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Commissioners

PURC PRESENTATION ON MANAGING COMPLAINT PROCESS

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Complaints Handling Procedure

Complaints handling is one the major activities of the Commission. This is undertaken by the Bureau of Consumer Services of the PURC. Complaints are handled according to the Complaints procedure and most complaints have been successfully resolved.



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Regional Offices

Three Regional Offices have been established in Kumasi, Takoradi and Tamale to provide services to the general public. The objective is to ensure that the interest of consumers and Utilities are protected nationally. The cities indicated above are responsible for the following regions:

Accra – Greater Accra, Eastern and Volta

Kumasi – Ashanti and Brong Ahafo

Takoradi – Western and Central

Tamale – Northern, Upper East and Upper West.



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Complaints Handling Process

The Commission has established regulations to provide guidelines for performance as well as to protect the consumer. One such key Regulation is the

- Complaints Policy and Procedures L. I. 1665 – Regulations governing the submission, hearing and determination of Complaints.



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Key points in LI 1665

- How to make Complaints
- Information Required of the Complainant
- How PURC respond to Complaints
- How PURC enforce its Decisions
- Payments of bills whiles complaint is being investigated
- Offences



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Operational Manual

The Bureau also has its own operational manual on complaints handling. Detail of which are below

Activity to be performed	Days
Document details of the complaint in a complaints Note Book.	3 days
Acknowledge receipt of complaint if by post or fax	1 day



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Forward a copy of the complaint together with a request for investigation and comments to the utility service provider, which must respond within five working days from the date of receipt.	Within 3 working days
Follow up with a phone call or written reminder if no response is received within ten days	1 Day



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Submission of appropriate response to complainant	2 days
Notification of further action on response from respondent to all affected parties.	Within 3 working days
If no agreement is reached, the Bureau should collaborate with the Legal Department to conduct a formal hearing before a panel of three or five representing the Commission	Within 7 working days



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A full report of each case resolved by any of the above processes should be submitted to the directorate of the Bureau of Consumer Services. In the case of a formal hearing, the panel should submit a Full report to the Commission including its recommendations. After considering the panel's report, the Commission will give its ruling and ensure its compliance.

Within 3
working
days of
resolution
or hearing



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Data on complaints received and resolved - (2004 – 2006)

Year	No. of Complaints	No. Resolved	Percentage Resolved
2004	240	114	47.5%
2005	287	153	53.3%
2006	274	166	60.6%
Total	801	433	54.1%

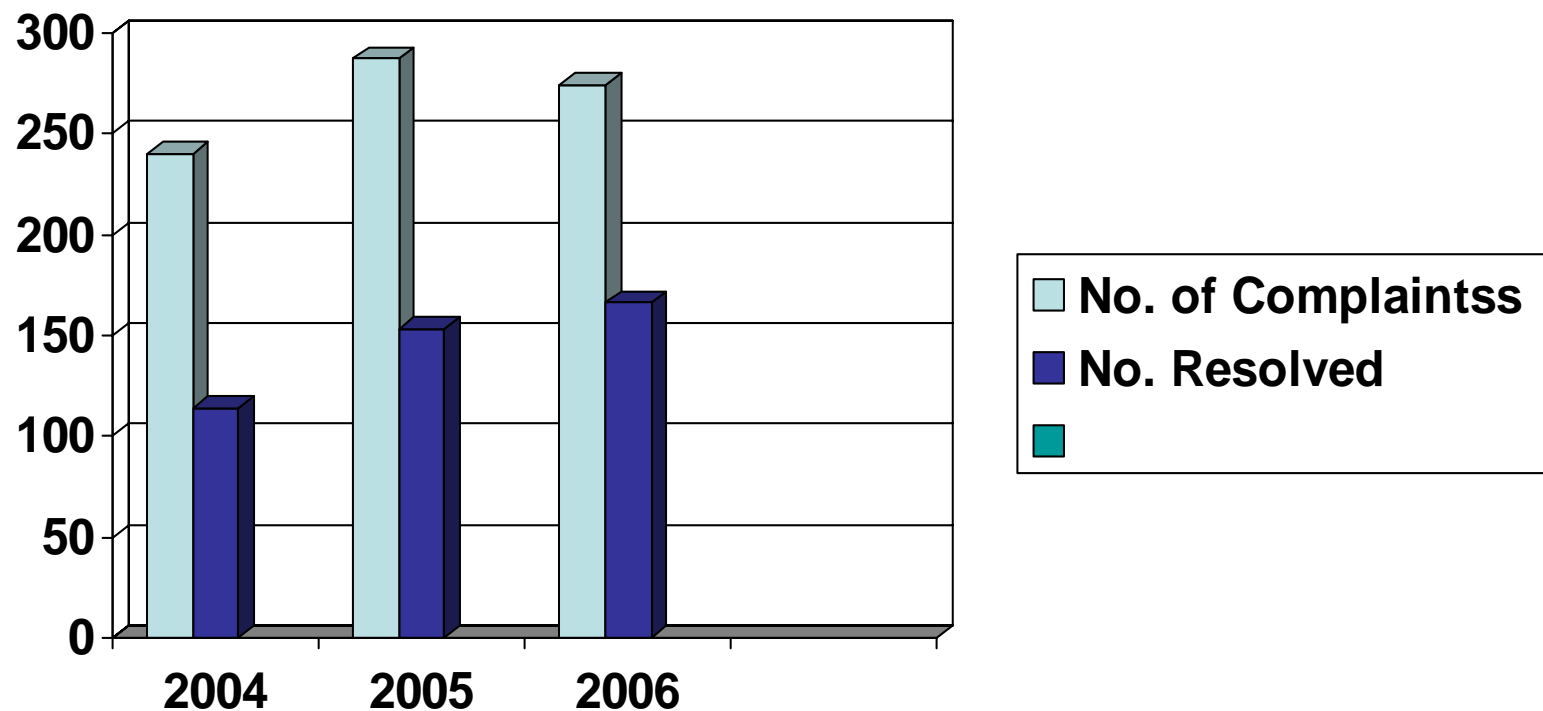


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Bar Chart indicating the number of complaints and the number resolved





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Categories of Complaints

Category Year	Payment not Reflecting	Quality of Service	Over Billing	Unlawful Disconnecti on	Faulty Meter	Total
2004	10	90	91	33	16	240
2005	21	75	120	52	19	287
2006	20	119	83	36	16	274
Total	51	284	294	121	51	801

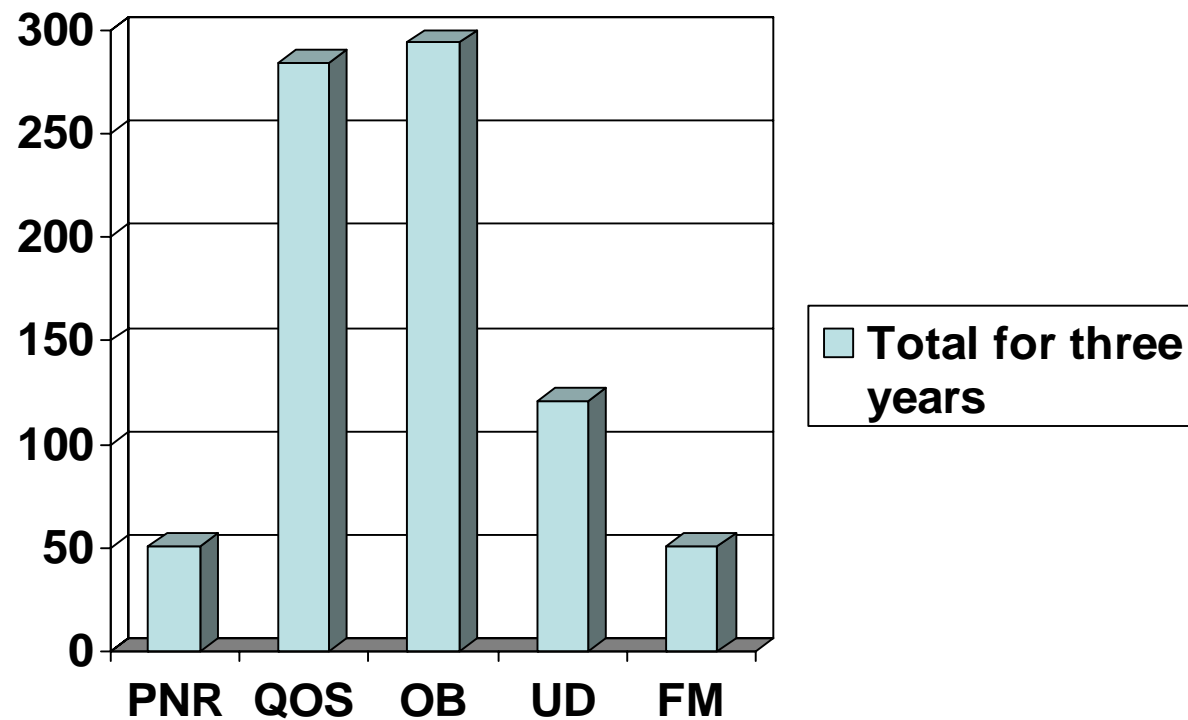


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Total complaints by categories – (2004 – 2006)





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Basis for the increases in complaints

- Through advertisements both in the print and electronic media and Discussions in the electronic media.
- Public For a
- Word of Mouth recommendations
- Deterioration in Quality of Service



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Customer Service rules and enforcement

- **Monitoring**

Regional and Consumer Services Officers undertake quarterly monitoring of Customer Service Centres and District Offices of the Utilities.

Criteria used in measuring their performance include;

Ambience, Comfort for Consumers, Suggestion Boxes, Schedule of Charges, Consumer Education, Complaints and Responses File, New Service Connection, Metering Policy , Disposition of the Officials, Attitude towards Consumers, Response Time to Faults, Dedicated Telephone Line, Promotion of Payment Options



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Customer Service rules and enforcement

- The utilities are also to provide quarterly information in a reporting format
- A draft guaranteed standards of performance and compensation have been developed but is yet to be implemented
- Enforcement have delayed due to the poor financing of the utilities and the differences of opinion amongst the Commissioners with regards to enforcement.
- ❖ This is subject to the planned amendment of the PURC Act (Act 538)



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Alternative Dispute Resolution

This is yet to be developed. However informal mediation is held between consumers and the utilities.

Areas of mediation include;

- o Billing
- o Payment agreement
- o Disconnection



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Challenges

- Communication Technology
- Inadequate funding
- Cooperation from the utilities
- High level of illiteracy



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