

## Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### OOCUR Chairman says 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Enables Proactive Regional Regulation

**(Kingston, Jamaica; 2026 April 29):** Chairman of the Organisation of Caribbean Utility Regulators (OOCUR), Ansord Hewitt, says the context of the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual OOCUR Conference allows Caribbean utility regulators to take a proactive approach to the challenges they currently face.

Mr. Hewitt, while giving his welcome remarks during the conference's opening ceremony, explained that these challenges include providing thought leadership and case studies on cutting-edge regulatory problems, innovations, and achievements; showcasing regional talents; and forging vital regional and international links.

He added that a conference of this nature enables collaboration across the Caribbean, allowing countries to share resources and leverage synergies, noting that no Caribbean country operates in a vacuum.

Mr. Hewitt further underscored that the conference will be deemed successful if, among other things, utility regulators engage in honest, frank, and respectful dialogue; confront inaction and procrastination and create a greater sense of urgency in addressing pressing issues.

Meanwhile, Minister Without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Science, Technology and Special Projects, Dr. Andrew Wheatley, who delivered the opening address on behalf of the Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Dr. Andrew Holness, echoed similar sentiments, noting that shared regulatory challenges create solidarity among Caribbean nations.

*"Electricity costs across much of the region are among the highest in the world, placing a heavy burden on households and businesses alike. Our water systems face intensifying stress from climate variability and climate change. Our telecommunications infrastructure, while improving, must now contend with the coming of 5G and the digital demands of tomorrow's economy. And all of this must be managed by regulatory authorities whose resources, by the standards of larger economies, are often modest," said Dr. Wheatley.*

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Dr. Wheatley also emphasised that the challenges addressed by OOCUR do not respect national borders and that the most effective responses require regional collaboration rather than isolated national efforts.

The OCCUR brings together professionals from the energy, water and sewerage, and telecommunications sectors across the Caribbean and North America. Participants can engage in networking, knowledge sharing, and discussions about the future direction of the utilities industry.

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) is hosting the Organisation of Caribbean Utility Regulators (OOCUR) Annual Conference in Trelawny from April 27 to May 1, 2026.

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