

September
2017

MONTHLY DATA REPORT



Consumer
Protection and
Enforcement
Division
California Public
Utilities Commission



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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.

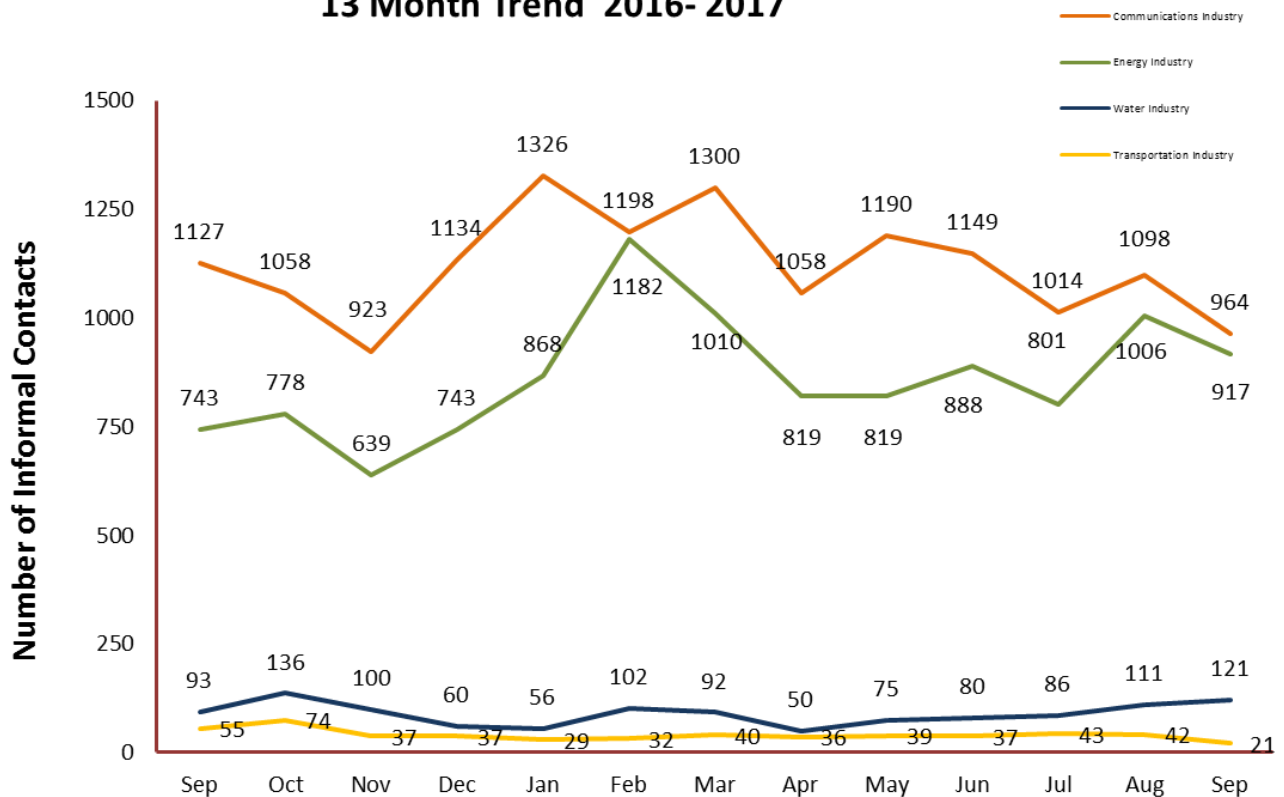
This report is based on contacts (informal complaints and questions) received by the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) and the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) within CPED, and presents annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual 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

2,023 CONTACTS (September 2017)

Consumer Contacts Received by Industry
13 Month Trend 2016- 2017



Overall, 2,023 total informal consumer contacts were received during September 2017 across the four regulated industries, a decrease of approximately 10% from the 2,257 informal contacts received during August 2017; and a 4% decrease from the prior 12-month average of 2,118. The overall contact decline is due to decreases in Communications, Energy and Transportation contacts, while Water contacts increased slightly for the period.

Communications: 964 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during September 2017, which is a decrease of 12% from the 1,098 contacts received during August 2017. The contacts received during August experienced a 15% decrease compared to the prior 12-month average of 1,131.

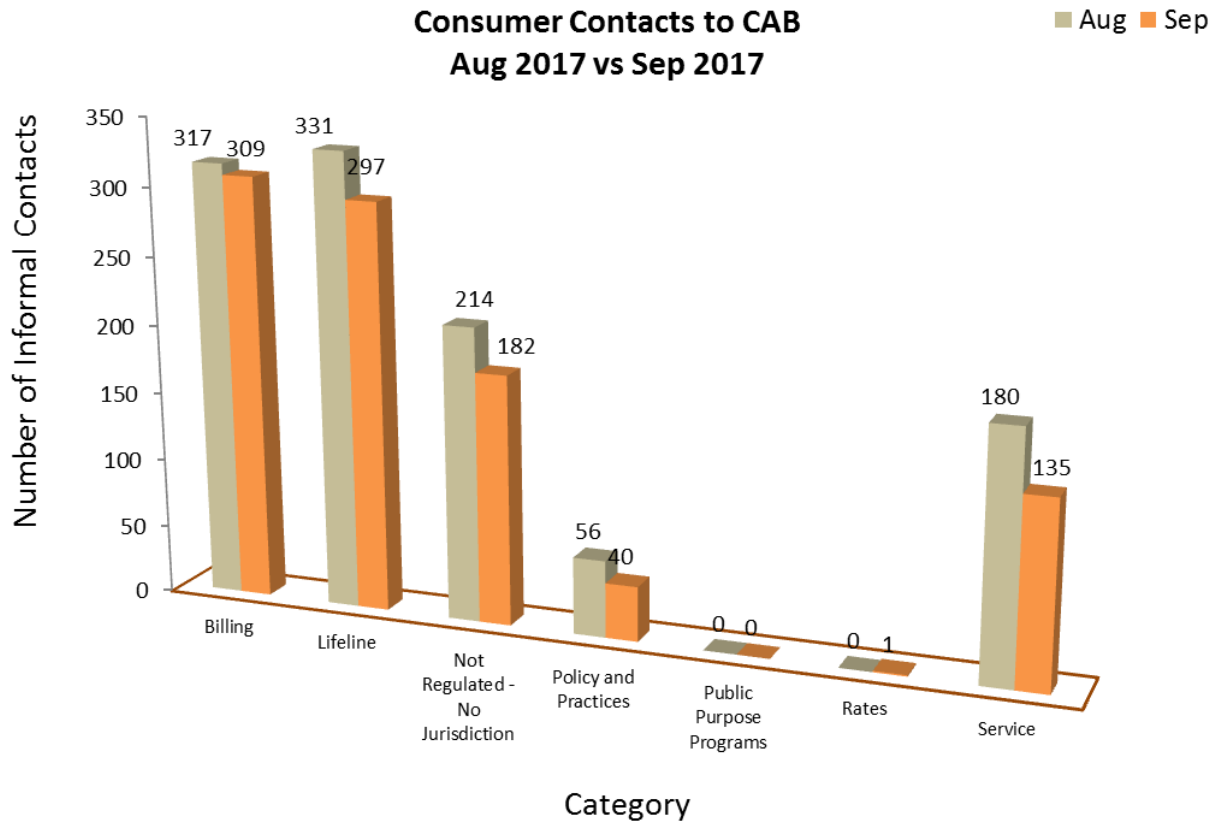
Energy: 917 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during September 2017, which is an 8.8% decrease from contacts received during August 2017. Contacts received in September are 6.9% higher than the prior 12-month average of 858.

Water: 121 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during September 2017. This is a 9% increase from the 111 contacts received in August 2017. Water contacts went to above average with September being 39% higher than the prior 12-month average of 87.

Transportation: The overall number of Transportation-related contacts received during September 2017 (21) is lower than in August 2017 (42) by 53%. September is 50% lower than the prior 12 month average of 42.

Communications

964 CONTACTS (September 2017)

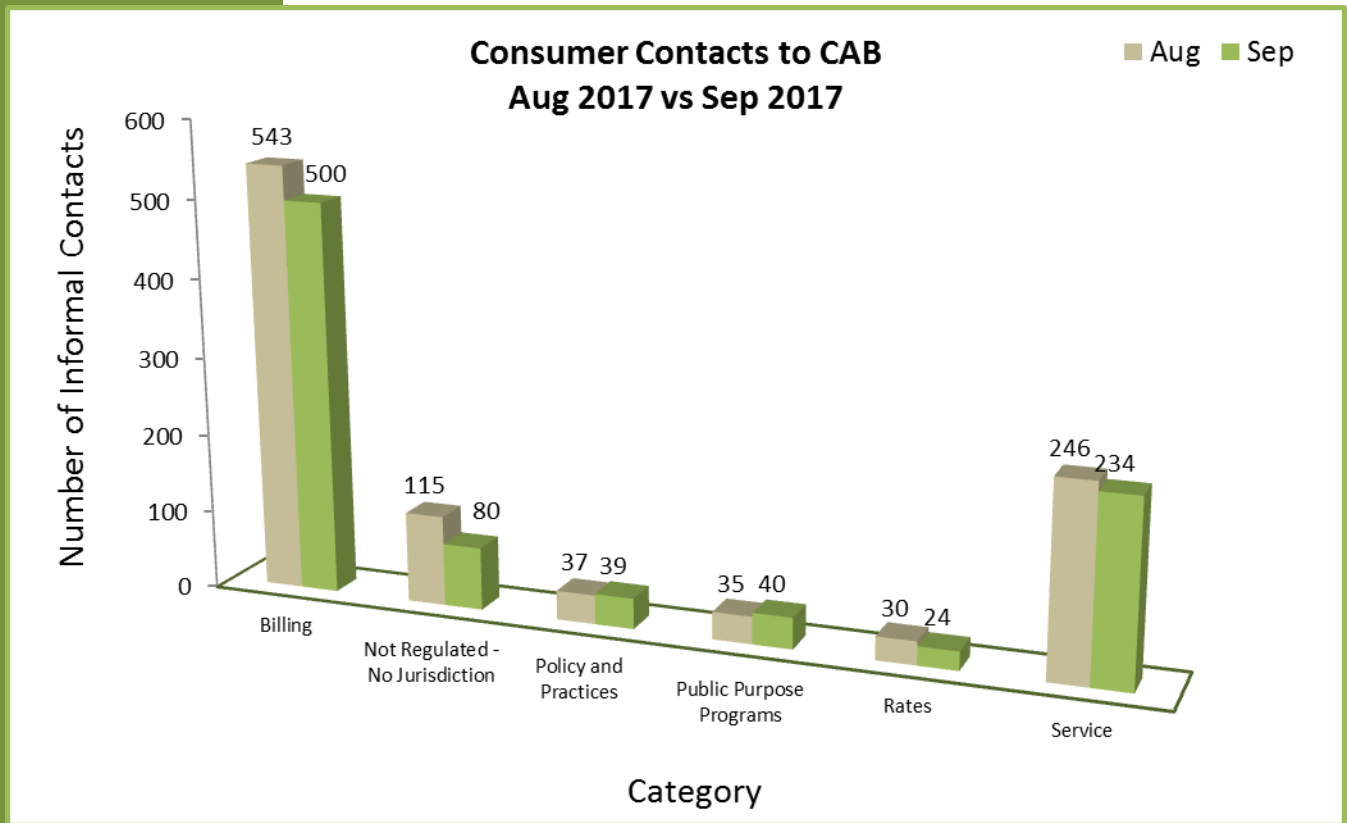


During September 2017, CAB received 964 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. This is a decrease of approximately 12% from August's 1,098 contacts.

In addition to the 964 categorized contacts, CAB received 147 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

Energy

917 CONTACTS (September 2017)



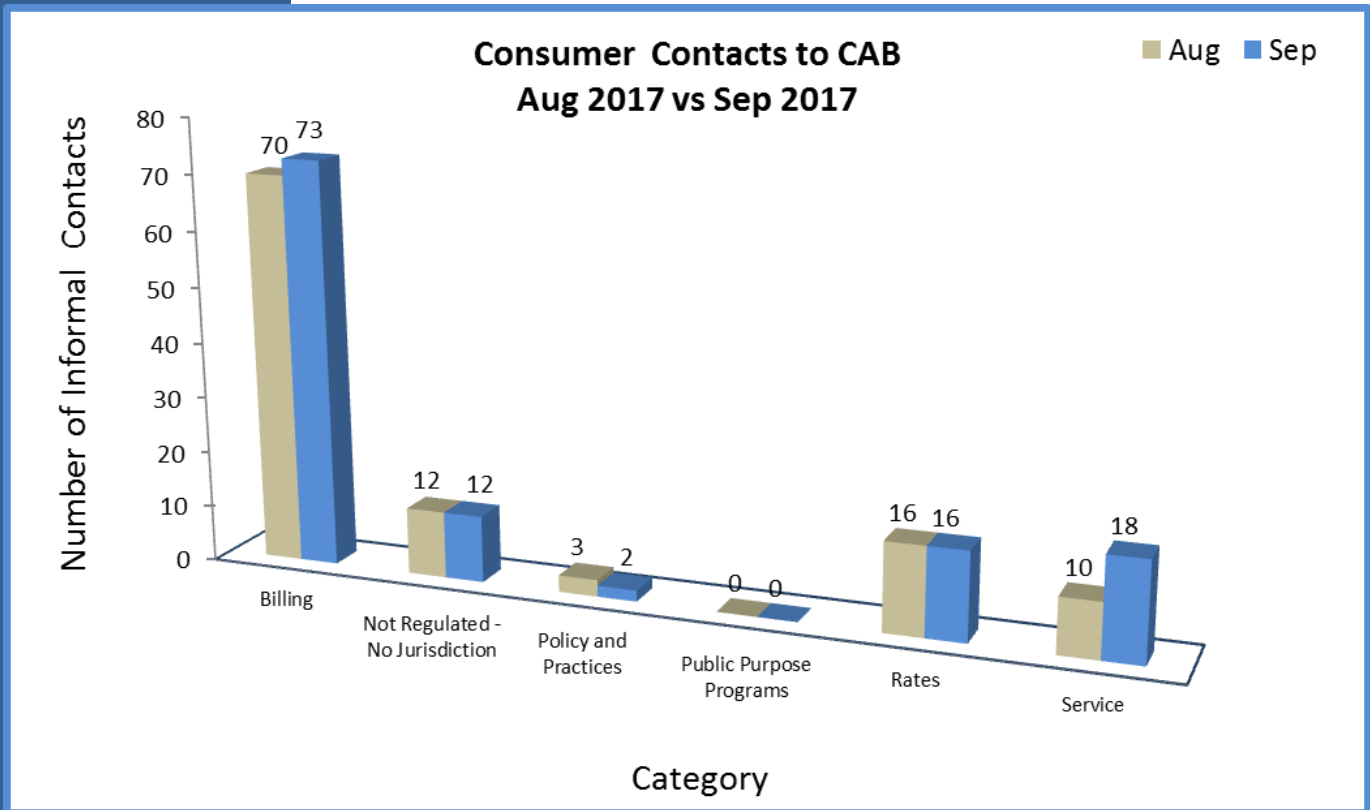
In September 2017, CAB received 917 Energy-related informal contacts allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. September experienced an 8.8% decrease in contacts. Overall contacts in September stayed relatively flat across the Policy and Practices category compared to August.

In addition to the 917 categorized contacts, CAB also received 58 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.



Water

121 CONTACTS (September 2017)

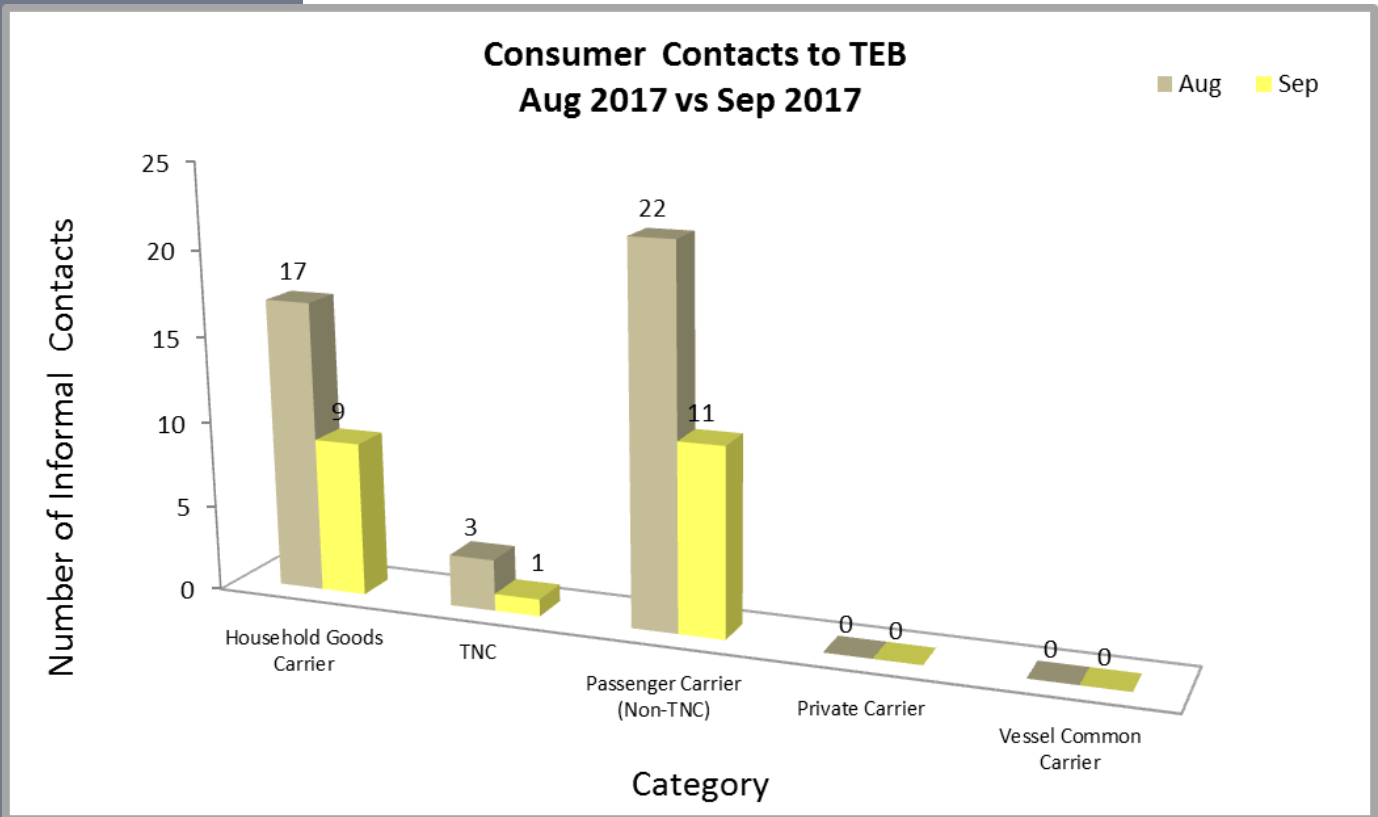


CAB received 121 Water-related informal contacts in September 2017, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There is an increase of 9% compared to contacts from August. Contacts in the Rates, Public Purpose Programs, Policy and Practices and Not-Regulated No Jurisdiction categories stayed flat between August and September.

In addition to the 121 categorized contacts, CAB received 26 uncategorized (misdirected and pending processing) contacts relating to water utilities in September 2017.

Transportation

21 CONTACTS (September 2017)



In September 2017, TEB received 21 transportation complaints, an overall decrease of 50% vis-à-vis the 42 complaints received last month. Complaints received against household goods carriers (9) decreased by 47% and complaints received against all other carriers (12) decreased by 52% vis-à-vis last month.

The nine (9) household goods complaints consisted of: overcharges (3); loss/damage claims (2); hold hostage claims (2), deposit not returned (1), and operating without active authority (1).

Eleven (11) complaints concerned limousines or buses that: advertised or operated without active authority (7), loss/damage claims (3), and operated with a revoked permit (1). TEB received one (1) complaint against a TNC that alleged loss and damage.

Safety Concerns Across Industries

During September 2017, CPED received 33 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

Communications	10
Property Restoration	1
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	3
Utility Infrastructure	6
Energy	15
Company Practice	2
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	1
Gas Leak	3
Property Restoration	3
Utility Infrastructure	6
Water	
No Water Safety Related Contacts	
Transportation	8
Operating Without Active Authority	8

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.