



OUR
OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

Regulating Utilities for the Benefit of All

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OUR Extends 10-Digit Permissive Dialling Period to March 2019

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2018 October 30): The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has extended the permissive 10-digit dialling period by five (5) months, to 2019 March 30.

The permissive dialling period was scheduled to end on 2018 October 30, however the OUR received several significant requests for an extension from service providers and some of their large business customers, asking for more time to address challenges relating to systems employing machine-to-machine communications and PBX telephone systems.

The challenges pertain primarily to some older PBX systems, budgetary constraints prohibiting the timely replacement of affected equipment, and the length of time needed to reconfigure thousands of Point of Sale (POS) and alarm systems. Affected customers include hospitals, hotels, security companies and some major government entities. Taking into consideration the financial and security risks involved, the OUR decided to extend the permissive dialling period by the five (5) months.

Although disappointed that stakeholders did not indicate the extent of their challenges earlier in the permissive dialling period, the OUR said that it is satisfied that, based on the magnitude of the problem, resolution before the expiry of the permissive dialling period is not practicable. A reasonable extension of time is, therefore, required.

BACKGROUND

On 2018 May 30, a new area code, 658 was implemented in Jamaica to augment the supply of numbers provided under area code 876. The effect of this is that there is a need to make 10-digit dialling for all local calls mandatory. To facilitate the transition from 7- to 10-digit local dialling, the Office had established a 5-month period of permissive dialling (ending 2018 October 30) during which both 7 and 10 digits may be dialled to complete calls with a reminder message preceding the call completion whenever a 7-digit number is dialled. All systems and devices used to dial and receive/store 10-digit telephone numbers were required to be made compatible by 2018 October 30.

It was expected that during the permissive dialling period, safety and security systems, other types of auto diallers, PBXs and other relevant number-dependent systems and devices would have been reprogrammed in time for the imposition of mandatory 10-digit dialling well in advance of the deadline date.

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Contact: Elizabeth Bennett Marsh – Public Education Specialist: 876-968-6053