR, at 83%, decreased by five percentage points.

Table 5: NWC's Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	<i>KPI Definition</i>	<i>2024 Performance</i>
		Jan - Mar
<i>Average Speed of Answer</i>	Average time for answering calls	0:00:22
<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:04:41
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time	0:06:48
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds	92%
<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	1.22%

<i>First Call Resolution Rate</i>	Customer's complaint/issue being resolved/solved at the first point of contact with the Call Centre	83%
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JPS:

As seen in Table 6, the JPS Call Centre Report for the review period also indicates a mixed performance in the KPIs measured when compared with the preceding quarter. The time taken for the *Average Talk Time* increased by one second while the Percentage Service Level and FCR increased by one and two percentage points, respectively. The *Average Speed of Answer* and *Average Length of Calls* decreased by 23 and 14 seconds respectively and the *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* also decreased by one percentage point.

Table 6: JPS Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	<i>KPI Definition</i>	<i>2024 Performance</i>
		Jan - Mar
<i>Average Speed of Answer</i>	Average time for answering calls	0:00:42
<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:05:19
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time	0:06:09
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds	96%
<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	4%
<i>First Call Resolution Rate</i>	Customer's complaint/issue being resolved/solved at the first point of contact with the Call Centre	81%

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's EOS report on its compliance was not submitted within the stipulated timeline.

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 must give advanced notice of at least 24 hours at a 90% attainment rate.

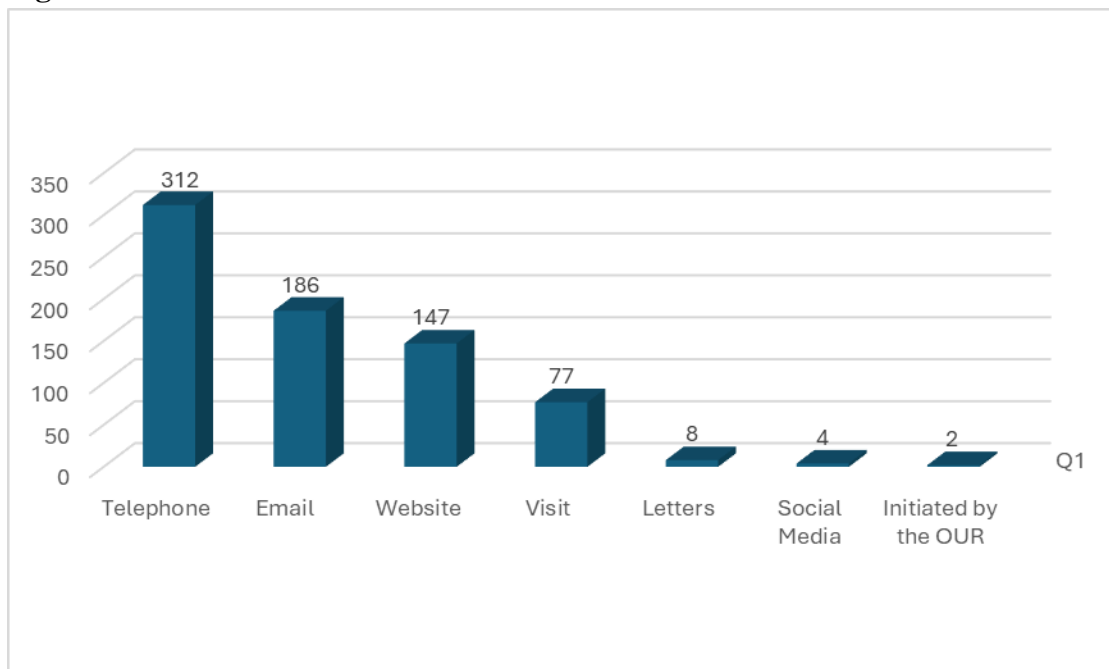
Based on the notifications to the public, for outages lasting no more than 4 hours, the NWC met the compliance rating as the sole relevant notice issued was issued within the established target.

For notifications exceeding four hours, the NWC attained a performance rating of 60% to provide at least 24 hours advance notice, which fell 30 percentage points short of the established target. Of the 15 related notifications received, 9 complied with the stated target.

Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

At 42%, the telephone continued to be the most frequently used method for customers contacting the OUR. Emails, the OUR's website, and visits followed with 186 (25%), 147 (20%), and 77 (10%) respectively. Letters, social media, and contacts initiated by the OUR shared the remaining 16 (3%). The details are provided in Figure 8.

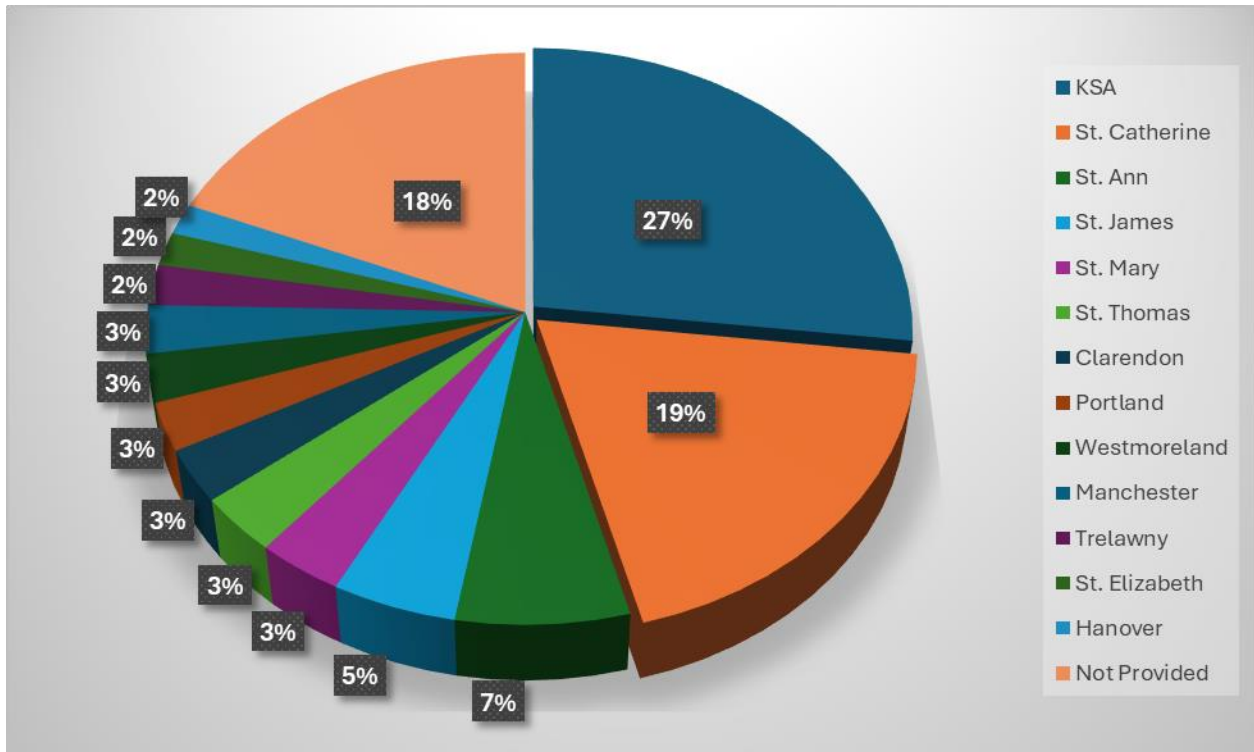
Figure 8: Methods of Contact



Geographical Distribution of Contacts

Kingston and St. Andrew and St. Catherine, at 27% and 19% respectively, continued to account for the most contacts. St. Ann and St. James followed with 7% and 5% respectively. St. Mary, St. Thomas, Clarendon, Portland, Westmoreland, and Manchester accounted for 3% each while all other parishes each had a share of 2% or less. Nineteen (19%) 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 ²

Eight (8) appeals were closed during the review period, with four each being resolved in favour of the customer and utility service providers. Five (5), representing 63% of the closed appeals were resolved within the established sixty-five (65) working days while the remaining three (3) were closed outside of the timeline.

(ii) Outstanding Appeals³

At the end of the review period, fourteen (14) appeals remained outstanding in that they exceeded the established sixty-five (65) business days for resolution. Of these appeals, eight (8) were awaiting OUR's action, while the NWC is to submit six (6) responses each for the remaining outstanding appeals.

JPS accounts for five (5) of the outstanding appeals, which relate to two (2) cases of equipment damage, one (1) property damage, and two (2) billing-related matters. The NWC accounts for the remaining nine (9) outstanding appeals which relate to eight (8) billing matters and one (1) disconnection.

Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Of the twelve (12) new appeals that were accepted for investigation, all relevant information was received for three (3) within the established timeline, two (2) were received outside of the timeline, an extension was granted for a response that was due, while the timeline for the remaining six responses had not expired. In addition, follow-up action was taken on one of the responses received.

Of the five responses received, final decisions were made and communicated to two (40%), customers (by way of Final Letters), for which all relevant information was received. Both final decisions made were completed within the established 65 working days timeline. Further details

² Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 9 on page 27

³ Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 10 on page 27

on the CAU's performance on some key Appeals Process activities are provided in Table 11, Appendix I.

Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

(i) Credits/Compensation

Through the OUR's intervention, \$561,273.93 was secured for utility consumers during the review period. Of this amount, NWC accounted for \$511,194.98 (91%). The remaining \$50,078.95 (9%) was shared among C&WJ (Flow), Columbus Communications Limited (Flow) and JPS.

(ii) Amendments to JPS and NWC Guaranteed Standards

Following a consultation process, the OUR used the feedback received to amend JPS and NWC Guaranteed Standards and outlined its decisions in the Determination Notice issued on 2024 February 28. The decisions made include:

1. A reduction in the number of GS for JPS's postpaid service from 17 to 14;
2. A reduction in the number of GS for the NWC from 17 to 15;
3. Introduction of two new GS for JPS's prepaid service to address areas of timeliness of meter replacement and availability of purchased kWh after successful top-up;
4. Modification of JPS's compensation mechanism for residential customers only from the current association with the reconnection fee to establishing a fixed GS compensation amount. This will be based on 20% of the calculated average residential customers' bill.
5. Reduction, by half, of the NWC's compensation mechanism to two (2) times the monthly service charge for General Compensation and three (3) times the monthly service charge for Special Compensation.

JPS has since submitted a reconsideration request for the decision regarding the modifications to its compensation mechanism, which is being reviewed. NWC has also requested clarification on a number of the decisions to which the OUR will include its response in the Reconsideration and Clarification Decision document.

The determinations will take effect after the upcoming review of the pending Five-Year Rate/Tariff application from both utility providers.

Appendices:

Appendix I: List of Tables: 2024 January - March

Table 7: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities)

	Description	JPS	NWC	C&W(FLOW)			Columbus		Digicel			Private Telcoms Provider	Private Water Provider	OUR/Other (Not Utility Provider)	Total
				Internet	Landline	Mobile	Internet	Landline	Internet	Landline	Mobile				
A	Contacts for the Quarter														
(i)	New Appeals	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
(ii)	New Complaints	183	150	18	5	10	63	11	10	2	8	2	2	0	464
(iii)	New Enquires	10	7	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	24
(iv)	New Opinions	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
(v)	New Referrals	68	115	1	1	9	12	0	2	0	2	1	0	21	232
	Total Contacts	262	285	20	6	21	76	12	12	2	10	3	2	25	736
B	Closure/Resolution of Appeals:														
(i)	Resolved in Favour of Customer	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Total Closures	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
C	Total Appeals from Previous Periods:														
	Outstanding Appeals with OUR														
(i)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
(ii)	Awaiting Service Provider's Response	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Total Outstanding Appeals	5	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14

Table 8: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers									Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&W (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Small/Private Telcoms Provider (Cornwall Communications Ltd)	Small/Private Water/Sewerage Providers	OUR/Other (Not Utility Related)		
Billing Matters	142	217	6	11	14	1	1	4	396	
Broken Main	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	
Customer Service	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	
Defective Street Lights	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Disconnection	9	10	2	1	8	0	0	0	30	
Equipment Damage	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	
Guaranteed Standards	15	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	
Health & Safety	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	
Illegal Connections	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Interruption of Service	28	15	5	17	44	1	1	6	117	
Irregular Supply	8	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	
Leak at Meter	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Number Portability	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Other	16	8	5	5	4	0	0	14	52	
Phone Credit Depletion	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	
Poor Service Quality	4	0	2	2	8	1	0	0	17	
Prepaid Metering Service	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	
Property Damage	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
Reconnection	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	
Refund	4	0	1	3	2	0	0	1	11	
Service Connection	2	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	7	
Terms and Condition of Service	1	1	2	1	4	0	0	0	9	
Unavailability of Service - No Facility	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Total	262	285	24	47	88	3	2	25	736	

Table 9: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Appeal Category	Service Provider	Total
	NWC	
Billing Matters	8	8

Table 10: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	2	8	10
Disconnection	0	1	1
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	1	0	1
Total	5	9	14

Table 11: CAU's Performance on Service Standards (New Appeals)

Activity	Service Standards	% Compliance	Comment
Acknowledgement of Appeals	Within two business days of receipt of customer's correspondence	100%	All new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within five business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	83%	Ten (10) of the 12 new Case Letters were dispatched within the stipulated five business days.
Correspondence Copied to Customer	The 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	40%	Final responses were prepared and dispatched within the established timeline for two of the five 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
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- 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 ⁴
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 ⁵
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 (Five) working days
Supervisor’s Review of Final Letter	2 (Two) working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
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 ⁶
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 working days
Supervisor's Review of Final Letter	2 working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days

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:

⁶ 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