

Almost \$155 million paid out to utility consumers in 2018

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2019 March 21): Utility companies paid out approximately \$155 million to their customers in rebates and compensation for breaches of the Guaranteed Standards in 2018.

A breakdown of the data contained in the OUR’s final Quarterly Performance Report for 2018, shows that the total sum secured for utility consumers through the OUR’s intervention was \$1,483,125. Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS), National Water Commission (NWC) and Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for 72%, 14% and 9% of total credits respectively with the remaining 5% being secured from C&WJ (FLOW).

Of the reported amount, \$200,814 was secured for utility customers through the intervention of the OUR’s Consumer Affairs Unit in the October to December quarter, with JPS, NWC, Columbus Communications (Flow), and C&WJ (FLOW) accounting for 33%, 40%, 12%, and 15% respectively.

In addition, the two major utility companies, JPS and NWC, paid out just under \$152M for breaches of its guaranteed service standards to customers in 2018.

The table below contains a breakdown of the number of breaches committed by JPS and NWC and the sum paid to affected customers.

Utility	Calendar Year 2018	Oct. 2018 to Dec. 2018	Notes
JPS			
Service Standard Breaches	72,046	17,240	Breaches fell by 5% over 2017
Potential Compensation	\$148M	\$37.3M	Potential compensation was paid through automatic compensation.
Actual Compensation	\$148M	\$37.3M	
NWC			
Service Standard Breaches	2,146	603	Breaches fell by 16% over 2017
Potential Compensation	\$7M	\$2M	54% of the potential compensation for 2018 was paid. The balance, 46% was not paid as the required claim forms were not submitted.
Actual Compensation	\$3.8M	\$1.2M	

The OUR is also satisfied that the JPS has stopped applying a monthly charge to customers who use the Pay-As-You-Go/Prepaid service, and that it has made refunds of approximately \$1.2M to the customers affected by the charge which JPS started in 2016.

This charge for the service was not approved by the OUR and so an investigation was launched.

Almost \$155 million paid out to utility consumers in 2018 .../2

JPS cooperated with the OUR's request for relevant information as part of its investigation about the charge. Having completed its work, the OUR is now satisfied that the light and power company has taken the measures necessary to cease the application of the Customer Charge to Pay-As-You-Go Customers, and has refunded affected customers' accounts.

The OUR's 2018 October – December Quarterly Performance Report can be found on the OUR's website: www.our.org.jm.

-30-

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