



# RI Office of Management and Budget

## Performance Report

RI Public Utilities Commission / Division of Public Utilities & Carriers

September 26, 2014

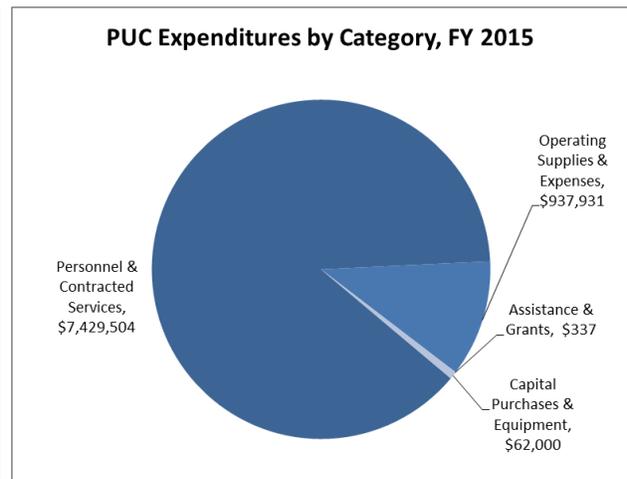
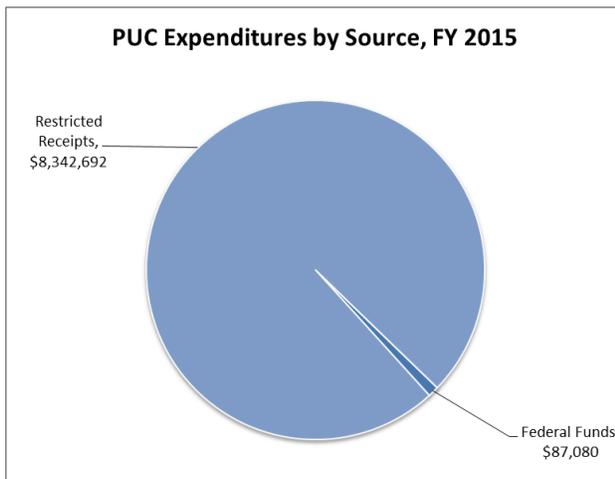
The mission of the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is to provide fair regulation of public utilities, cable television, common carriers, and major energy facilities; to ensure just and reasonable rates; to ensure sufficient utility infrastructure to promote economic development; to implement legislative mandates that facilitate renewable electric generation, improve water availability, deliver rapid communications and assure that Rhode Island is on the cutting edge of reliability and environmental quality regulation; and to cooperate with other state and federal government agencies to coordinate these efforts. The PUC includes two distinct regulatory bodies: a three-member Commission (Commission) and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC). In Fiscal Year 2015 (FY 2015), the Commission and DPUC had 50.0 authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

### Public Utilities Commission – Fiscal Year 2015

The majority of funding for PUC in FY 2015 comes from restricted receipts (99.0 percent), followed by federal funds (1.0 percent). PUC’s largest category of expenditure is personnel and contract services (88.1 percent). Operating supplies, other assistance and grants, and capital purchases collectively account for 11.9 percent of expenditures. The tables below illustrate the sources of funding for PUC and how funds are budgeted in FY 2015.<sup>1</sup>

Source	Amount	Percentage
General Revenue	\$ -	0.0%
Federal Funds	\$ 87,080	1.0%
Restricted Receipts	\$ 8,342,692	99.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,429,772</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Category	Amount	Percentage
Personnel & Contracted Services	\$ 7,429,504	88.1%
Operating Supplies & Expenses	\$ 937,931	11.1%
Assistance & Grants	\$ 337	0.0%
Capital Purchases & Equipment	\$ 62,000	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,429,772</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

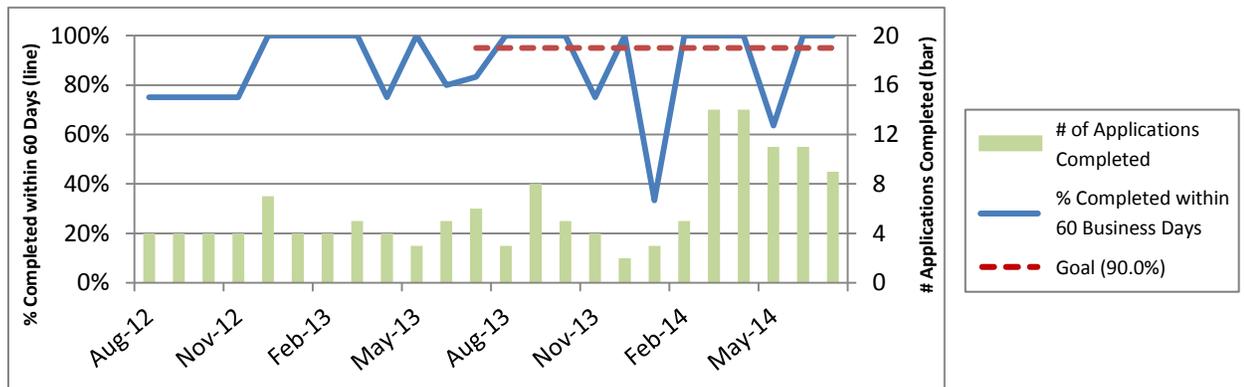


<sup>1</sup> Figures for PUC’s funding sources and budget categories are from the FY 2015 appropriations act, as approved by the Rhode Island General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Lincoln D. Chafee on June 19, 2014. The figures also reflect a statewide savings adjustment to medical and vision benefits enacted by the General Assembly.

## MOTOR CARRIER APPLICATIONS

When the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC) receives an application to operate as a motor carrier (e.g., taxi, limousine, moving company, water taxi, etc.), it is docketed and a public hearing is scheduled and advertised. Following the hearing, DPUC issues a formal written report granting or denying the application to operate.

Figure A: Percentage of Motor Carrier Applications Completed within 60 Business Days



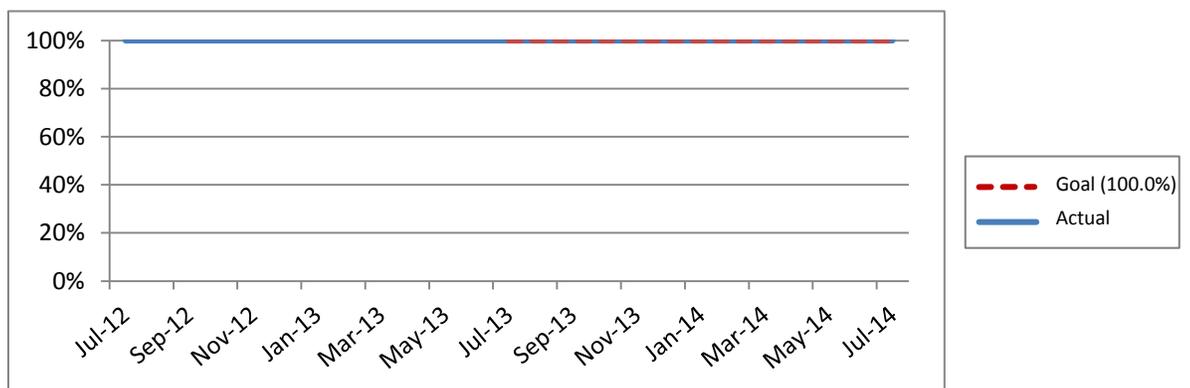
### Key Points:

- In FY 2013, DPUC processed 48 motor carrier applications, processing 87.5 percent within 60 business days. The number of applications processed increased to 86 in FY 2014, with applications processed within 60 days increasing to 90.7 percent.
- Since March 2014, the average monthly number of applications has increased over historical levels. DPUC expects that this increase is attributable to the recent influx of ridesharing service companies in Rhode Island.

## FUEL SURCHARGE CALCULATION

When fuel costs exceed levels specified under state law, DPUC’s Motors Carrier Section calculates a monthly fuel surcharge that taxis, towing companies, and ferries may charge.

Figure B: Percentage of Fuel Surcharge Calculations Completed within the Monthly Timeframe



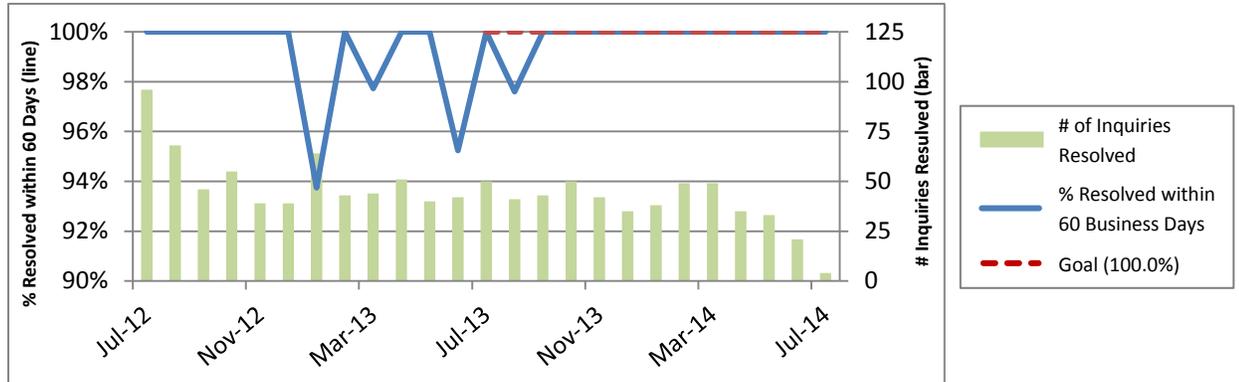
### Key Points:

- Under state law, DPUC may implement a surcharge for taxi companies and towing companies when the average price of gasoline in the state exceeds \$1.50 per gallon. DPUC may implement a surcharge for ferry companies when the average price of diesel fuel exceeds \$1.20 per gallon.
- The fuel surcharge calculation has been completed within the established monthly timeframe since DPUC began reporting this measure in July 2012. As a result, DPUC is developing new measures to track performance of other components of the Motor Carrier Section.

## CABLE AND TELECOM INQUIRIES

DPUC receives cable and telecommunication customer inquiries involving billing disputes, tariff issues, rate increases, interconnect issues, product installation, repairs, and service quality. The agency aims to resolve these inquiries in a timely fashion.

Figure C: Percentage of Inquiries Resolved within 60 Business Days



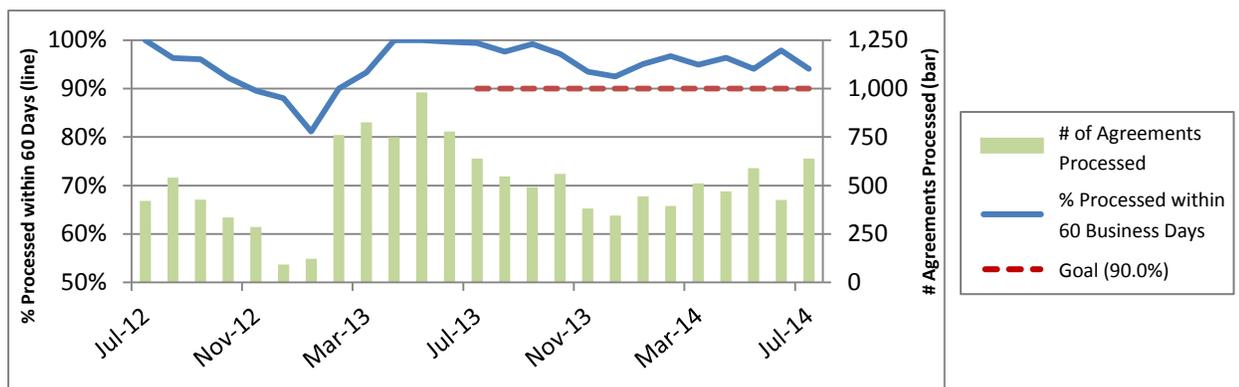
### Key Points:

- In FY 2013, DPUC received 627 cable and telecom inquiries, resolving 98.9 percent within 60 business days. The number of inquiries resolved decreased to 486 in FY 2014, with resolutions within 60 days increasing to 99.8 percent.
- Beginning FY 2015, DPUC adjusted the tracking methodology for this measure in an effort to improve data quality. Basic inquiry calls will now be recorded separately.

## INFORMAL CONSUMER PAYMENT PLAN

Customers enrolling in a payment plan are required to make an initial down payment of 10 percent of their unpaid balance in order to avoid utility service termination or to have their service restored. DPUC aims to process these informal consumer payment agreements in a timely fashion.

Figure D: Percentage of Informal Consumer Payment Agreements Processed within 60 Business Days



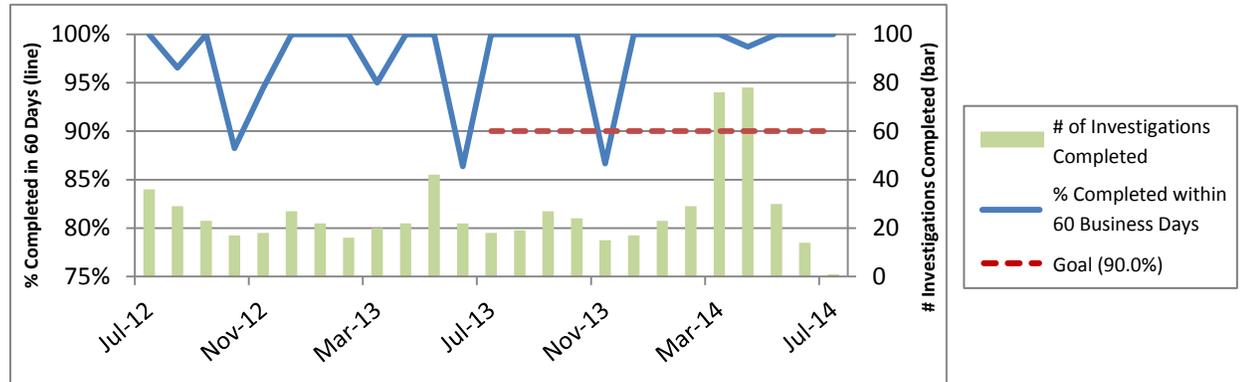
### Key Points:

- In FY 2013, DPUC processed 6,314 informal consumer payment agreements, completing 98.9 percent within 60 business days. The number of informal consumer payment agreements decreased to 5,794 in FY 2014, with agreements processed within 60 days decreasing to 96.4 percent.
- Following a drop in the timeliness of approvals in the first half of FY 2013, the DPUC streamlined its approval process. Since February 2013, performance has remained above the target of 90.0 percent.

## BILLING COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

DPUC investigates complaints involving motor carriers such as taxis and limousines, and public utilities including electric, gas, and water providers. Non-payment related billing complaints include reports of unforeseen bill balances often attributable to clerical error, customer misunderstanding, faulty utility meters, and leaks.

Figure E: Percentage of Non-Payment Related Billing Complaint Investigations Completed Within 60 Business Days



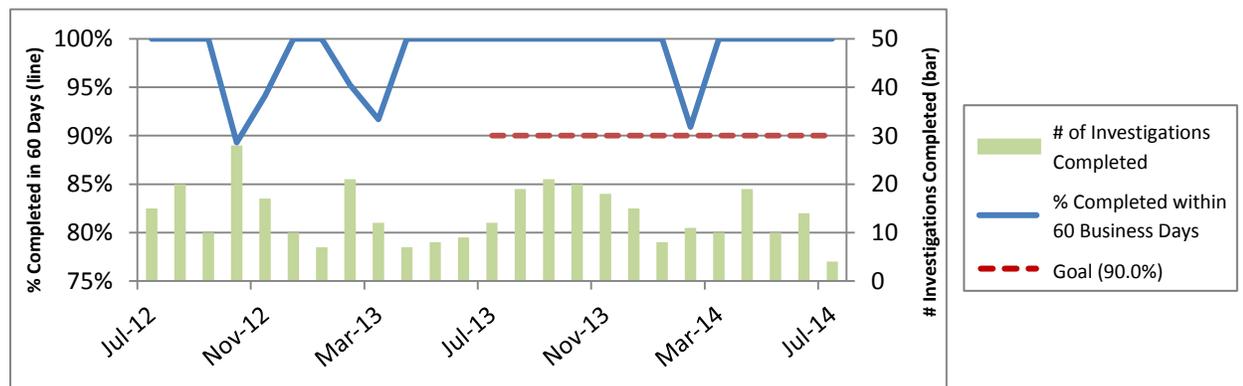
**Key Points:**

- In FY 2013, DPUC completed 294 non-payment related billing complaint investigations, completing 97.3 percent within 60 business days. The number of non-payment related billing complaint investigations increased to 370 in FY 2014, with completions within 60 days increasing to 99.2 percent.
- The March-April 2014 spike in investigations was the result of a direct mail advertising flyer sent to consumers from a Non-regulated Power Producer (NPP). DPUC received a number of calls from the general public and the news media regarding these mailings.

## SERVICE COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

Examples of service complaints include reports of poor customer service, downed wires, service fluctuations, gas leaks and explosions, and injuries to utility worker or person(s) attributable to utility services.

Figure F: Percentage of Service Complaint Investigations Completed within 60 Business Days



**Key Points:**

- In FY 2013, DPUC completed 164 service complaint investigations, completing 96.3 percent within 60 business days. The number of service complaint investigations increased to 177 in FY 2014, with completions within 60 days increasing to 99.4 percent.