

25
OUR

1997
- 2022

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

Congratulations!



MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES

MISSION

OUR contributes to national development by effective regulation of utility services that enables consumer access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality utility services, while ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investment.

VISION

To be a trusted, purpose-driven, forward-looking and stakeholder-focused regulator that enables Jamaica to be a leader in utility consumer protection and satisfaction, and sustainability of regulated entities.

CORE VALUES

A - Accountability
F - Fairness
I - Integrity
R - Respect
E - Excellence

MESSAGES

25 years of phenomenal work and service to country

THE OFFICE of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has been in existence since 1997, established by an act of Parliament in 1995 to regulate the operations of utility companies. Over the last 25 years, the OUR has prided itself in providing an avenue of appeal for consumers who have grievances with the utility companies. The company also continuously contributes to

national development by effectively regulating utility services, to enhance consumer satisfaction and for them to have easy access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality services.

This certified entity is not only recognised for its hard work at the local level, but also internationally. They have been recognised for their pioneering role in the regional development of

independent utility regulation and the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector. They have also managed to maintain a track record of transparent, consistent and objective rules for regulating utility service providers.

It is my pleasure to join you in celebrating 25 years of continuous, phenomenal work and service to our country. I must commend



you for your work in carrying out a function that is so beneficial to the people, and for creating proper order in the nation. I wish you much success in your continued effort to serve the people of Jamaica.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE MOST HONOURABLE SIR PATRICK ALLEN ON, GCMG, CD, KStJ
Governor General

Congratulations

25
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OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

With the compliments of

TRAILLE
CARIBBEAN

"Taking the World to the Caribbean"

Continue to exemplify your mission

CONGRATULATIONS TO the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) on achieving 25 years of being the regulatory body of the utilities sectors – electricity, telecommunications, water and sewerage in Jamaica.

The OUR was first established through an act in Parliament in 1995 to regulate the operations of utility companies. However, operations began in 1997.

As an ISO 9001:2015 regulator, the Government commends the office for being recognised internationally for its transparent and efficient service. Indeed, the Government and people of Jamaica are grateful for the services that the OUR has provided over the years.

Undeniably, the OUR has functioned efficiently and effectively in all areas of expertise, offering satisfactory results to customers in many instances. As the regulator, the OUR



monitors and ensures that the utility providers comply with certain rules and guidelines. A part of the role of the OUR includes developing the framework within which the regulated utilities operate; setting the rates and service standards for the relevant regulated sectors; and operating in a fair, independent, and transparent manner in fulfilling its

PLEASE SEE **MISSION**, 3

MESSAGES

Commendations for commitment to the Jamaican people

IT IS with great pleasure that I join the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) in celebrating its 25th anniversary.

The OUR, having been established in 1997, has been in steadfast pursuit of its mandate to contribute to national development through the effective regulation of utility services, thereby enabling consumers to access modern, reliable, affordable and quality utility services, while ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investment.

The OUR plays a critical role in the regulation of our electricity, telecommunications and water/sewerage service sectors by setting rates and ensuring that proper standards are maintained.

In the current harsh economic climate, and as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is becoming increasingly difficult to reconcile consumer and supplier interests. The OUR must always strive to ensure that competing interests are fairly and transparently balanced, so that all stakeholders may feel satisfied with the process, even if not with the result.

It is by staying true to its core values of accountability, fairness, integrity, respect and excellence that our society will be well served and the reputation of the OUR will



be strengthened.

I am pleased that the OUR has embarked on a comprehensive review of the Guaranteed Standards Scheme for the Jamaica Public Service Company and the National Water Commission and is seeking feedback from consumers about the quality of service received from our public service providers. It is important that the OUR routinely carries out checks to ensure that these standards are adhered to.

I want to commend the OUR for 25 years of service and commitment to the Jamaican people. Congratulations to the management and staff of the OUR on this important milestone in your history.

Happy 25th anniversary, OUR!

MARK J. GOLDING
Leader of the Opposition, MP

MISSION

CONTINUED FROM 2

obligations to stakeholders.

The Government of Jamaica acknowledges and appreciates the work done by the OUR, the team of professionals who are constantly sensitive to their customers' needs, while offering sound advice and the quality of work done by the office.

As the Office of the Utilities Regulation commemorates its silver anniversary, I urge all stakeholders to continue developing

and maintaining an excellent relationship with all current and future clients.

Continue exemplifying your mission to contribute to national development by effective regulation of utility services that enables consumer access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality services, while ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investment.

Once again, I extend congratulations on 25 years well served.

THE MOST HON ANDREW HOLNESS, ON, PC, MP
Prime Minister



THE
REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

wishes to extend congratulations to the

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

(OUR)

on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary



OUR continues to regulate with vision, purpose

USE this opportunity to express heartiest congratulations to the Office of Utilities Regulations (OUR), on 25 years of service to the people of Jamaica.

This anniversary is of great significance and merits celebration, as the entity continues to regulate with vision and purpose.

Commendation goes out to the management and staff of the OUR for their contribution to national development, as they implement standards to ensure improved consumer access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality utility services.

As an independent regulator, the OUR has the arduous task of maintaining the balance between providing an avenue of appeals for consumers aggrieved by utility companies, and ensuring that utility providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investment.

Throughout the years, this balance has been maintained through the impartial and objective handling of matters by the entity; which has contributed to its international recognition as a pioneer in the regional development of independent utility regulation, and the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector.



As you celebrate your 25th anniversary, I wish for you continued success, as you continue to serve this great island of Jamaica.

HON DARYL VAZ, MP
Minister of Science, Energy and Technology

Congrats and all the best in future endeavours

THE MINISTRY of Economic Growth & Job Creation (MEGJC) recognises the critical role of the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) in the water sector. The OUR, in the execution of its functions, consistently ensures that the providers of water and sewerage services deliver the best quality service to its customers, while adhering to their agreed service level standards.

Over the years, the OUR has ensured that the rates and tariffs that are granted to both public and private service providers are reflective of the cost to deliver the service, thus facilitating a fair return on their investment. Their diligent regulation of both public and private service providers has undoubtedly contributed to the quality of service that is delivered to customers, thereby making Jamaica's water sector one of the best in the Caribbean.

Similarly, over the years, the MEGJC and the OUR have worked together to contribute to the growth of the water sector, with the issuance/renewal of licences to approximately 16 private providers for the supply of water and sewerage services that serve small geographic areas and facilities. The



ministry remains committed to working with the OUR to ensure the sustainability of the water sector, as we work together to achieve universal access to potable water and adequate sanitation by 2030.

The ministry congratulates the Office of Utilities Regulation on its recognition in the international sphere, and wishes the agency all the best in its future endeavours.

HON MATTHEW SAMUDA
Minister without Portfolio
Ministry of Economic Growth & Job Creation

OUR's journey as an effective regulator is ongoing

DURING THE 1990s, Jamaica initiated liberalisation processes on several fronts. The financial sector was allowed to expand, the foreign exchange system was liberalised, privatisation was encouraged and gathered pace, as did investment and competition across Jamaica's utility sectors. In the aftermath of these liberalisation processes, it quickly became clear that Jamaica's regulatory infrastructure had not kept pace with these changes and Jamaica's policymakers moved to establish new regulatory structures



and strengthen existing ones. Against this background, in 1997, the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) began operations, as did the Financial Services Commission in 1998 and the Jamaica Deposit Insurance Corporation in 2001.

With respect to the OUR, its 1995 enabling act specified that it was formed, *inter alia*, to regulate the provision of prescribed utility services by licensees, receive and process applications for licences to provide a prescribed utility service, advise the responsible

minister on related matters, protect the interests of consumers in relation to the supply of a prescribed utility service, and promote and encourage the development of modern and efficient utility services.

In its 25 years of operation, the OUR has sought to remain faithful to the objectives articulated at its formation. Indeed, it has developed a national, regional and international reputation for regulating Jamaican-based

PLEASE SEE **JOURNEY**, 6

The **ECTEL** congratulates the **OUR** on celebrating 25 years of contributing to national development and consumer protection by effectively regulating utility services. As a fellow regulator who understands the challenges of the electronic communications sector, we encourage you to keep up the remarkable work!

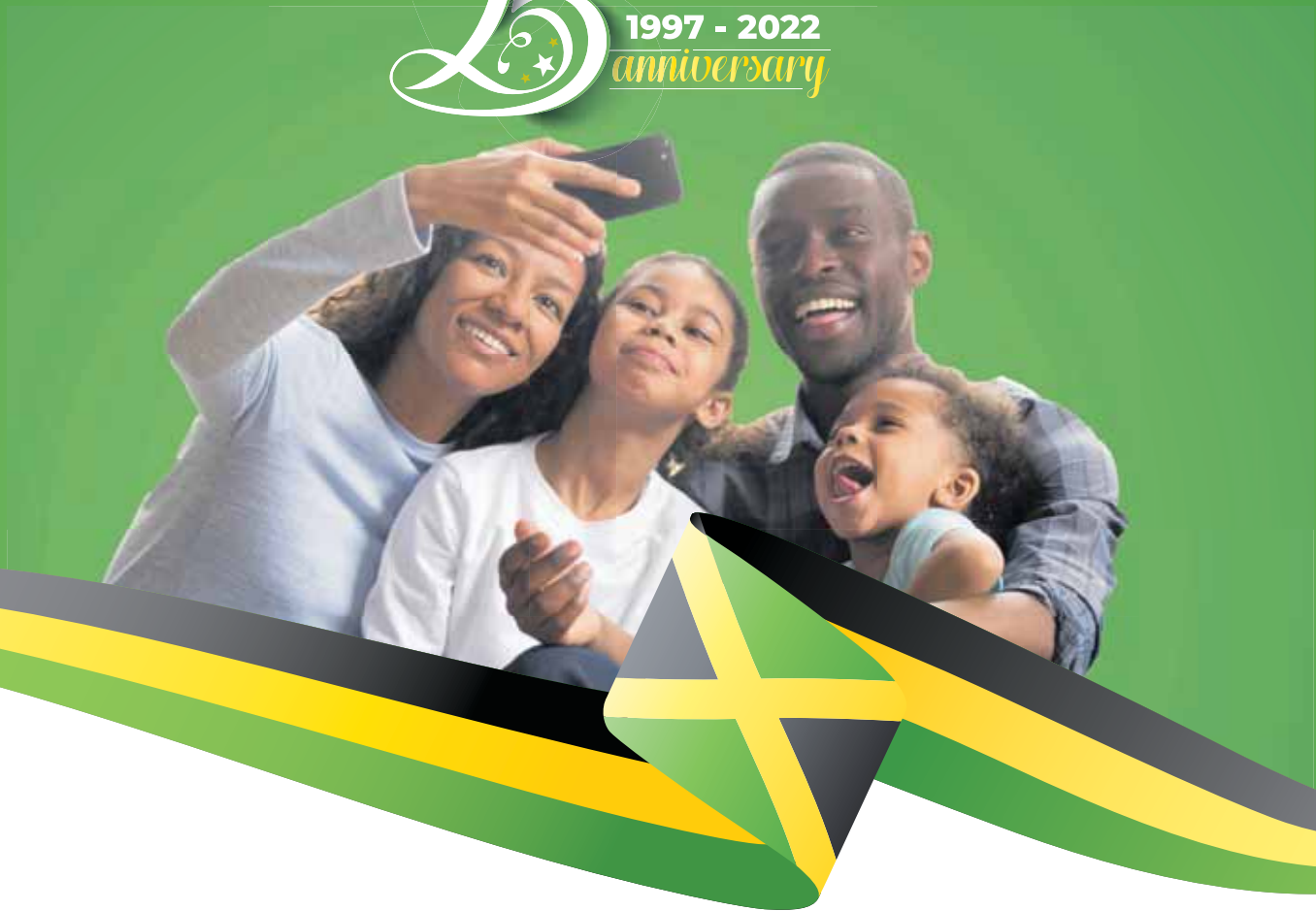
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The Telecommunications Authority
of Trinidad and Tobago
congratulates



CELEBRATING
25th
1997 - 2022
anniversary



Celebrating its 25th year of facilitating

*“national development by effective regulation of utility services that enables consumer access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality utility services while ensuring that service providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investment”
to the citizens of Jamaica.*

www.tatt.org.tt



OUR is testament that the best also attracts the best

IT IS neither grandiloquent nor immodest to assert that over the 25 years of its existence, the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has been in the engine room and at the helm of every significant advancement of utilities and major utility infrastructural development in Jamaica. From presiding over the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector to providing critical inputs to electricity privatisation and the subsequent partial liberalisation, to facilitating private participation in the water and sewerage sector and ensuring greater security in the capital financing for the National Water Commission, the sweep of OUR's influence has been expansive, notable and consequential.

In the process, we have seen the deployment of a modern, resilient information and communications technology sector; the elimination of uncertainties regarding sustainable investment in electricity generation capacity; the diversification of fuel sources, with a significant influx of renewables and the introduction and expansion of the use of liquefied natural gas. In the water and sewerage sector, while losses remain a significant bane, there is now greater acceptance of private provisioning of water, and the public provider is far more attuned to the need to demonstrate adherence to market signals. At the same time, our emphasis on public education, insistence on standards and consumer empowerment has oriented the public to become increasingly intolerant of interruption, poor customer service and unstable supplies, as evidenced by the disaffections we see in social and traditional media with any such occurrences.

It bears noting that the OUR



had its genesis in the anticipated adoption of privatisation modalities by the then major utilities, and the accepted need to establish the institutional framework and mechanisms to ensure transparency, stability, confidence and protection of rate payers from abuses. So, on April 25, 1995, the creation of the OUR was enshrined in law through the passing of the Office of Utilities Regulation Act, which provided for a body corporate to regulate the operations of entities that provide utility services in Jamaica. Just under two years later, on January 6, 1997, the OUR opened its doors to fulfil this mandate. This was a defining moment not just for utility regulation in Jamaica, but, as it turned out, regionally as well, with several other Caribbean countries following suit in relatively short order.

Earl Richards, programme manager/consultant of the OUR Preparation Unit in 1994, contextualised the thinking behind the establishment of the OUR well, during an interview five years ago: "Traditionally, public utilities were regulated by governments because they started as departments of governments. Around the time of the establishment of the OUR, the issue of private power with private

Having been with the OUR for 22 of its 25 years, I have had the privilege of having a front-row seat to the changes and challenges with which we have been confronted over the years. It has, to say the least, been an exciting, enlightening and edifying ride, notwithstanding the slings and arrows.

investors expecting a return on their investment was moot, and so it was necessary to have an independent regulator who could balance the interest of all parties."

The OUR's first director general, Winston Hay, after demitting office, reminisced on the mandate of the OUR: "We had as an objective that we needed to be as competent in understanding how utility services were provided as the utilities themselves. We needed to be of the highest integrity. We needed to be fair to all concerned – no discrimination of any type. We needed to be transparent in our operations and in our decision-making. And we needed to be accountable to the Government and the people at large."

Having been with the OUR for 22 of its 25 years, I have had the privilege of having a front-row seat to the changes and challenges with which we have been confronted over the years. It has, to say the least, been an exciting, enlightening and edifying ride, notwithstanding the slings and arrows. I cannot think of a parallel that would have been as satisfying.

To say that we had a rocky start would be an understatement. The fiat to regulate four sectors – water and sewerage, transportation (which was included at the start),

electricity and telecommunications – was a behemoth task, with each sector posing its own formidable challenges. This was exacerbated by the need to rapidly re-orient both industry and government to accommodate a paradigm shift to what was termed 'independent regulation'. The butting of heads, philosophical differences and major objections to some of the OUR's decisions resulted in many being challenged before the relevant tribunals or a court of law. Fortunately, in most instances, the OUR's decisions were ruled to be sound, which to my mind is a fitting testimony to the rigour, objectivity and sound technical approach that the agency has displayed, and which has won for it a well-earned reputation over its 25-year history.

The OUR has manifested varying levels of dynamism over the period. This creates an environment in which we are constantly challenged to be a step ahead of each evolution, anticipating the demands of investors and consumers, while ensuring the sectors remain attractive for investments and that consumers enjoy good-quality service at a reasonable cost.

It is my oft-repeated claim that the quality of an institution is both defined by, and emblematic of, the

people it is able to attract. The OUR, since its inception, has been served by a staff that is of a calibre second to none.

The OUR also owes its successes to the pedigree of my predecessors, whose leadership I am delighted to acknowledge and salute as we celebrate this milestone. Winston Hay, our first director general; J. Paul Morgan, who passed on in 2020; George Wilson; Zia Mian; Albert Gordon; and, of course, our current Deputy Director General, Maurice Charvis, who served two stints in the posts between directors general, have all helped to shape the quality organisation the OUR has been and continues to be.

Since 2016, when the composition of the office was widened, we have had the benefit of stellar contributions from an eminent and astute panel of non-executive office members, led by Joseph Matalon, our first office chairman; Dr Derrick McKoy, who now serves as Jamaica's attorney general; and currently, Professor Alvin Wint. The appointment and tenure of my predecessors and chairmen underscore the critical role the OUR plays in nation-building. I contend that the OUR is a testament to the assertion that the best also attracts the best.

Long live the OUR, as it continues to take hold of the arc of Jamaica's history and bends it further towards development and the continued pursuit of excellence. On behalf of my colleagues at the OUR, I thank our stakeholders for their continued support and wish them all that is good.

ANSORD E. HEWITT
Director-General
Office of Utilities Regulation

JOURNEY

CONTINUED FROM 4

utilities in an independent and technocratic manner.

It is my pleasure, having observed the process and intent at its formation, and having worked with the OUR as an industry

stakeholder, and most recently as chairman, to congratulate the individuals who have, over these 25 years, contributed to its success as an effective regulator. It is clear that the OUR has overseen and facilitated many significant developments in Jamaica's utilities sectors that are aligned to its mandate to encourage the development of modern and efficient utility services.

But despite the demonstrable progress,

Jamaica's utility sectors continue to require modernisation and improved efficiency. The OUR is seized of the reality that its journey as an effective regulator is ongoing. It continues to benefit from policy and legislative changes, such as those included in the 2015 OUR Amendment Act, which created a non-executive oversight structure, geared to providing relevant and effective oversight, while facilitating its continuing functioning as an independent and technocratic

regulator. The continuing objective is to improve regulatory performance.

As we celebrate the successes of the first 25 years of the OUR's journey, we also commit to ongoing efforts to improve our efficiency and effectiveness as Jamaica's utility regulator.

PROFESSOR ALVIN WINT
Chairman
Office of Utilities Regulation



CONGRATULATIONS
TO THE
OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION (OUR)
FOR

25
YEARS

OF REGULATING JAMAICA'S UTILITIES



newfortressenergy.com

**Congratulations to the
Office of Utilities
Regulation management
and staff on 25 years of
operation.**

**The BMR Energy team
especially recognizes the
agency's impactful work in
Jamaica's electricity market,
in which it has reinforced the
country's clean energy
leadership in the Caribbean.**

**We wish the OUR many more
years of success and we look
forward to continued
collaboration.**

**BMR JAMAICA
WIND LIMITED**

BMR Energy



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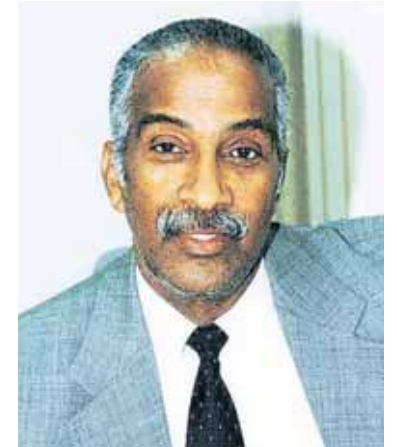
**OUR
DIRECTORS
-GENERAL**



Winston Hay
1995-2002



J. Paul Morgan
2002-2008



George Wilson
August 2008-February 2009



Zia Mian
February 2009 - 2013



Maurice Charvis
February 2013-November 2013,
October 2016 - January 2017



Albert Gordon
November 2013-October 2016



Ansord Hewitt
2017-Present

Congratulations to the
OUR on their 25th Anniversary

With the compliments of **WRB** *The developers of*
ENTERPRISES



Content Solar  *a 20-MEGAWATT
Solar Energy facility
in Clarendon
serving Jamaica since 2016*

25 years of being a passionate champion for the Jamaican consumer

THE NATIONAL Water Commission (NWC) salutes and congratulates the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) for 25 years of regulatory service to both the people and utilities operating in Jamaica. Since its inception, the OUR has redefined the utility regulatory landscape of Jamaica and the Caribbean region, contributing to the development of standards and partnering with other regulatory agencies in ensuring that utility service providers deliver the quality services that customers expect and deserve, at rates aimed at meeting the financial needs of the utility service providers.

As advocates for the Jamaican consumers, the OUR has challenged utility service providers, like the

NWC, to ensure the implementation of appropriate systems, policies, and procedures to meet the various standards and regulatory requirements. As an economic regulator for utilities, the OUR has sought to grant rates that it believes are fair, based on the economic realities of the country and/or consumers and the information presented by the utilities.

As a service provider, we may not always agree with the final determination or consider the rates approved or granted by the OUR to be adequate to meet the full revenue required by the NWC to meet its operational and capital needs. However, we can attest to the professionalism and dedication of the OUR's team, as demonstrated

in their willingness to engage with us and to identify areas of possible efficiency gains and the means of attaining same.

Although we may disagree on occasions, we do not consider our relationship, or partnership, to be adversarial in nature, but rather, one where there is mutual respect and understanding of the varying issues that challenge the viability and operational effectiveness of both entities. This is evident in our various stakeholder engagements, public education forums, numerous community meetings, scores of virtual forums, and extensive exchange of vital information. Thus, creating a rock-solid partnership of commitment to transparency and quality service delivery.

It is our belief that the relationship between the NWC and the OUR transcends both organisations, and that we owe it to the citizenry of Jamaica to continue this relationship on a foundation of mutual respect, professionalism, integrity, accountability, teamwork, customer centricity and being open to new and innovative ways of operating. Together, we have a responsibility to ensure that the NWC's customers are always provided with excellent customer service, while maintaining the highest quality and reliable potable water and sewerage services at rates that ensure the viability and sustainability of the country's primary provider of water and sewerage services.

Once again, the NWC



congratulates the OUR on attaining the milestone of 25 years of sterling contribution to the utility sector and the Jamaican consumers. We look forward to many more years of a mutually beneficial partnership as we both seek to deliver on our individual mandates to our customers and the wider Jamaica.

MARK BARNETT
President
National Water Commission

Regulating with vision, securing our digital future

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS of 'regulating with vision' has enabled the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) to support our mission to deliver a first-class telecommunications network and service experience to consumers and businesses. This visionary approach sowed roots of change, which led to the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector in 1999. This opened the gateway to Digicel's market entry in 2001, and introduced competition in Jamaica's telecommunications sector. This remarkable accomplishment democratised access to modern



communications technology for millions of Jamaicans, enabling them to connect to a world of information and entertainment from

almost anywhere, while providing access to countless opportunities.

In the spirit of Jamaica 60, a true reflection on our Independence journey would be incomplete without highlighting the tremendous human development impact of our over US\$2-billion investment in providing a modern telecommunications infrastructure since 2001, with the support of the OUR. Today, as Jamaica's only digital operator, people from all walks of life enjoy access to our award-winning LTE and fibre networks that have demonstrated unparalleled resilience, especially during times of change

and challenge. As a service provider that was made in Jamaica, we, like the OUR, understand the unique needs and challenges of our fellow Jamaicans. As such, we continue to work closely with the regulator in its oversight capacity to strengthen standards and compliance, while facilitating the introduction of new technologies, features and services.

The distinguished past achievements of the OUR in encouraging revolution and, indeed, evolution in telecommunications will serve as an invaluable reference point and road map for us as we move to expand and solidify opportunities for all in

the burgeoning digital economy.

Digicel commits to working even more closely with the OUR, so that our plans for the future will include even bolder and more imaginative ideas that deliver on our national mantra to 'Reignite Our Nation for Greatness'. In these efforts, we wish you continued success in a progressive partnership that works for all.

Digicel heartily congratulates the OUR on 25 years of dedicated service to Jamaica.

JABBOR KAYUMOV
CEO
Digicel Jamaica



The Tryall Club wishes to congratulate the OUR on their milestone 25th anniversary.

The Tryall Golf and Beach Club water company (TGBC Water) has officially been in operation for four years as a private utility service provider regulated under the OUR act.

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EXCLUSIVELY PRIVATE,
NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL.

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876-956-5660/ 876-633-8000
reservation@tryallclub.com



HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY!

On behalf of the Regulatory Authority of Bermuda, we send our warmest congratulations to the OUR on providing the regulation of utility services in Jamaica for the past 25 years.

We wish you continued success!



OUR
OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION



1st Floor, Craig Appin House,
8 Wesley Street, Hamilton HM 11, Bermuda
T: (441) 405-6000 • E: contactus@ra.bm • Web: ra.bm

OUR will continue to evolve to meet future stakeholder needs

THE JPS board, leadership team, and staff extend hearty congratulations to the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) on your 25th anniversary.

For the past 25 years, the OUR has steadfastly worked towards its vision of being a purpose-driven, forward-looking and stakeholder-focused regulator. The structure that the OUR has brought to the energy sector in particular, has set the tone for the orderly expansion of the sector in the context of our National Development Plan. The regulatory framework provided by the OUR has undoubtedly helped to lay the groundwork for Jamaica to become the place to live, work, raise families and do business.

We commend your foresight and tenacity, as you have charted new paths and have grown to become a leader in utilities regulation in the region. Your ability to maintain balance between the sometimes conflicting interests of stakeholders, has earned you the respect of the utility companies you regulate, as well as our customers. Through your sustained public education efforts, consumers are much more aware of their rights and responsibilities, and more empowered to make the right decisions.

As we celebrate this 25th anniversary milestone with the OUR, we recognise that the utility sector is evolving at a pace never seen before – both locally and globally. We are confident that the OUR will also continue to evolve to meet the future needs of its stakeholders. We wish



you all the very best as you begin the next chapter in utilities regulation in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

MICHEL GANTOIS
President & CEO
Jamaica Public Service Company Limited

We commend your foresight and tenacity, as you have charted new paths and have grown to become a leader in utilities regulation in the region.

Looking forward to OUR taking industry regulation to another level

FLOW JAMAICA, FLOW Business and C&W Business, subsidiaries of Liberty Latin America, salute the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) on its 25th anniversary.

Over the years, the OUR has cemented its reputation as an independent, unbiased regulator, providing a measured and methodical approach in its regulation of the utilities sector, to the benefit of consumers and operators and in keeping with international best practices. Its transparent, consultative approach has resulted in a relatively stable industry.

We appreciate the OUR's oversight role which enables consumer access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality utility services, while ensuring that utility providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investments. This is critical



to the proper functioning of the telecommunications industry.

The regulator continues to be a leader in national development through its excellent efforts to connect with and engage communities across Jamaica, to improve their access to telecommunications services.

FLOW looks forward to the OUR taking the regulation of this fast-paced industry to another level with continued review of its needs and, in so doing, ensuring that there are fit-for-purpose regulations that foster a level playing field for licensed local carriers, especially in light of changing technology.

Congratulations on this significant milestone.

STEPHEN PRICE
Country Manager,
FLOW Jamaica

OUR SNAPSHOTS



OUR representatives paid a courtesy call on the Governor General, Sir Patrick Allen (right) on March 28, 2017. From left to right: then OUR's Secretary to the Office, Ambassador Peter Black, then OUR Chairman, Joseph Matalon and OUR Director-General, Ansord Hewitt.

Dairy Spring Limited (DSL) wishes to congratulate the **OUR** on its

25th Anniversary.

DSL is a licenced private water utility reliably meeting piped water needs in parts of Ocho Rios with superior service at a competitive rate for over 20 years.

Contact: dairyspring@flowja.com (876) 978-0214

**The Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Guy L. Malone,
and the Extraordinary Staff of the**



Celebrate
with the
Office of Utilities Regulations on this
25 year milestone.

**We would like to extend heartfelt congratulations and wish
you continued success in the future.**

Happy Silver Jubilee **OUR!**



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

The OUR Story



The official opening of OUR offices on 1997, January 6 (from L- R): then Prime Minister, the Most Honourable PJ Patterson, then Director-General of the OUR Winston Hay, the first Director - Consumer Affairs Antoinette Stewart and then Minister of Public Utilities and Transport, Robert Pickersgill.

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1995 to regulate the operations of utility companies.

The OUR Act was signed on 1995 April 24, by Sir Howard Cooke, Governor General, Jamaica. It repealed the Public Utility Commission Act and made new provisions with regard to the supervision of utility services.

Mr Earl Richards was appointed by The Honourable Robert D. Pickersgill, Minister of Public Utilities and Transport to undertake the preparatory work for the establishment of the OUR. The task took on a degree of urgency when the Government announced its intention to privatise The Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS) by way of the sale of majority shares.

The OUR was charged with the responsibility of regulating utilities in the telecommunications, water and sewerage, electricity and transportation (rail, road and ferry) sectors. In 2014, The OUR Act was amended, removing the regulation of Transportation by Rail, Road and Ferry from its portfolio.

In 2015, there were further amendments to the OUR Act, piloted by the Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining, Hon. Phillip Paulwell. This new Act, according to the Minister, sought to make more transparent the mechanism being utilised to set tariffs for the electricity sector, by requiring the OUR to be guided not only by the amended legislation, but also the Electricity Act, the amended All-Island Electric Licence and certain principles when setting tariffs for the electricity sector. This new amended Act also expanded the governance framework of the OUR to include non-executive members and the Director-General serving as an ex-officio member. All seven members comprise the Office.

The objectives of the OUR 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 in their relationship with the utility providers.
- Work with other related agencies in the promotion of a sustainable environment.
- Act independently and impartially.

In the execution of its duties, the OUR is guided by several pieces of legislation including the OUR Act (2015), The Electricity Act (2015), the Electricity Licence (2016), Telecommunications Act (2000), the National Water Commission Act and the Public Bodies Management and Accountability Act.



Congratulations on your 25th Anniversary

Office of Utilities Regulation

It has been a privilege collaborating with you over the past 25 years, shaping Jamaica's energy sector and raising the standard of service to our customers.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to balancing the needs of the utilities you regulate and those of the customers we serve.

We wish you every success and look forward to continuing to work alongside you to achieve further advancements in the sector!



JPS 25th
ANNIVERSARY

Powering What Matters

LONG-SERVING STAFF MEMBERS

The OUR salutes our members of staff who have served 15-25 years with the organisation. We look forward to your continued contribution to nation-building.

25 YEARS



Maurice Charvis
Position: Deputy Director-General
Joined: 1997 March 3



Ingrid Brown Cripps
Position: Manager, Property and Office Service
Joined: 1997 April 1



Venetia Cooke
Position: Records and Information Management Officer
Joined: 1997 April 1

20-24 YEARS

15-19 YEARS



Ansord Hewitt
Position: Director-General
Joined: 2000 February 14
Number of years served: 22



Nova Barnett
Position: Manager, Public Procurement
Joined: 2001 January 8
Number of years served: 21



Otis Anderson
Position: Manager, Information Technology and Risk
Joined: 2003 April 14
Number of years served: 19



Marsha Minott
Position: Senior Utility Analyst
Joined: 2003 October 6
Number of years served: 19



Wayne McGregor
Position: Senior Legal Counsel
Joined: 2004 May 17
Number of years served: 18

15-19 YEARS



Lorraine Baker
Position: Receptionist/Telephone Operator
Joined: 2004 July 1
Number of years served: 18



Laverne Small
Position: Accountant
Joined: 2004 August 22
Number of years served: 18



Cedric Wilson
Position: Deputy Director General
Joined: 2004 October 18
Number of years served: 18



Jodian Coultman
Position: Coordinator, Consumer Affairs (Acting)
Joined: 2004 November 11
Number of years served: 18



Shanique Nunes
Position: Manager, Human Resource
Joined: 2005 January 3
Number of years served: 17

SEE MORE ON PAGE 18

25 years of integrity in action.



NCB joins the **Office of Utilities Regulation** in celebrating **25 years** of contributing to the nation's development. We congratulate them on their consistent stewardship of the utilities industry over the years, and look forward to many more years of continued service to the people of Jamaica.



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The National Water Commission is dedicated and committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in the delivery of service to our valued customers.

We salute the OUR in achieving this milestone of 25 years of service to the utilities in Jamaica, but more specifically to the NWC. Through our collective efforts, the NWC continues to transform in its quest to achieve its objectives.

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Collette Goode
 Position: Consumer Affairs Specialist
 Joined: 2005 January 24
 Number of years served: 17



Diana Cummings
 Position: Secretary to the Office
 Joined: 2005 April 1
 Number of years served: 17



Carlene Dunbar
 Position: Licensing Officer
 Joined: 2005 July 11
 Number of years served: 17



Renae Gayle
 Position: Budget Officer (Acting)
 Joined: 2006 September 1
 Number of years served: 16



Beverley Green
 Position: Consumer Affairs Officer
 Joined: 2006 December 4
 Number of years served: 16



Courtney Francis
 Position: Manager – Engineering & Technical Analysis
 Joined: 2007 February 26
 Number of years served: 15



Sashana Miller
 Position: Senior Utility Analyst
 Joined: 2007 December 3
 Number of years served: 15



Francine Brown-Thomas
 Position: Senior Procurement Officer
 Joined: 2007 December 3
 Number of years served: 15



CONGRATULATIONS

on 25-years of enabling access to utilities through
regulation, partnership and innovation

By “regulating with vision” the OUR has supported the evolution of
Jamaica’s telecommunication sector and propelled us into the digital future.

Digicel Jamaica is the product of the OUR’s vision, and we commend their efforts to facilitate
the introduction of new technologies, features and services to satisfy Jamaica’s growing
needs. Digicel heartily congratulates the OUR on 25 years of dedicated service, with every
wish for a more progressive partnership in the many years to come.



Key Milestones

DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITY REGULATION

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) is an organisation that is rather well known, but about which there is so much misunderstanding. By its mandate, it reviews and makes decisions on tariff applications, reviews and make recommendations on licence applications, develops policies, handles consumer issues and advises the government on regulatory matters. Here are a few of its milestones over the years.

1999

- **First Tariff Determination:** OUR granted the National Water Commission a tariff adjustment which took effect February 1, 1999.
- Established the **Guaranteed Standards for the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS).**

1999 -
2001

- Established the regulatory framework for competition within the telecoms sector.
- Made its contribution to the formulation of the draft legislative Bill that would later become the **Telecommunications Act, 2000.**

2000

- **OUR's Information Centre (OURIC)** was established. It officially opened in 2003.

2001

- Developed **Quality of Service Standards for the NWC.** These included (i) Overall and (ii) Guaranteed Standards.
- Set out final aspects of **Cable and Wireless' Reference Interconnection Offer (RIO)** which stipulated the terms and conditions under which the company would permit interconnection to its telecommunications network.

2004

- **Introduced a price cap regime for JPS** by which the JPS would have incentives to seek to properly maintain its infrastructure - and pass on to consumers any benefits gained. The amendment to the Electricity Licence in 2016 changed this to a revenue cap regime.
- Assessed and made recommendations for a **Fibralink Submarine Cable Licence** which was issued on 2004 December 20.
- Made first set of recommendations for the granting of licences to small private water and sewerage providers, Can Cara and Rosehall Development.

2008

- In the 2008 Tariff Determination for the NWC, OUR established the K-Factor fund to provide the entity with funds to carry out capital projects intended to reduce non-revenue water, extend sewerage services, as well as to improve its existing sewerage treatment plants.



**The Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA)
congratulates The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR)
on its 25th anniversary**



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Key Milestones

2013

- **Reduced Mobile Termination Rates**, approving a rate of \$1.10, which saw consumers benefitting from a sharp decline in cost per minute to call across networks.

2013 -
2019

- Led procurement processes and recommended selections for 115 MW of **renewable energy solutions** for Jamaica. In addition, a 24.5 battery storage system was approved by the OUR and commissioned by JPS in 2018, to facilitate the integration of even more renewable plants on the JPS grid. In 2021, renewable energy sources produced approximately 13% of the nation's electricity supply, a three-fold increase over the 2016 figure of 4%.

2015

- Introduced **Number Portability**, which allows mobile and landline customers to switch their providers and keep their phone numbers.
- Established the Bogue Plant Reconfiguration Fund to facilitate the introduction of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the island. The Bogue power plant was subsequently upgraded to also use LNG. Today, LNG makes up 62.49% of the country's energy mix.
- Achieved **ISO 9001:2008 QMS certification**. This was subsequently upgraded to **ISO 9001:2015** certification in 2018.

2018 -
2020

- Presided over the addition of 300MW of new, firm capacity to the grid - removing the uncertainties surrounding the country's future generation capacity.

2019

- Introduced an additional **Area Code and 10-digit dialling**: OUR, which is charge of numbering, applied for and received another area code for Jamaica - 658 - which necessitated the **10-digit dialling** requirement.

2021

- Further reduction in **Mobile Termination Rates**: The most recent review by OUR resulted in a mobile termination rate of J\$0.69 per minute effective 2021 December 1. Fixed (landline) termination rates went down by an average of 30% between 2021-2025.

2021 -
2022

- Led a public consultation process which culminated in a recommendation document for the regulatory framework to facilitate the penetration of **Electric Vehicles** in Jamaica.

FLOW CONGRATULATES THE OUR ON ACHIEVING 25 YEARS

Our Flow family congratulates the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) on its 25th Anniversary.

Flow Jamaica, Flow Business and C&W Business Jamaica, subsidiaries of Liberty Latin America, laud the OUR for its service to Jamaica's utilities sector.

Over the years, the OUR has cemented its reputation as an independent, unbiased regulator, providing a measured and methodical approach in regulating the sector, to the benefit of consumers and operators and in keeping with international best practices.

The OUR continues to be a leader in the region on critical telecommunications issues such as local number and interconnection rules and rates.

We salute you for 25 years of contributing to national development.

Congratulations on this significant milestone!



FLOW BUSINESS

FLOW



THE OFFICE



Alvin Wint - Chairman



Dr. Damien King



Noel DaCosta



Simon Roberts



Yasmin Chong

SECRETARY TO THE OFFICE



Diana Cummings - Director



Carlene Dunbar



Thalia McPherson

Missing: Peta-Gaye Locke Rankin



Duhaney Smith - Director



Laverne Small



Carol Crooks



Renae Gayle



Shekva Miller



Shavouy Drake



David Case

EXECUTIVES

Ansord E Hewitt - Director-General



Maurice Charvis



Cheryl Lewis



Cedric Wilson



Patricia Watson

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

Laurette Adams Thomas - Director



Nova Barnett



Lyndon Adlam



Shanique Nunes



Ingrid Brown Cripps



Rahsaan Thomas



Granville McKoy



Lorraine Baker



Francine Brown



Roxan Jackson



Adeka Minns

FINANCE



Rolando Johnson



Venetia Cooke



Kadine Williams



Joan Bailey-Banton

Team

LEGAL



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & RISK



REGULATION, POLICY, MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT



AUDIT



CONSUMER & PUBLIC AFFAIRS





IT and Risk Director Leighton Hamilton (right), who was appointed the OUR's management representative, quality management system, accepts the ISO 9001:2015 certification from former Chairman of the Bureau of Standards Jamaica, Matthew Samuda, and Michelle Sturridge of the NCBJ on November 28, 2018.

The OUR is ISO 9001:2015 certified

IN 2015, the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) became the first Jamaican regulator to gain ISO 9001:2008 certification for its quality management system (QMS). The certification of conformity to the ISO 9001 standards was presented on Tuesday, December 8, 2015.

In 2018, the OUR upgraded its QMS certification to ISO 9001:2015. The OUR began the process of

obtaining ISO certification as a validation of its quality management system in 2012, through a process of rigorous audits, to determine its eligibility for certification.

Reacting to the award of the certification in 2015, former OUR Director General Albert Gordon said at the time, "ISO certification for the OUR is not mission accomplished, but mission beginning. It

is a continuous process. It is expected to improve our efficiency and effectiveness as an organisation. Establishing and maintaining a quality management system has become a way of life for the OUR."

In its goal to become ISO-certified, the OUR realigned the processes of the organisation towards customer satisfaction,

implemented process standards and audits to ensure adherence to best practices, used a vigorous project management system to measure performance, and improved its document management and records control.

It was accredited by the National Certification Body of Jamaica (NCBJ), the local certification body. The NCBJ is accredited by ANSI-ASQ

National Accreditation Board to offer internationally recognised certification to QMS standards (ISO 9001). The certification provided by NCBJ is equivalent to all leading certification bodies throughout the world.

The OUR undergoes regular surveillance audits by the NCBJ to ensure continuing conformity to the certification.



Mark A. Jamison

OUR provides 25 years of world-class service

OUR provides 25 years of world-class service

Mark A. Jamison/ Contributor

BUILDING A prosperous country requires the work of great individuals and great institutions. Jamaica has been blessed with both, especially in the space of utilities regulation.

I met Winston Hay, the Office of Utilities Regulation's (OUR) first director general, in January 1997, just five months after he started the job. He was in the first cohort of the University of Florida's Public Utility Research Center (PURC) two-week course on utility regulation and strategy. This launched a long and productive relationship between Mr Hay and PURC, and between the OUR and PURC. It is a relationship that has served both entities well.

Fifty-nine OUR professionals have participated in this course, both as instructors and attendees. The latest OUR official to be part of our faculty, Deputy Director General Cedric Wilson, is carrying on a strong tradition that Mr Hay, J. Paul Morgan, and others formed over the years.

Both through this outreach and through its examples of well-reasoned decision-making, the OUR has been a world leader in regulation. My colleagues and I use OUR

decisions in our teaching, as the OUR evaluations of regulatory alternatives are thorough and clear. Whether the decisions are as controversial as determining utility profits or as esoteric as deciding which is more effective – controlling prices or controlling revenues – regulatory professionals from around the world have benefitted from studying the OUR and its decisions.

OUR leadership was instrumental in forming the Organisation of Caribbean Utility Regulators, which is one of the world's most successful utility regulatory associations, providing its members with important learning opportunities and challenging them to be world leaders.

The OUR has also been a leader in energy reforms, providing model decisions for renewable energy and incentivising utilities to be efficient in how they purchase their fuels.

So congratulations to the OUR, and to Jamaica, on the 25th anniversary of the OUR's founding. My PURC colleagues and I are proud of our connections with you, and of the work you have accomplished.

Dr Mark Jamison is the director and Gerald Gunter Memorial professor of the Public Utility Research Center at the University of Florida, USA.

Congratulations to
**The Office of
Utilities Regulation**
on your

25th
ANNIVERSARY

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LIST OF ENTITIES REGULATED BY THE OUR

LICENCEES IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

Advance Cable Systems Company Ltd
 Amber Innovations Limited
 Apito Limited
 Bessnet Company Ltd
 Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd
 Caribbean Landing Co Ltd
 Caribbean Voice Limited
 Caribe Communication
 Columbus Communications Ltd/ trading as Flow
 Combined Communications Ltd
 C.T.L. Limited
 Dekal Wireless Limited
 EZMZE Company Limited
 Fibralink Jamaica Limited
 Giant Networks Limited
 Home Time Entertainment Limited
 Home Town Telephone Ltd
 Hospitality Comms Information System, Now Traille Caribbean Ltd
 Innovo Solutions Limited
 Introlink Café Communication Ltd
 Island Networks Limited
 JACS Cable Limited
 Jamaica Digiport International Ltd. Has been acquired by Lime
 Jamaica Prepaid Limited (formerly Merit Communications Limited), now Columbus Communications Ja Ltd (FLOW)
 Jamaica Public Service Co. Ltd
 Kayla Internet Service Provider Ltd
 Kubi Wireless Jamaica Ltd
 Linscom Network Ltd
 McKoy Cable Television Company Ltd

Digicel (Jamica) Limited
 NAV Sat Supplies Ltd
 Neptune Communications (Jamaica) Limited
 Network Cable Services Ltd
 Noble Wi-Fi Ltd
 NYCMAR Communications Limited
 One Force Communications.
 Orbit Links IP Services Co Ltd
 Phoenix Tower Jamaica Ltd
 PIXCOM Communication Ltd
 Porting Access
 QES-46 Limited
 Radio Jamaica
 ReadyNET Limited
 Rock Mobile Limited
 Rural Net Solutions Company Ltd
 S & B Communications Limited
 Solar Internet Repairs S.I.R. Tech Jamaica Ltd
 Stars Cable Company Ltd
 Surge Telecom
 Telecomb Networks Ltd
 Telecomunicaciones Grand Caribe S.A.
 Tendo Telecom Limited
 Trans Caribbean Cable Ltd
 Ubitelecom Ltd
 Xtrinet Ltd
 Verge Communication
 Vionet Enterprise Limited
 Woke Communications Inc Limited

Eight Rivers Energy Company
 Jamalco – Ropecon
 Jamaica Energy Partners
 Jamaica Private Power Company
 Jamaica Broilers
 Jamaica Public Service Company Limited
 Munro College Windfarms Limited
 Wigton Windfarms Limited
 NFE South Power Holdings Limited
 South Jamaica Power Company Limited

LICENCEES IN THE WATER & SEWERAGE SECTORS

Can-Cara Development Limited
 Central Waste Water Company Limited
 Dairy Spring Limited
 Dynamic Environmental Management Limited
 Four Rivers Development Company Limited
 Hampstead Citizens Association Benevolent Society
 Rose Hall Development limited
 Runaway Bay Water Company
 Landmark Development Limited
 Waterwheel Estates Ltd
 Drax Hall Utilities Limited
 St Jago Hills Development Co Ltd
 Ironshore Utilities limited
 Everoy H. Chin Co Ltd
 Richmond Environmental Services Ltd
 Tallawah Investment Ltd.
 Tryall Golf and Beach Club Ltd
 Kemtek Development & Construction Ltd

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Reaching OUT



OUR's IT and Risk Director, Leighton Hamilton provides mentorship to two students as part of OUR's 2016 activity to observe Girls in ICT day.

The OUR staff adopted the Wortley Home for Girls. Every year, the OUR members donate well needed supplies and gifts, provide mentorship and spend time with the wards.



OUR's Patricia Watson making preparations for the treat for the wards in 2021 December.



Two of the wards give each other a joyful embrace after receiving their Christmas gifts.



OUR's Fay Samuels (right) presents a few donations to the Wortley Home for Girls.



OUR's Judene Channer puts the finishing touches on her artwork at Bellefield Basic School in St Mary for Labour Day 2015.



OUR's Andre Lindsay ensuring he gets all the angles while painting at Bellefield Basic School.

Customer Service & Outreach





OUR Customer Service & Outreach



CONGRATULATIONS



To the **OUR** on **25 years** of pioneering nation-building in the space of independent utility regulation and empowering Jamaican consumers.

LEADING CHANGE. MAKING A DIFFERENCE.



Starting operations at the OUR – some brief recollections

I AM pleased to extend hearty congratulations to the Office of Utilities Regulations (OUR) on its 25th anniversary. It is very satisfying to know that the OUR has performed creditably and with integrity since its inauguration in 1997.

Prior to its formal commencement, it was a privilege to have been appointed by the Ministry of Public Utilities and Transport (with the approval of Cabinet) as programme manager – consultant for the establishment and management of the OUR Preparation Unit. That assignment commenced in early 1995 and ended after the appointment of Mr Winston Hay, by the governor general, as the first director general in late 1996. The Preparatory Unit successfully completed its assignments and handed the baton over to the OUR.

The establishment of the OUR became necessary because of the intention of the Government, with the support of the World Bank and the Inter-American Bank, to permit private investments in Jamaica's public utilities sector for the very first time. Being chairman of the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd (JPS) at the time, and having participated in negotiations with the then prospective investors in the first such power plants eventually built in Jamaica – Jamaica Private Power Company (JPPC) and Jamaica Energy Partners (JEP) – presented me with the opportunity to visit electricity generation plants along with several public utilities regulators in the United Kingdom. This experience undoubtedly proved very useful for my OUR assignment. As expected, my relationship with the JPS was relinquished prior to assuming the role as consultant at the OUR Preparation Unit.

There is a natural and inevitable tension built into the role of an organisation designed to administer agreements, mediate protocols and make financial determinations among competing interests. This is particularly true when the parties involved are the public (Government and people) on one hand, and private sector (profit-focused) capital on the other. This persistent,



Earl Richards

precarious, problematic balance defines the OUR's role.

It is even more testing, when the organisation (the OUR, in this instance) is a creature of the Government, and yet it is expected to exercise a high degree of independence in its adjudications. In this regard, for the past 25 years, the OUR has achieved – by public account – remarkable success and respect. I applaud the successive directors general and senior leadership of the OUR for this achievement. I also congratulate successive governments for standing with the OUR, even in trying circumstances.

Jamaica has seen a significant and ongoing expansion in private capital investments in the public utilities sector over the 25 years of the OUR's existence. Much credit is due to the precise, delicate equilibrium in the OUR's decisions and performance, critical factors in the confidence needed by private capital to invest while balancing the collective interests of the public.

The OUR has also been successful in communicating effectively to the public and facilitating open discourse on its deliberations. This effort has enhanced the organisation's public profile and deserves commendation.

May God's continued blessings attend the OUR team as it works and pursues excellence.

– Earl Richards



Some OUR staff members pose for a photo after the OUR's 25th anniversary church service at the Faith Cathedral Deliverance Centre on January 9, 2022.



The major utility companies show their commitment to and support for the OUR's Parish Connections outreach series at the launch on March 9, 2015. The series saw the staging of several outreach activities in each parish including community meetings and utility expos over a three year period. From left to right are: Andrew Lee (FLOW), Charles Douglas (LIME), Patrick Young (Digicel), Winsome Callum (JPS), Albert Gordon (OUR) and Charles Buchanan (NWC).

We thank you for your continued support as we work in the nation's interest to improve utility regulation in Jamaica.

25
OUR
1997
- 2022

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

We remain focused on fulfilling our mandate to provide effective regulation of utility services to facilitate access to modern, reliable, affordable and quality services while ensuring utility providers have the opportunity to make a reasonable return on their investments.

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The OUR is not a consumer advocacy body: It provides regulatory balance

Elizabeth Bennett Marsh
Public Education Specialist, Office of
Utilities Regulation

WHOSE SIDE are you on, OUR? This refrain comes in various forms from utility customers and is often echoed in mainstream and social media.

Public comments on the perceived role of the OUR, especially following an announcement of a utility tariff decision, have not escaped the regulator's scrutiny, even while it has, on many occasions, sought to remind the public of its powers and obligations under the OUR Act and other sector-specific legislation.

There is, seemingly, a misperception held by utility consumers that the OUR was set up solely to secure only their rights and interests. From this perspective, it is sometimes assumed that the OUR should only make decisions that cater to the consumers' most pressing expectations, notwithstanding the prevailing circumstances.

Some utility consumers are of the view that in these harsh economic times, the OUR must 'read the room' when making decisions, and act accordingly. Meaning that the OUR should only take into consideration the difficulties being experienced by customers arising from loss of wages, increases in the cost of living, downturn in business, volatile global prices, etc.

Is the OUR obliged to do so? Is it a consumer advocacy body? These questions bring into sharp focus the role and mandate of the OUR.

Consumer advocacy is the protection and promotion of the welfare and rights of consumers. A consumer advocacy body – usually a lobby group – is the voice of consumers on policy matters and other decisions that impact them and their well-being.

The OUR began operations in 1997 with a mandate to provide effective regulation of utility services.

This kind of regulation is fundamental to the well-being of people in modern society and entails ensuring that consumers have access to modern, safe, reliable, affordable, and quality utility services, while providing the opportunity for utilities or service providers to make a reasonable return on their investment.

The OUR's mandate includes establishing and maintaining transparent and objective rules for the regulation of utility services, advising the government on utility matters as required, making recommendations on service supply licence applications, and ensuring that utility consumers enjoy an acceptable quality of service at a reasonable cost.

The OUR, being an independent and impartial economic regulator, operates under the constraints of various legislation and licences which detail clear objectives, powers and procedural obligations, as well as define the scope and scale of what it is empowered to do. For example, the Electricity Act, 2015, sets out clear guidelines on when the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) can submit tariff review applications to the OUR, and the parameters within which such applications should be assessed by the OUR. The OUR, as a quasi-judicial body, is obliged to make objective decisions based on technical, economic and legally sound reasoning. Therefore, it does not have the latitude to make decisions that are politically or emotionally motivated. Its firm adherence to making decisions guided by relevant legislative provisions, has resulted in decisions that have proven, largely, to withstand scrutiny whether through public discourse or before a tribunal or a court of law.

Arguably, it is out of a collective sense of confidence in the OUR and its decisions that creates situations where matters that do not fall within its regulatory remit are sometimes

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Bank of Jamaica congratulates the Office of Utilities Regulations on achieving its Silver Anniversary. We pay tribute to you as a nation builder. Continue to rise and achieve!

Happy 25th Anniversary

OUR



How the OUR helps to improve utility customer service standards

Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson, Director, Consumer and Public Affairs, Office of Utilities Regulation

FOR BUSINESSES, delivering quality customer service is a *sine qua non* for success. As long as the price is affordable and the quality of customer care as well as the goods and services are consistently pleasing to the consumer, they will continue to beat a path to that door or, if they are dissatisfied, they will look for other suitable options.

But what happens to the utility consumer whose choice is limited (or non-existent) and who continually experiences poor customer service? Some consider it a waste of time to complain when they encounter poor customer service, whilst many, even though they might protest, often fail to register it in a manner where a correction can be made. Instead, they succumb to the 'me cyan bother' syndrome. Naturally, the next question from the lips of any disaffected Jamaican utility customer would be: so what is the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) doing?

As a regulator, the OUR's role includes determining the regulatory framework within which the regulated entities operate, as well as setting the utility service rates and standards, including the standard of customer service, for some of them. In doing so, we must ensure that we take into account the needs of stakeholders, including the GOJ, utility service providers and the largest group – the consumers. To honour this role, we embarked on a Mystery Shopping (MS) programme designed to monitor the providers' service level. Since 2017, we have implemented our MS research to monitor the major utility providers: Digicel, FLOW, Cable and Wireless Jamaica, National Water Commission (NWC), and the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd (JPS).

The OUR's MS objectives are in keeping with the organisation's efforts to continually implement policies to improve the well-being of utility consumers. Annual surveys measure the current level of customer service in-store, in the call centres, online and on social media, such as chatrooms/helpdesks, Facebook, Twitter and blogs; customer satisfaction in relation to service quality, specifically, customer experience; the level of improvement; and the overall customer satisfaction rating for each provider.

The question may quite rightly be asked about the value of MS, and here some background and information is necessary. 'Mystery Shopping', also called 'secret shopper' or 'secret caller', was coined in the 1940s by a research company, WilMark, which used the technique of hiring private investigators to pose as employees as part of an undercover operation to stop workplace theft/ fraud. The research has evolved to include data collection for, among other things, customer service. There

is now even a trade association, Mystery Shopping Providers Association (<https://www.mspa-global.org/industry>).

The main feature of MS is that it is a covert activity and persons undertaking the task do not declare that they are conducting it. MS tests the operation of staff to confirm training standards and service delivery at the face-to-face point, with the main objective being to increase the customer service levels.

The OUR's MS objectives are in keeping with the organisation's efforts to continually implement policies to improve the well-being of utility consumers. Annual surveys measure the current level of customer service in-store, in the call centres, online and on social media, such as chatrooms/helpdesks, Facebook, Twitter and blogs; customer satisfaction in relation to service quality, specifically, customer experience; the level of improvement; and the overall customer satisfaction rating for each provider.

What's the value of this technique? The MS research, in and of itself, does not change behaviour. However, the results are in how the findings are utilised to make changes to the OUR's Guaranteed and Overall Standards (where applicable) to benefit consumers.

The notable actions emanating from OUR's MS research are: a new overall standard in customer service for JPS and the development of a Code of Practice for Complaints Handling (COP) for all providers.

Among the consumer service-related aspects of the OUR's Decision on JPS's 2019-2024

Tariff Application, was – EOS13 (Effectiveness of Customer Service) to monitor and measure the level of customer service delivered by JPS. This standard is to, *inter alia*: allow the regulator to verify performance claims made by JPS, and establish minimum customer service quality levels to meet consumer needs and expectations.

Following on its MS findings, the OUR convened annual symposia on Utilities Customer Service and Quality of Service (QoS) Improvement, from which the COP was collaboratively developed.

So what are some of the 'secrets' of the OUR's MS? Personnel hired and trained by a research company goes to the utility provider

and anonymously undertakes a transaction. Each 'shopper' is given a specific scenario, for example, enquiring about how to obtain a new meter, a bill query or payment plans.

The OUR provides the research company with the contact details of the utility's outlets. 'Shoppers' remain anonymous and are both males and females across various ages. No single 'shopper' shops more than one location for the same provider (an important quality control measure), to ensure that their previous experience with another location does not influence their thoughts for the other. Visits and calls are done during both the typical peak (busy) and off-peak (less busy) periods, determined by dates, to assess the provider's performance when there is heavy traffic (peak) versus when there is a slow trickle of customers.

The in-store 'shopper' engages the utility personnel to get a first-hand experience of customer service. Some of the metrics include: the quality of the interaction; whether the customer service representative was professional, knowledgeable, courteous, and was able to appropriately respond to the concerns/complaint.

Online, chatroom and social media 'shoppers' evaluate, for example, ease of bill payment (and instructions), access, knowledge of customer service personnel, and timeliness/usefulness of responses.

The telephone 'shoppers' check the wait time before the call is answered (number of rings); evaluate customer service experience (quality of the responses, knowledge of the agent, clarity of the resolution/information); indicate their perception of the interaction with the representative; and evaluate whether the agent was professional, knowledgeable, courteous, and able to appropriately respond to the concerns/complaints.

The data-collection tool is electronic and in the final analysis, the sum-of-scores method is used to determine the location's customer service performance.

The Mystery Shopping survey is another tool in the OUR's monitoring arsenal to continually improve the quality of customer care that utility customers receive.



KOREA EAST-WEST POWER COMPANY Congratulates the OUR on its 25th Anniversary!

Your hard work and dedication to the Jamaican people have not gone unnoticed.

Thanks for your sterling service to this great nation.



WE ARE THE **OUR**



We regulate the electricity, water/sewerage, and telecommunications sectors.

We protect the rights of consumers and the sectors we regulate impartially.

We provide an avenue of appeal for consumers.

We set the Guaranteed Standards that should be delivered to consumers by utility companies.

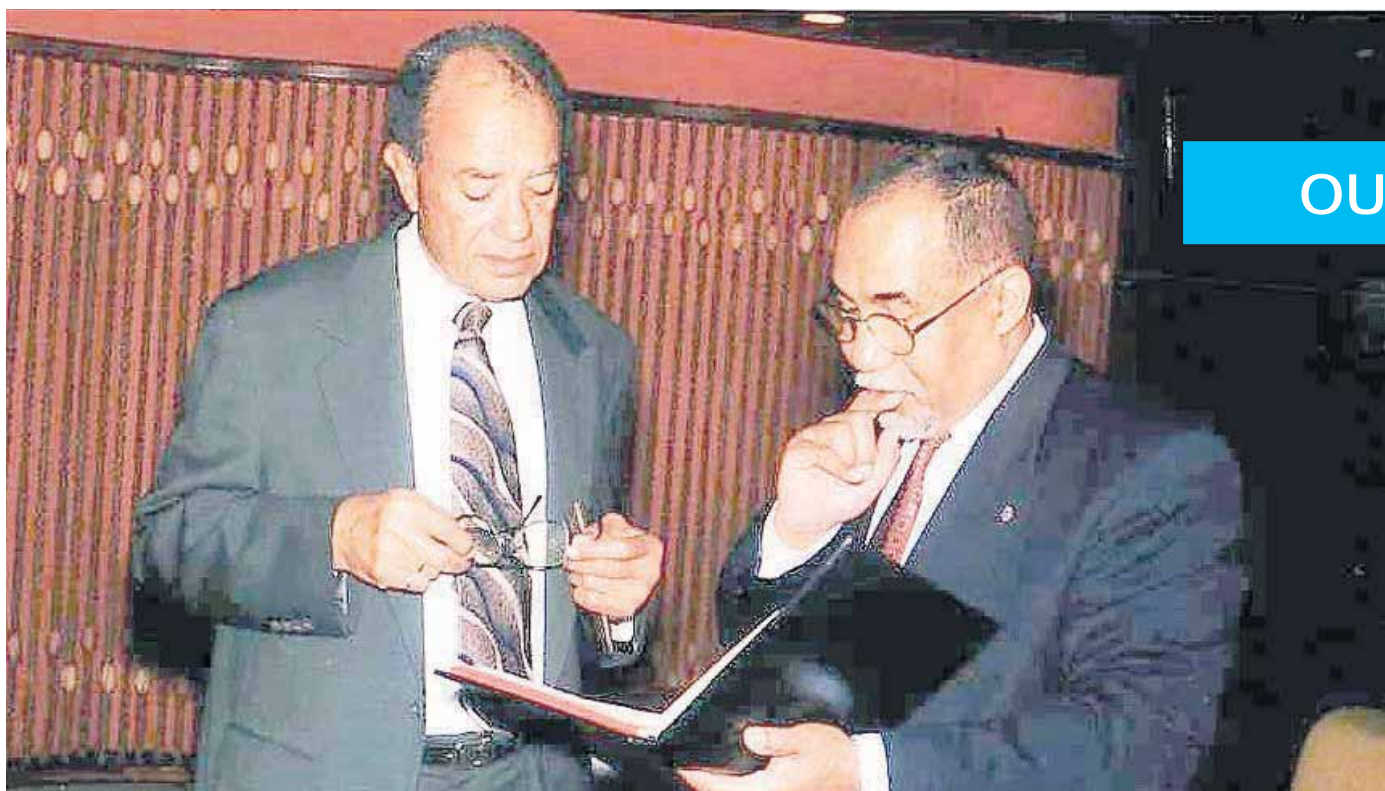
To learn more about the **Guaranteed Standards** and what else we do, log on to www.our.org.jm



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OUR SNAPSHOTS



Director-General Winston Hay (left), confers with Deputy Director-General. J. Paul Morgan ahead of an event in 1999

BALANCE

CONTINUED FROM 35

referred to it for advice and resolution.

So to answer the question posed as to whether the OUR is a consumer advocacy body, it is not. However, the OUR is required to keep regulatory issues in balance. Consequently, it is obliged to consider, among other factors, consumer interest in keeping with the provisions for the protection of consumers set out in the OUR Act, the Telecommunications Act, the National Water Commission Act, the Electricity Act, 2015 and the Electricity Licence, 2016.

In its 25-year history, the OUR has made major, impactful decisions in the interest of consumers. These are just a few:

- Developed guaranteed standards for the National Water Commission (NWC), JPS and private water providers, which hold these utility providers to basic service standards, and, if breached, attracts compensation to affected customers;

- Reduced mobile termination rates in 2012. These are fees mobile telephone companies charge other carriers to terminate calls on their networks. OUR's decision resulted in a significant reduction of overall rates charged by the major telecoms companies, whether for calls to their network or to another;

- Introduced number portability in the telecommunications sector in 2015. This places more power in the hands of telecoms customers by allowing them to change their mobile or landline service provider and keep their existing phone numbers. The guidelines are now being reviewed to ensure, among other things, that the interests of customers continue to be protected;

- Approved measures in the electricity sector that provide cost-effective options to customers. These include transitioning from a two-period to a three-period time of use (TOU) rate regime, and the extension of TOU rates to more customer categories, as well as the introduction of prepaid (pay as you go) rates;

- Spearheaded international procurement processes to identify over 115MW of renewable energy capacity pursuant to a directive in 2015. The country now has a renewable energy mix of mainly

The OUR is required to keep regulatory issues in balance.

Consequently, it is obliged to consider, among other factors, consumer interest in keeping with the provisions for the protection of consumers set out in the OUR Act, the Telecommunications Act, the National Water Commission Act, the Electricity Act, 2015 and the Electricity Licence, 2016.

wind and solar plants provided by Wigton Windfarms, Blue Mountain Renewables, WRB Enterprises Content Solar, and Eight Rivers Energy Company.

- Played a pivotal role in the modernisation of the electricity sector with the introduction of cheaper and environmentally friendlier natural gas and the replacement of old inefficient, oil-fired generating plants with modern, gas-fired plants.

- Approved a special K-Factor Fund for the NWC. This OUR-monitored facility allows the NWC to use a pre-determined percentage on customers' bills to implement non-revenue water (NRW) reduction, sewerage and other specifically approved operational efficiency projects. This Fund has assisted the NWC to deal with the shortage of capital that restricted its ability, in the past, to take on critical projects. A sufficient reduction of the NRW should realise more consistency in the water supply, including during periods of drought.

Despite the OUR not being a consumer advocacy body, it continues to ensure that utility consumers' interests are always taken into consideration in the decision-making process, and that decisions are made in the best interest of all the stakeholders it serves, as it has been doing for the last 25 years.

MESSAGE TO THE OUR FROM Verge COMMUNICATIONS

Verge Communications Ltd. extends sincere congratulations to the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) on the occasion of your **25th Anniversary** of service as Jamaica's utilities regulator.

We recognise and appreciate the vital role you have played in the regulatory framework of this country and the positive contribution to the growth and development of our nation – especially during this time of our Jamaica 60 celebrations.

The future of the utilities sector is poised for rapid transformation as industries tackle climate change, energy management and the new digital economy. The OUR will continue to play a key role in educating, guiding and protecting all parties involved in this vital sector of our economy.

Verge Communications Ltd. looks forward to continuing its working relationship with the OUR and wish for the Office continued success in the coming years.



Austin Brown
Executive Director
Verge Communications Ltd.



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OUR SNAPSHOTS



Bogue Gas Project launch

OUR's then Director-General, Albert Gordon (centre) and former Deputy Director-General, Hopeton Heron (left) toured the Bogue power plant following the launch of the Bogue Gas Project which saw the plant being converted to also use Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The launch took place in Montego Bay, St. James on October 13, 2015.



Courtney Jackson

Deputy Director-General, Courtney Jackson addresses a media conference in 2002.

OUR SNAPSHOTS



Long service

Two of the OUR's longest serving members – Ingrid Brown Cripps (second left) and Venetia Cooke (second right), who each served 25 years at the OUR, pose with OUR's executives on January 9, 2022, following a service to mark the OUR's 25th Anniversary. The members of the executives pictured are: Deputy Director-General, Cheryl Lewis (left), Director-General, Ansord Hewitt and Deputy Director-General, Cedric Wilson.



OUR Launch

The official launch of the OUR took place September 4, 1997 on the roof of the PCJ Resource Centre in New Kingston. From left: Deputy Directors-General Delreo Newman (at lectern) and J. Paul Morgan (sitting), guest speaker, Prime Minister, Percival J. Patterson, Deputy Director-General, Winston Hay, Minister of Public Utilities & Transport, Robert Pickersgill and Rev. Ernest H. DeSouza, Spiritual Leader, Jewish Community who blessed the OUR.



In 2000, the OUR recognised the need to effectively manage the documents and books that had accumulated. This resulted in the establishment of the OUR's library. This was officially opened in October 2003. From left: Japanese Ambassador, His Excellency Hiroshi Sakurai, Director-General, J. Paul Morgan and Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP, Bartholomew Mensah.

Congratulations

25

OUR
1997 - 2022

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

Continue to serve Jamaica for another 25 years!

With the compliments of



Richmond Environmental Services Ltd.



OUR SERVICE STANDARDS FOR THE APPEALS PROCESS

Our Appeals Process outlines the steps taken in conducting investigation into your concerns with your utility provider. However, you must first complete the service provider's complaints procedure at the service provider before appealing the decision to the OUR. In submitting your appeal, you must include: a copy of the utility's response, a letter outlining your reason for appealing and any other supporting information.

OUR'S APPEALS PROCESS*	TIMELINE (Working Days)
Acknowledgement and Assignment of Appeals	2
Case Letter Preparation and Dispatch	5
Response from Service Provider	30
Review of Provider Response	10
Follow-up Case Letter where necessary	0
Response from Service Provider to Follow-up Case Letter	5
Review of Provider Response to Follow-up Case Letter	5
Final Letter Preparation	5
Review Draft Final Letter	2
Dispatch Final Letter	1
	65

*Special Appeals are completed within 85 Business Days.

2020 March

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36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10, Jamaica W.I.

Email: consumer@our.org.jm
Website: www.our.org.jm
www.facebook.com/theourja
www.twitter.com/TheOURja

Tel: 876-968-6053
Fax: 876-929-3635
Toll Free from land lines:
888-CALL-OUR (2255-687)



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION
Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

CONSUMER AFFAIRS CUSTOMER CHARTER



OUR SNAPSHOTS

Praise and Thanksgiving

OUR executives and well-wishers gather for the OUR's Praise and Thanksgiving service in December 2012. From left to right: Dr Wayne Henry (now Director-General, PIOJ); Earl Richards, former Programme Manager, OUR Preparatory Unit; Former Directors-General, J. Paul Morgan and Winston Hay and then Director-General, Zian Mian. In the background is then Deputy Director-General, Hopeton Henry.



They left a mark

THE OUR is fortunate to have been graced with very qualified and dedicated members who contribute greatly to the development of the organisation and the utility sectors during their tenure. Some died while at the OUR, while others passed after demitting the organisation. We would like to recognise them.



Carolyn Young – Up to the time she retired in December 31, 2017, Carolyn Young was the longest serving member of the OUR, having started on January 20, 1997. While at the OUR, Carolyn served in various capacities, culminating with her appointment as Director of Human Resources and Administration, a post in which she served until her retirement. Carolyn died on April 10, 2021.



Lorna Ferguson Townsend started with the OUR on January 3, 2002 and was the Coordinator for the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit. Her passion of customer service was trumped only by her undying love for the Lord. As a faithful Christian, she sought to uphold her strong Christian ideals and was a mentor and confidant to many of her colleagues. Lorna initiated the OUR's annual Christmas Praise and Thanksgiving Service, a yearly fixture on the holiday calendar. She passed away on August 19, 2015 while at the OUR.

HAPPY
25th
ANNIVERSARY
to the
OUR
BEST Wishes!



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DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

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The purpose of the Consumer and Public Affairs Department is to administer the consumer affairs regulatory function of the OUR and to monitor and evaluate the customer service performance of all regulated utilities.

Special Appeals relate to those matters which require consultation outside of the Consumer Affairs Unit. As such, an additional twenty (20) working days is provided for the needed consultation; thereby resulting in a completion timeline of 85 working days for these appeals. Customers are advised of the completion timeline for general and Special Appeals.

Our commitment to you...



The Office of Utilities Regulation, through the Consumer Affairs Unit, is committed to providing you with exemplary service. In this regard, this Charter outlines how we will conduct our duties and responsibilities to you, our valued customers, while enabling access to information in a customer-centric environment.

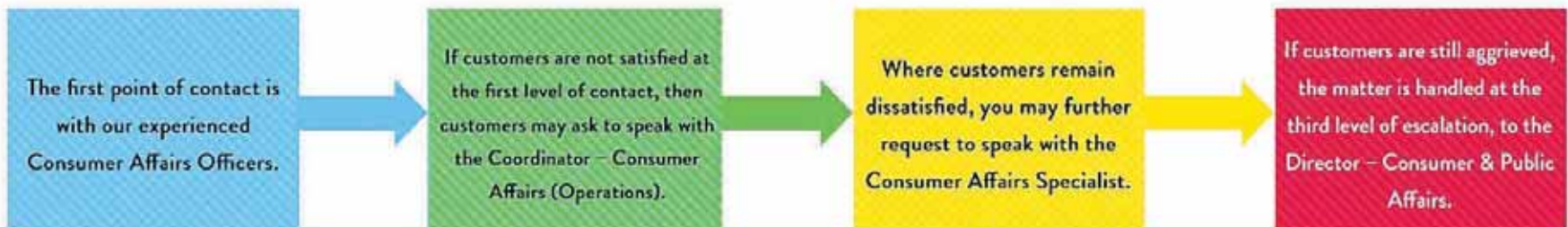
WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM US:

WE EXPECT OUR CUSTOMERS TO:

- Professional, warm and friendly staff.
- Courteous Consumer Affairs Officers who will identify themselves upon contact.
- Complete investigation of your routine appeals within 65 working days.
- To be provided with an update on your appeal every thirty (30) working days.
- To be seen by a Consumer Affairs Officer within five (5) minutes of arrival.
- Your information to be treated with the strictest level of confidentiality.
- To be provided with accurate and current information.

- Take your complaints to the respective service provider, escalating the matter where necessary before appealing to us.
- Submit appeals of your service provider's decision in writing (letter, email or fax), which should contain the account number affected.
- Provide accurate and detailed information.
- Provide contact details including: telephone number, mailing address and email address.
- Provide timely response to requests for additional information or clarification.
- Treat our staff with the same level of respect received.
- Take the time to provide us with feedback to help us to continually improve our services.

ESCALATION OF APPEALS PROCEDURE:



OUR SNAPSHOTS

Bid Opening

OUR team members verified documents at a public bid opening on August 8, 2013. From left to right, General Counsel Chenee Riley, Chief Internal Auditor, Hope James and Budget Officer Deslyn Nwude.

They left a mark

THE OUR is fortunate to have been graced with very qualified and dedicated members who contribute greatly to the development of the organisation and the utility sectors during their tenure. Some died while at the OUR, while others passed after demitting the organisation. We would like to recognise them.



Camile Rowe joined the OUR on February 1, 2018 as a Consultant Regulatory Economist. Though her stint was short, her contribution was vast and wide-reaching. She died on December 22, 2020 while still in the employ of the OUR.



J. Paul Morgan – Prior to his appointment as Director-General of the OUR from 2002 to 2008, he was one of two Deputy Director-General and a member of the Office from 1997 to 2002. Long after he demitted office, J. Paul remained a valuable resource, who made himself available to assist in whatever way he could. J. Paul died on January 19, 2020.



PORTINGXS

CONGRATULATES

the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) and their team with their 25th anniversary!

PXS is proud to have provided its number portability services for many years as part of the OUR's mission to contribute to Jamaica's national development. We highly value our long term relationship with the OUR and the Jamaican telecommunication service providers and look forward to continue our collaboration for years to come.

Team PXS

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18	58	88	58	27	SUBSCRIBER	23			95	19			56	81	80	76	67	77	08	
59	58	35	78		INFORMATION	02	21	28	74	26	52	74	58			86	55	34		
30	68	21	82	00	DATABASE	10	94	80	22		78	44	10	65	55	90	97	11		
54	64		16		73	53	90	45	97	86	26	48	NUMBER	10	27	78		18		
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OUR SNAPSHOTS



Wheeling Workshop

Deputy Director-General Cedric Wilson (centre) addresses a question from a stakeholder at a Wheeling workshop on May 2, 2013.



Talking Telecoms at UTech

Maurice Charvis, who was acting Director-General, makes a presentation at a conference at the University of Technology in March 2013.

They left a mark

THE OUR is fortunate to have been graced with very qualified and dedicated members who contribute greatly to the development of the organisation and the utility sectors during their tenure. Some died while at the OUR, while others passed after demitting the organisation. We would like to recognise them.

Janet Stewart started with the OUR as an Administrative Assistant on January 3, 2000. She died January 20, 2002.



Patrick Williams served as an Economist at the OUR between 2000 and 2004 and later as a Senior Economist from 2005 to 2007. He died in December 5, 2008.



Courtney Jackson – Courtney accepted the position of Deputy Director General at the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), with responsibility for Telecommunications in 2000. He served seven years in this capacity under two Director Generals, Mr. Winston Hay and Mr. J. Paul Morgan. Courtney transitioned on March 2, 2017.

***Congratulations on
25 years of excellent service!***

25
OUR
1997
- 2022

The Fair Trading Commission salutes the OUR for its sterling contribution to Jamaica's development through effective regulation of the utility services.



The FTC is committed to the protection and promotion of competition.

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The Spectrum Management Authority congratulates the Office of Utilities Regulation on its 25th Anniversary.

.....

The SMA commends the
OUR's achievements in
regulating utilities for the benefit of
the people and the
Government of Jamaica.



As we continue in partnership for the
growth and development of Jamaica,
the SMA wishes the OUR
perpetual years of success.



Celebrating 21 years of regulatory service and

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