

**THE ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(EWURA)**

COMPLAINT NUMBER: EWURA/33/4/231

BETWEEN

DAR ES SALAAM MERCHANTS CHAMBER..... COMPLAINANT

VERSUS

**DAR ES SALAAM WATER SUPPLY
AND SEWERAGE CORPORATION..... RESPONDENT**

AWARD

**(Made by the Board of Directors of EWURA at its 111th Ordinary Meeting
held at Dar es Salaam on 4th October 2016)**

1.0 Background Information

On 23rd December 2015, Ms. Farida Lyimo on behalf of the Dar es salaam Merchants Chamber ("the Complainant") located at Textile House, 2nd Floor, Morogoro Road /Indira Ghandi Street, P. O. Box 12 Dar es salaam, lodged a complaint at EWURA against the Dar es Salaam Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation, (DAWASCO) ("the Respondent") complaining on malicious and poor quality of service conducted by the Respondent's staff. The Complainant states that it has been a routine for the Respondent to send SMS bills on Friday and to visit the Complainant the following day, i.e. Saturday, after close of business to disconnect water supply with allegations that the previous month bill is not paid. The Complainant claims further that when they show their receipts, the Respondent's staff come up with fictitious claims which they cannot substantiate as they do not carry a list of customers to be disconnected. The Complainant states that they are

not happy with the way the Respondent is handling them and thus, they have requested that the Respondent be ordered to:

- (a) observe customers rights as required by law and to practice good governance as well as maintaining respect and human dignity;
- (b) serve water bill every month in a transparent manner (openly) indicating meter reading and unit consumed and sewer charges to be shown separately;
- (c) give customers freedom to decide the mode of getting their bills such as SMS, E-mails or to collect the printed copy at the Respondent offices;
- (d) allow customers up to 3 weeks to pay their monthly bill, whereby end month being within that period;
- (e) give one week disconnection notice if payment is not made within time;
- (f) stop disconnection of water services on Saturdays and Sundays (week end and holidays);
- (g) reduce connection fee from 30,000 to 15,000 to match with the majority economic state;
- (h) reduce reconnection time to 6 hours after payment;
- (i) investigate and rectify allegation of wrong billing within a week and inform customer the correct bill in writing;
- (j) avoid estimated bills unless it is inevitable (beyond DAWASCO's control) however the bill to be adjusted in the next bill;
- (k) conduct awareness program to educate customers on the use of DAWASCO hotline and E-mail address in submitting complaints, inquiries and or recommendations; and
- (l) deal with submitted complaints, inquiries and or recommendations appropriately so as to maintain good customer relationship.

Following receipt of the complaint, on 13th January 2016, the Authority summoned the Respondent to submit a defense to the complaint within twenty one (21) days as required by the EWURA (Consumer Complaints Settlement Procedures) Rules, GN 10/2013. On 30th January 2016, the

Respondent submitted his statement of defence, informing the Authority that:

- (a) DAWASCO is a public owned company serving the society so they perform their duties all the time to make sure that the society get good service all the time as such they are liable to work on holidays, Sundays and Saturdays;
- (b) meters are read monthly to get actual water consumption, so bills are based on the units consumed per month and sewer is 80% of water consumption at the rate of three hundred and eighty six shillings (TZS 386) per unit;
- (c) customers are given their bills by e-mails and SMS monthly after their meter have been read;
- (d) customers are given 7 days to pay their bill. DAWASCO disconnect services to customers who failed to pay their bill within 7 days;
- (e) disconnected customers are liable to pay their outstanding bill plus reconnection fee and;
- (f) that customers are free to collect their hard copy bills at Respondent offices any time; and
- (g) all charges and time are as specified in the DAWASA Tariff Adjustment Order, 2015.

On 21st April, 2016, the parties attended a mediation meeting whereby both parties acknowledged on the importance of consumers to be informed and invited to participate in any future tariff adjustment review process. The matter was settled on the following terms:

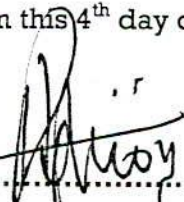
- (a) that the Respondent shall monitor and offer good services to its consumers including improving customer communication relation; and
- (b) that consumers shall not be charged disconnection fee in case of premature disconnection of service.

The above points of agreement were reduced into writing as required by Rule 13 (4) of the EWURA (Complaints Handling Procedure) Rules, GN. No 10/2013 and contained in the attached Settlement Form.

2.0 **Decision**

The parties have reached an agreement and pursuant to Rule 13 (4) of the EWURA (Consumer Complaints Handling Procedure) Rules, GN. No 10/2013, the agreement contained in the Settlement Form attached hereto is registered as an Award of the Authority. Each party shall bear its own costs.

GIVEN UNDER SEAL of the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) in Dar es Salaam this 4th day of October 2016.


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FELIX NGAMLAGOSI
DIRECTOR GENERAL