

October  
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

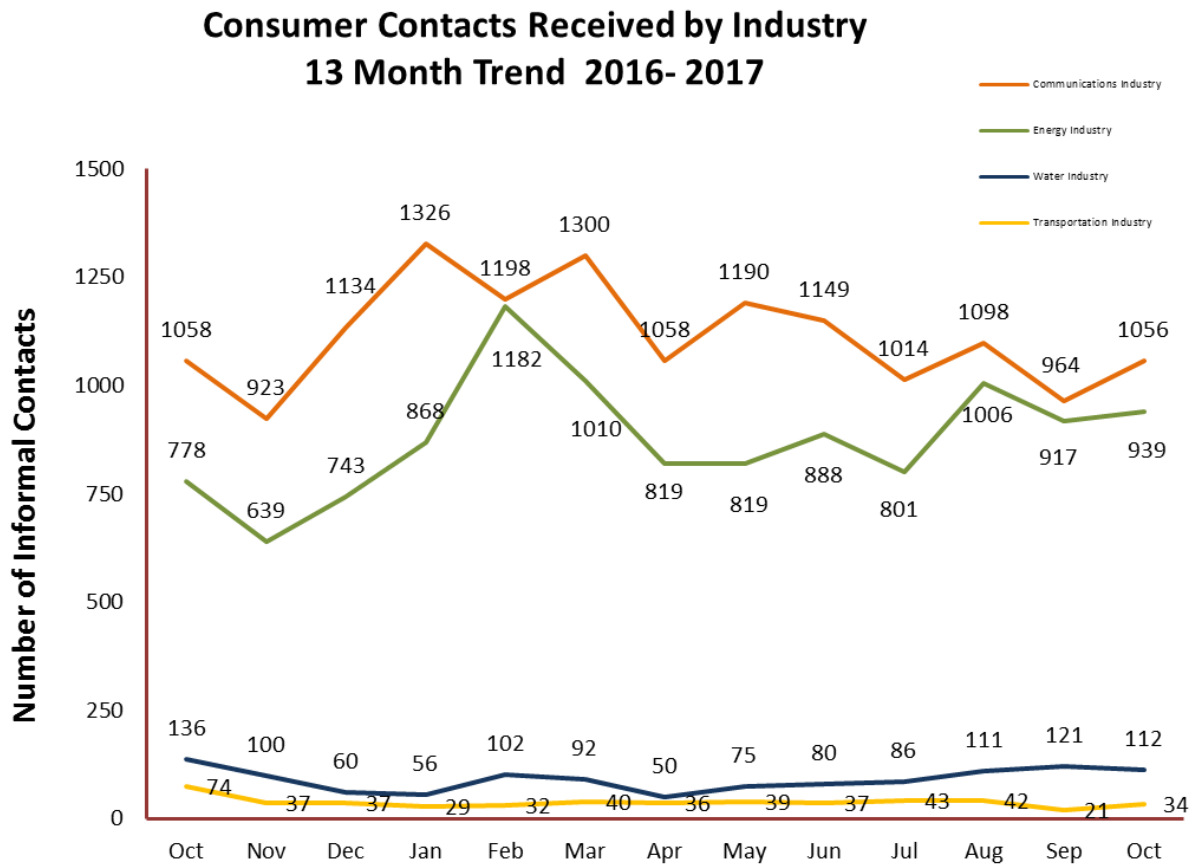
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able 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 both annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and Page 3 through Page 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

2,141 CONTACTS (October 2017)



Overall, 2,141 total informal consumer contacts were received during October 2017 across the four regulated industries, an increase of approximately 6% from the 2,023 informal contacts received during September 2017; and a 1% increase from the prior 12-month average of 2,118.

**Communications:** 1,056 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during October 2017, which is an increase of 9.5% from the 964 contacts received during September 2017. The contacts received during October experienced a 6% decrease compared to the prior 12-month average of 1,118.

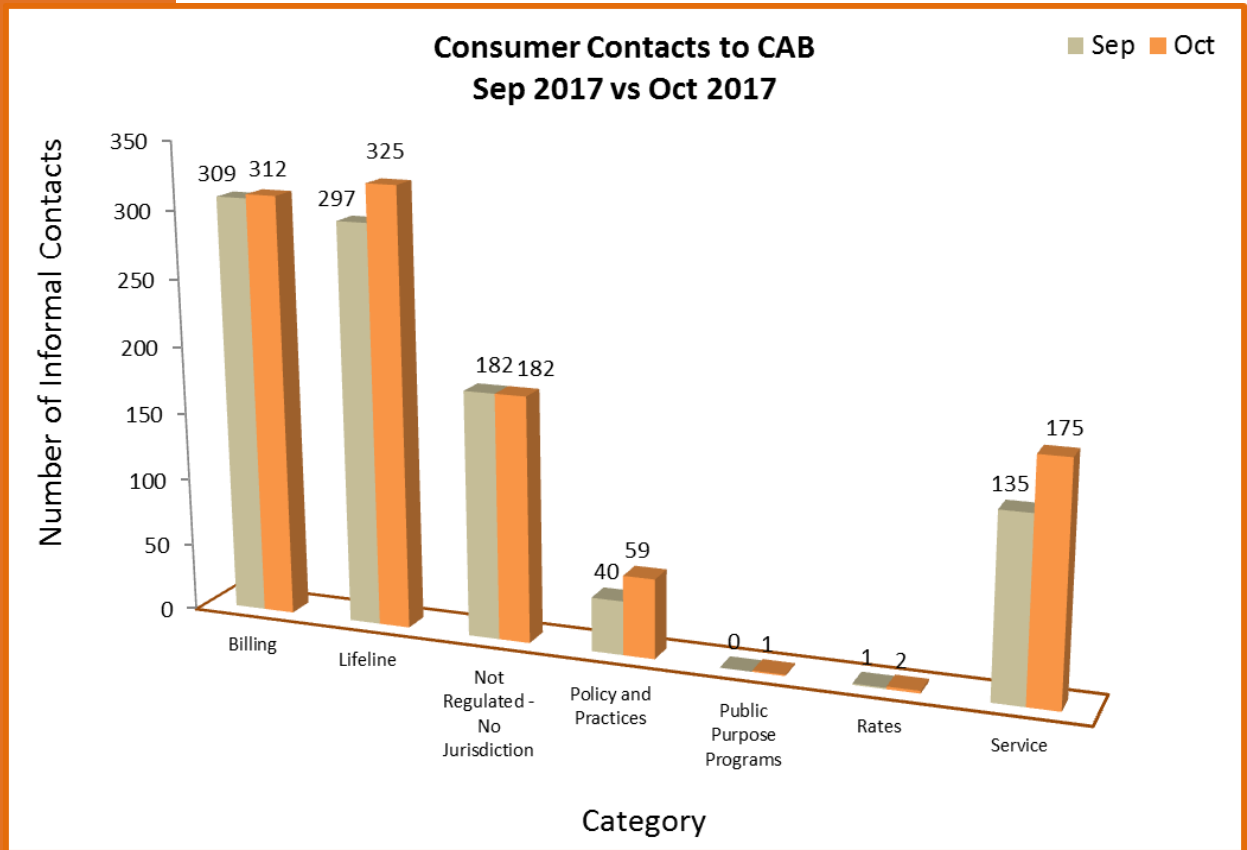
**Energy:** 939 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during October 2017, which is a 2.4% increase from 917 contacts received during September 2017. Contacts received in October are 8.9% higher than the prior 12-month average of 863.

**Water:** 112 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during October 2017. This is a 7.4% decrease from the 121 contacts received in September 2017. Water contacts went to above average with October being 25% higher than the prior 12-month average of 89.

**Transportation:** The overall number of Transportation-related contacts received during October 2017 (34) is higher than in September 2017 (21) by 62%. Similarly, October is 15% lower than the prior 12 month average of 40.

# Communications

1,056 CONTACTS (October 2017)

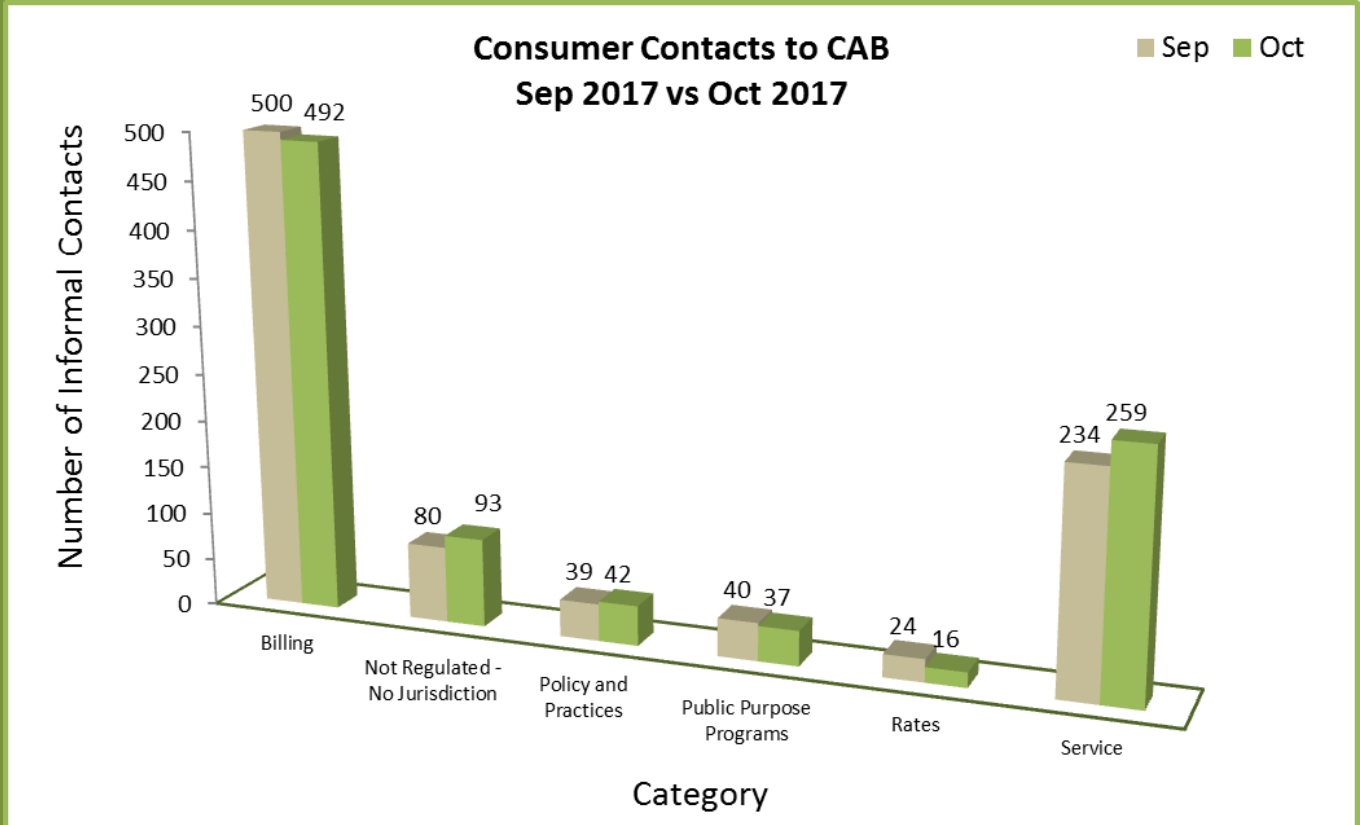


During October 2017, CAB received 1,056 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. This is an increase of approximately 9.5% from September's 964 contacts.

In addition to the 1,056 categorized contacts, CAB received 211 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

# Energy

939 CONTACTS (October 2017)



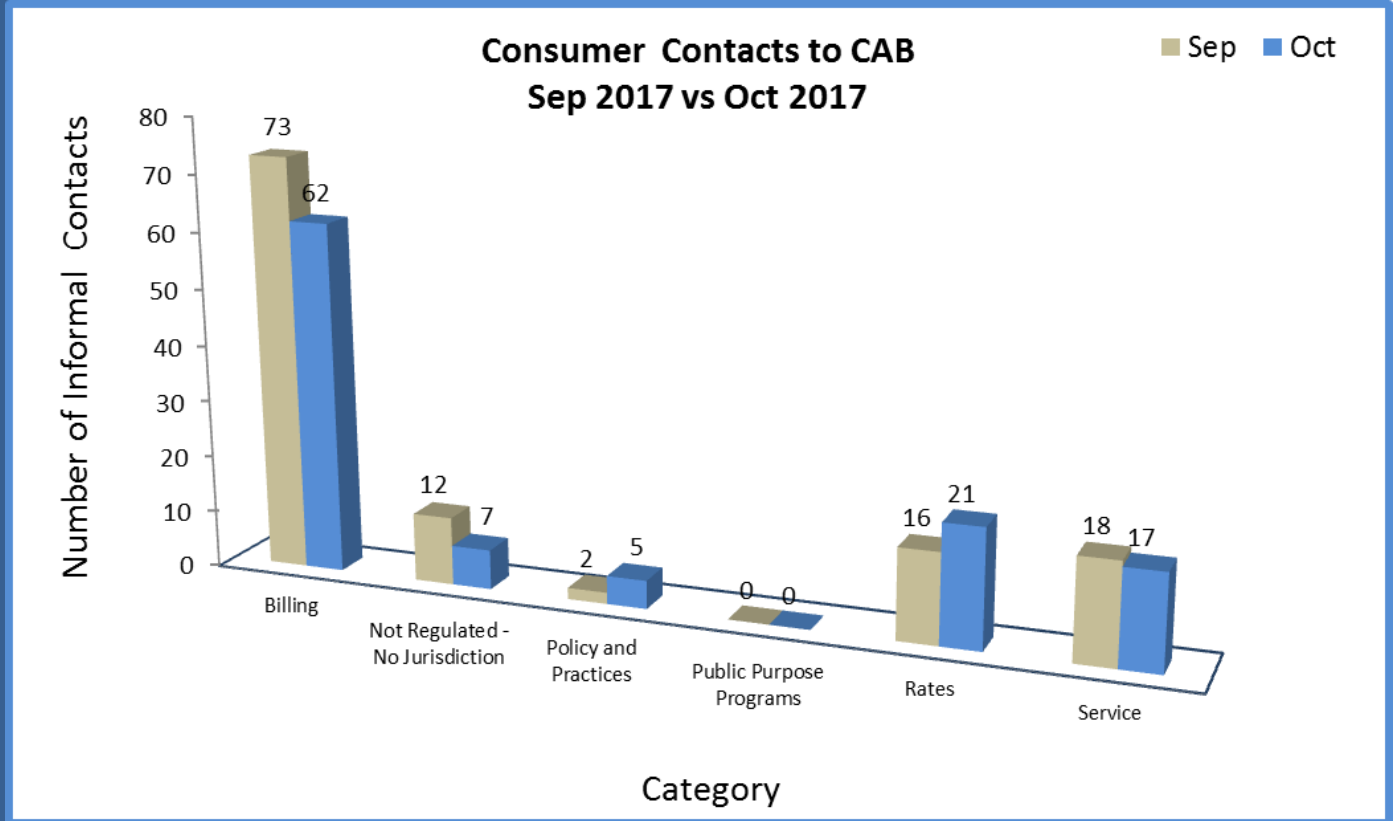
In October 2017, CAB received 939 Energy-related informal contacts allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. October experienced a 2.4% increase in contacts.

In addition to the 939 categorized contacts, CAB also received 65 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.



# Water

112 CONTACTS (October 2017)

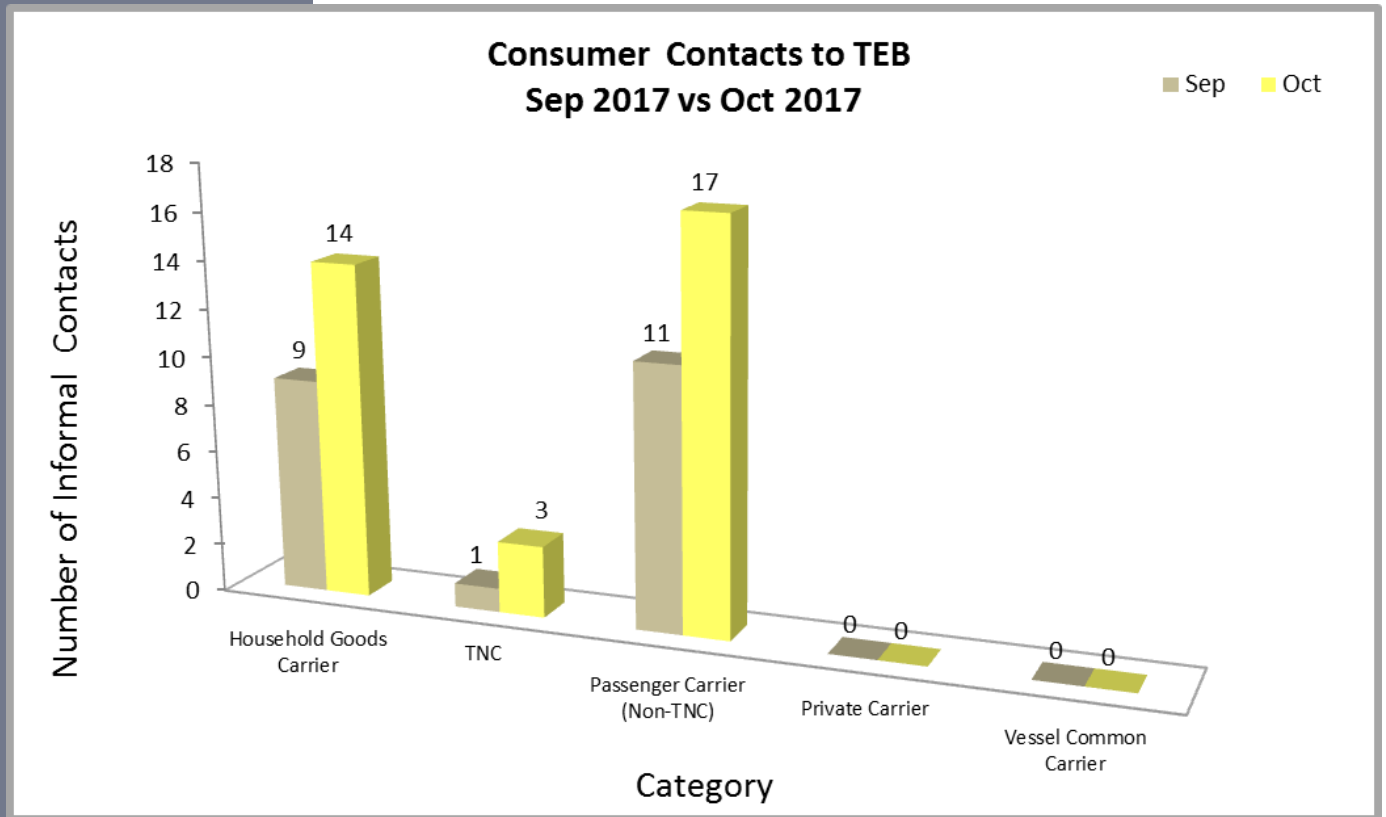


CAB received 112 Water-related informal contacts in October 2017, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There is a decrease of 7.4% compared to contacts from September.

In addition to the 112 categorized contacts, CAB received 39 uncategorized (misdirected and pending processing) contacts relating to water utilities in October 2017.

# Transportation

34 CONTACTS (October 2017)



In October 2017, TEB received 34 transportation complaints, an overall increase of 62% over the 21 complaints received last month. Complaints against household goods carriers (14) increased by 55% and complaints received against all other passenger carriers (20) increased by 66% over the last month.

The 14 household goods complaints consisted of overcharges (3), loss/damage claims (3), operating without active authority (6) and operating on a denied or revoked permit (2).

The twenty (20) passenger carrier complaints concerned limousines or buses that advertised or operated without active authority (10), loss/damage claims (4), and operating with a denied or revoked permit (3). TEB received three (3) complaints against TNCs alleging one safety complaint for transporting a child in the front seat and two for operating as a taxi.

# Safety Concerns Across Industries

During October 2017, CPED received 52 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>12</b>
Property Restoration	1
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	3
Utility Infrastructure	8
<b>Energy</b>	<b>28</b>
Consumer Property	1
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	3
Gas Leak	4
Property Restoration	5
Utility Infrastructure	15
<b>Water</b>	<b>2</b>
Water Quality	1
Water Utility Infrastructure	1
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>10</b>
Operating Without Active Authority	10

## 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.

**Consumer Property** includes issues with consumer owned property such as unsafe appliances (heaters, stoves, etc.)

**EMF/Power Surges/Voltage fluctuations** include cases related to Electromagnetic Field (EMF) concerns (e.g. Smart Meters), consumer household power surges and electricity voltage fluctuations.

**Emergency Services/ Health Concerns** include 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.