

March  
2017

# MONTHLY DATA REPORT



## Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division

California Public  
Utilities Commission



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2 OVERVIEW
- 3 COMMUNICATIONS
- 4 ENERGY
- 5 WATER
- 6 TRANSPORTATION
- 7 SAFETY CONCERNS
- 8 GLOSSARY

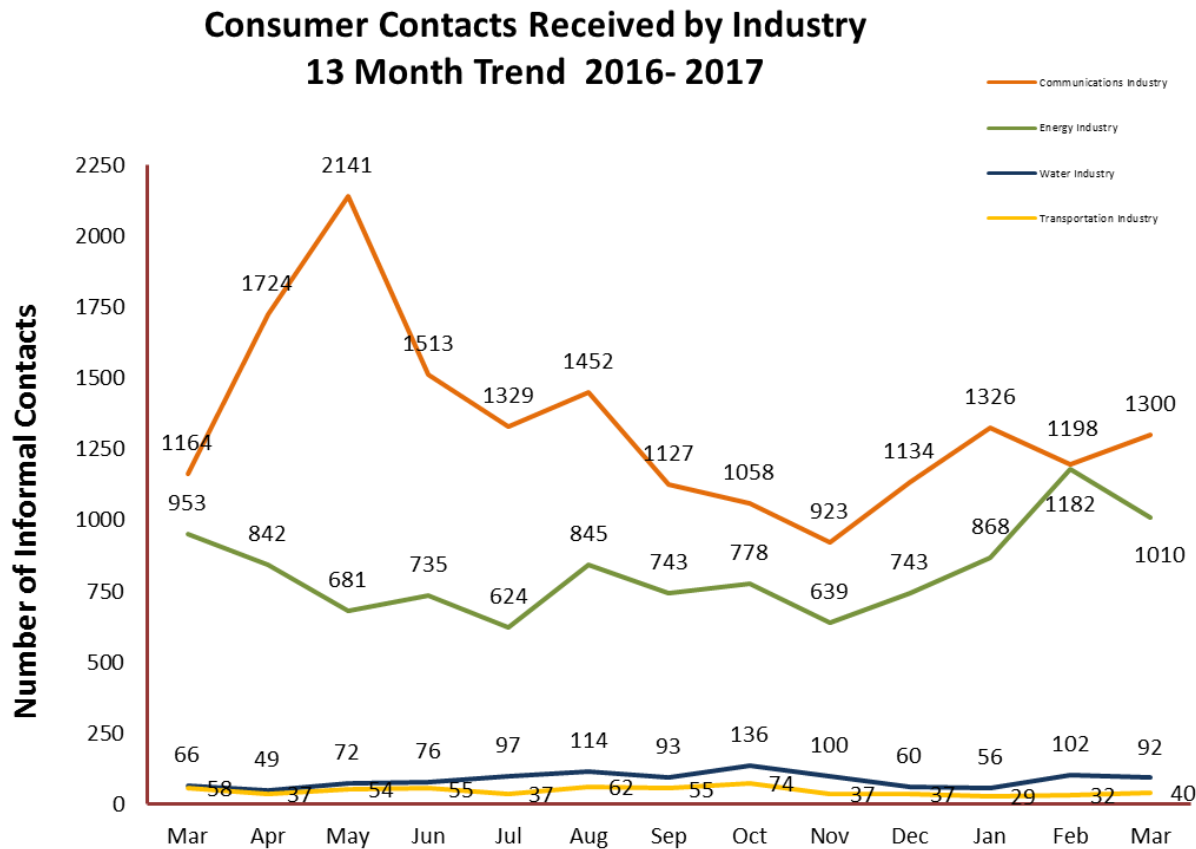
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able to assist consumers with an informal complaint resolution process, with answers to questions, and with referral information. In assisting consumers, we are able to gain a useful picture of consumer issues and trends.

This report is based on contacts (informal complaints and questions) received by the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) and the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) within CPED, and presents annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and pages 3 through 6 report data by industry for the current month. For context, the report also includes comparable data from the previous month. Page 7 presents contact data specifically related to safety concerns, by industry. A glossary of terms used in this report can be found on page 8.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division serves as the first line of support for consumers of CPUC-regulated services. CPED collects and resolves consumer informal complaints, enforces laws and regulations governing transportation carriers, and investigates allegations of utility waste, fraud, and abuse.

# Overview

2,442 CONTACTS (March 2017)



Overall, 2,442 total informal consumer contacts were received during March 2017 across the four regulated industries, a decrease of approximately 3% from the 2,514 informal contacts received during February 2017; and a 7% increase from the prior 12-month average of 2,276.

**Communications:** 1,300 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during March 2017, which is an increase of 8.5% from the 1,198 contacts received during February 2017. The contacts received during March experienced a 3% decrease compared to the prior 12-month average of 1,341.

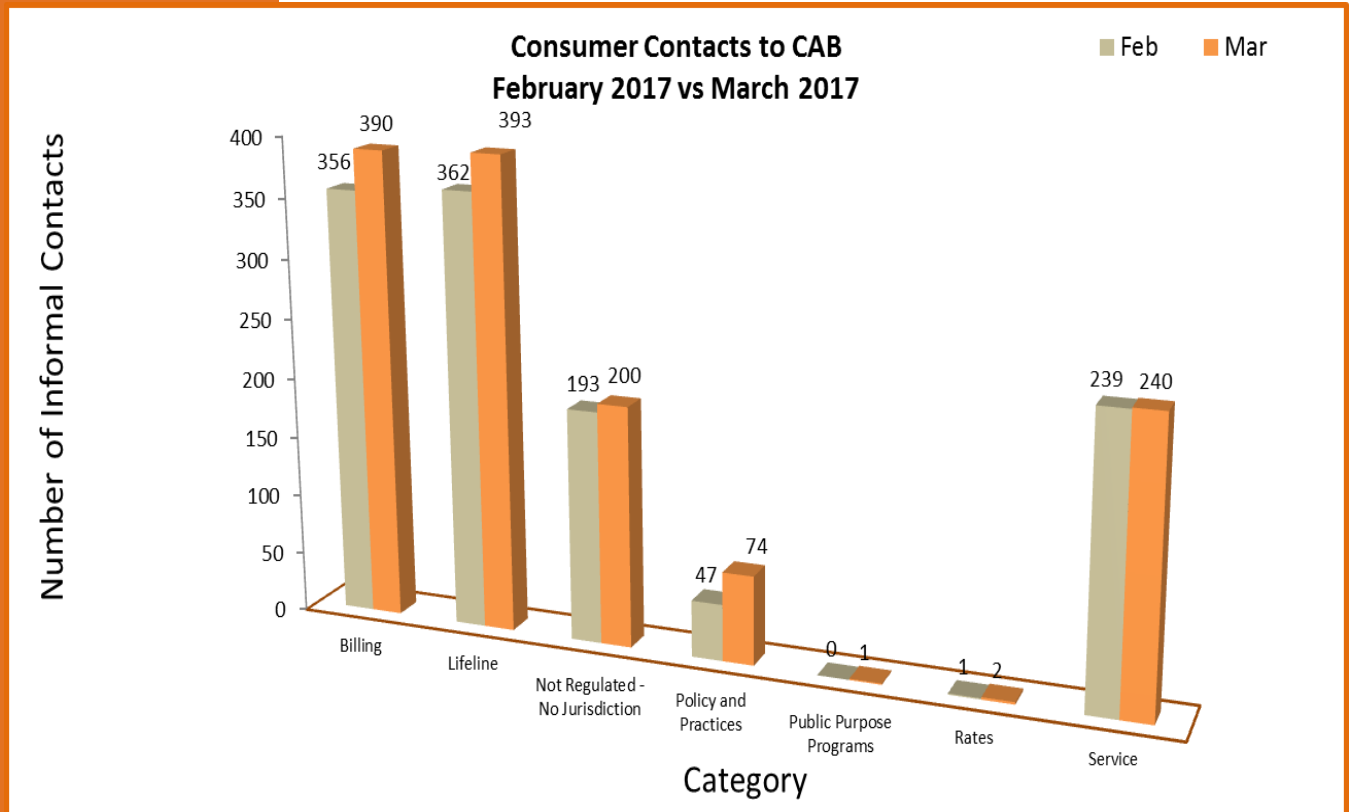
**Energy:** 1,010 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during March 2017, a near 15% decrease from the 1,182 contacts received during February 2017, and 26% higher than the prior 12-month average of 803.

**Water:** 92 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during March 2017. This is a 9.8% decrease from the 102 contacts received in February 2017. Water contacts went to above average with March being 8% higher than the prior 12-month average of 85.

**Transportation:** The overall number of Transportation-related contacts received during March 2017 (40) was higher than in February 2017 (32) by approximately 25.3%. This is 17% lower than the prior 12 month average of 48.

# Communications

1,300 CONTACTS (March 2017)

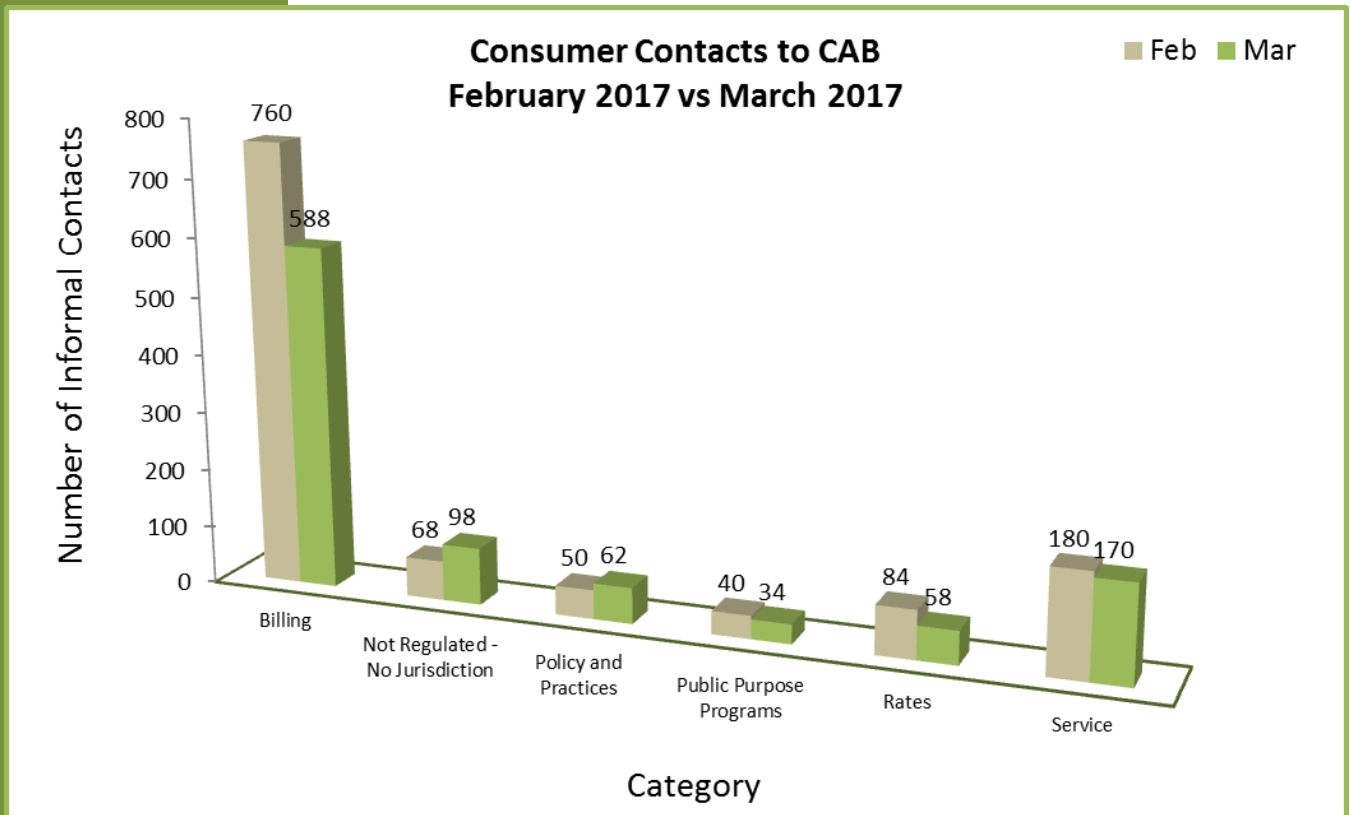


During March 2017, CAB received 1,300 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. This is an increase of approximately 8.5% from February's 1,198 contacts.

In addition to the 1,300 categorized contacts, CAB received 265 uncategorized (pending process and misdirected) contacts.

# Energy

1,010 CONTACTS (March 2017)

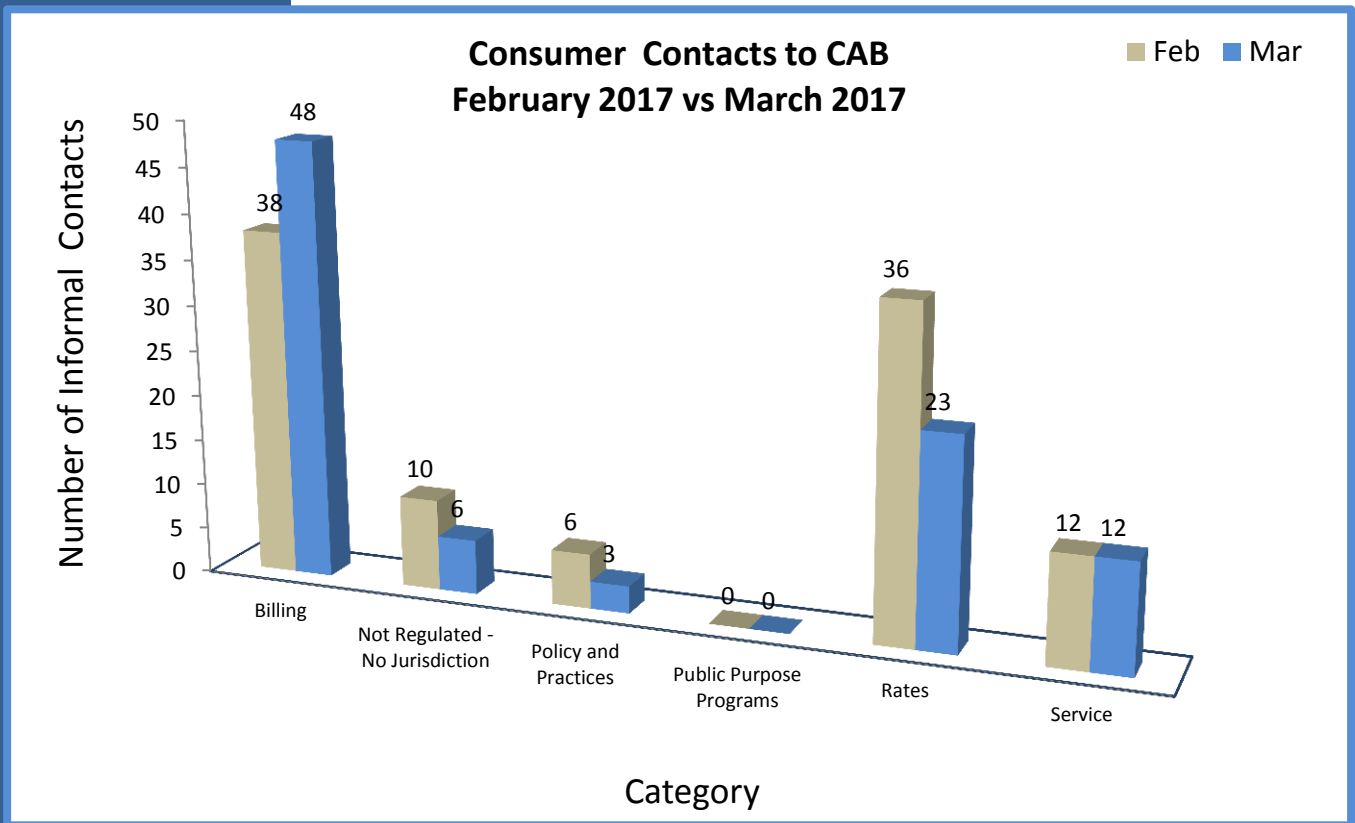


In March 2017, CAB received 1,010 Energy-related informal contacts allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There was a near 15% decrease in contacts between March 2017 and February 2017. The decrease can be attributed in part to reduced consumer contacts regarding high winter bills and dissatisfaction with late winter rate increases for PG&E. These contacts have tapered off as indicated by the 23% decrease in contacts regarding high bills, and a 31% decrease in contacts regarding rates.

In addition to the 1,010 categorized contacts, CAB also received 147 uncategorized (pending process and misdirected) contacts.

# Water

92 CONTACTS (March 2017)

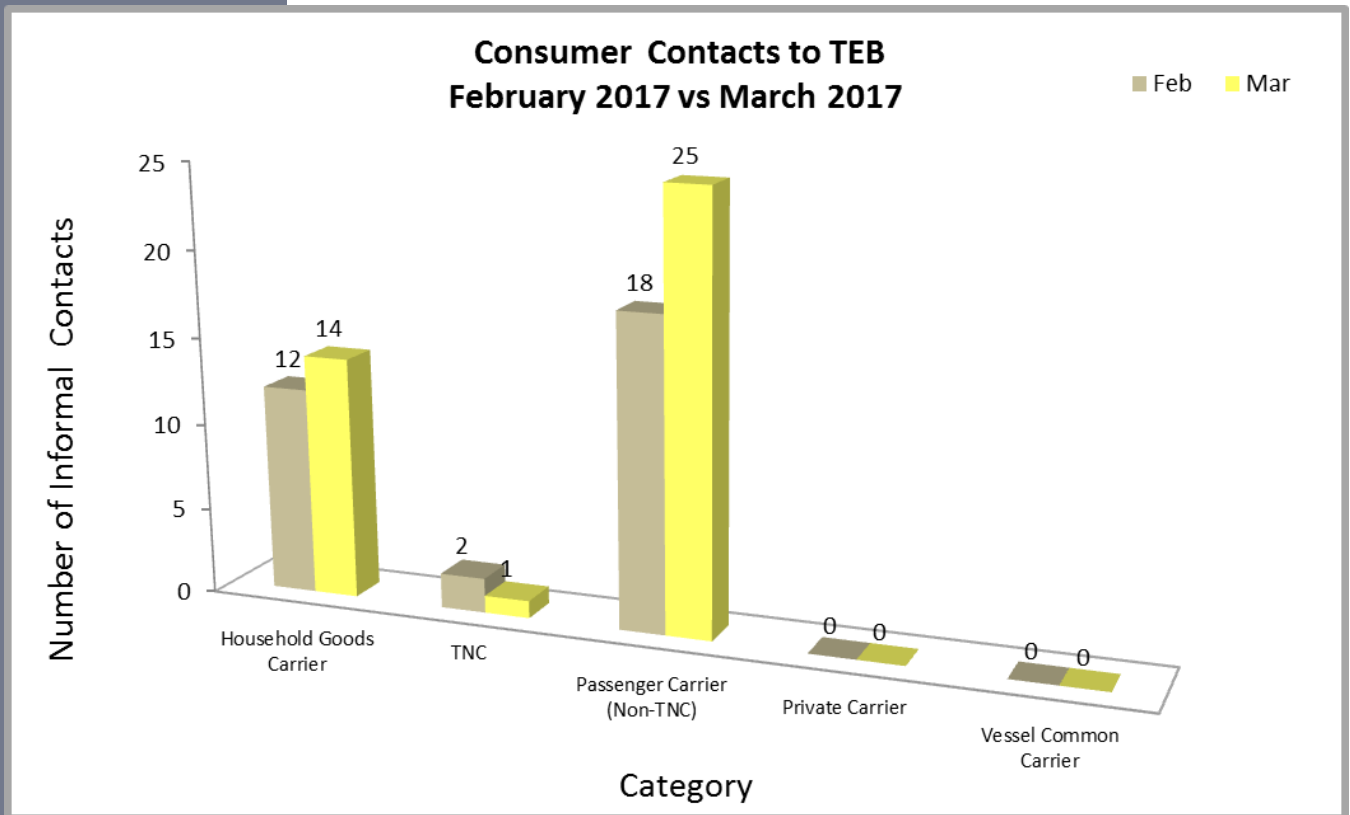


CAB received 92 Water-related informal contacts in March 2017, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There was a 9.8% decrease from February 2017, when CAB received 102 contacts. March contacts are 26% higher than the prior 12 month average of 81.

In addition to the 92 categorized contacts, CAB received 44 uncategorized (misdirected and pending process) contacts relating to water utilities in March 2017.

# Transportation

40 CONTACTS (March 2017)



In March 2017, transportation complaints regarding passenger carriers (40) were more than those in February 2017 (32) by 25%. Complaints regarding household goods carriers (14) increased by 2 (12) or 15%. Most informal complaints involved allegation of operating and/or advertising without active authority: 11 among household goods carriers and 21 among passenger carriers. The remaining household goods-related complaints involved (1) for operating on a pending permit and (3) loss and damage. TEB also received complaints about passenger carriers involving damages and losses (2), and operating on an expired or suspended permit (2). There was one complaint about no worker's compensation insurance. There was also one TNC complaint questioning a trip cancellation fee.

# Safety Concerns Across Industries

During March 2017, CPED received 62 safety-related contacts identified as having a safety concern component across the four reported industries. The contacts presented below are a subset of those presented on pages 3-7 of this report. Safety contacts are classified by the type of safety concern

<b>Communications</b>	<b>11</b>
Health Concerns/Emergency Services	6
Utility Infrastructure	5
<b>Energy</b>	<b>18</b>
Consumer Property	1
Gas Leaks	7
Health Concerns/Outage	1
Property Restoration	2
Security Concerns	1
Utility Infrastructure	6
<b>Water</b>	<b>0</b>
No Water Safety-Related Contacts Received	-
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>33</b>
Operating Without Active Authority	33

## Definitions for Safety-Related Contacts:

**Company Practice** includes service-related issues perceived to impact consumer safety such as lengthy appointment wait times for service restoration.

**Health Concerns/Emergency Services** includes immediate or perceived concerns due to potential outages or events, such as inability to reach 911 during phone outage, or failure of medical equipment during power outages.

**Gas Leak** includes any concerns related to gas leaks in the utility distribution system or in the consumer's premises.

**Operating Without Active Authority** involves operations without a valid permit or certificate, including operations with a suspended or revoked permit or certificate.

**Property Restoration** includes issues regarding ground hazards such as holes, trenches, tripping hazards, debris removal, tree trimming and street lighting.

**Security Concerns** includes issues perceived to impact consumer security such as phone line privacy issues, unlisted phone numbers, or utility personnel identification.

**Utility Infrastructure** includes issues regarding infrastructure that is faulty or in disrepair such as hanging cables, exposed wires, leaning utility poles, analog meters and transformers.

**Water Safety or Quality** includes immediate or perceived concerns relating to water quality such as color, odor or presence of chemicals in drinking water.

# Definitions

## Consumer Affairs Branch

The following definitions were compiled to assist with understanding consumer contacts information.

Type of Contacts Definitions	
Informal Consumer Contacts	Informal Contacts are consumers' communications received by CAB via phone calls, letters and electronic submissions (email/web form). Contacts can consist of complaints, questions, or feedback from consumers regarding the policies and practices of specific utilities or the CPUC. These contacts are reported as Categorized or Uncategorized.
Categorized Contacts	These are informal contacts which have sufficient information to be allocated into one the defined categories: Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, and Service based on the primary (overarching) reason for the contact.
Uncategorized Contacts	These are contacts which are pending assignment, lack sufficient information to be processed (Unknown), or contacts in which the consumer intended to contact some other entity, and mistakenly contacted CAB (Misdirected).

Category Definitions	
Billing	Consumer contacts related to disputed items appearing on a consumer's utility bill, the appearance of the bill, or other utility charges.
LifeLine (Billing & Appeals)	Consumer contacts related to the Lifeline Program, which assists low income telecommunications customers. It includes items related to Lifeline Appeals or Lifeline Billing disputes.
Not Regulated – No Jurisdiction	Consumer contacts related to concerns, disputes, and issues where the CPUC does not have jurisdiction.
Policy and Practices	Consumer contacts related to utility and/or CPUC policies and practices.
Public Purpose Programs	Consumer contacts related to programs that assist utility consumers, including income-based and disability-based programs.
Rates	Consumer contacts related to rate design, rate protests and baseline rates.
Service	Consumer contacts related to the service provided to the consumer by the utility.
Uncategorized Definitions	
Misdirected	Consumer contacts intended for some other entity such as consumer attempting to contact their utility. CAB assists these consumers by redirecting them to the entity best able to address their concerns.
Pending Assignment	Category not identified due to case pending processing.
Unknown	Category not identified due to lack of information from consumer.