

## Consumer Protection - Enforcement and Redressal (January-February, 2022)

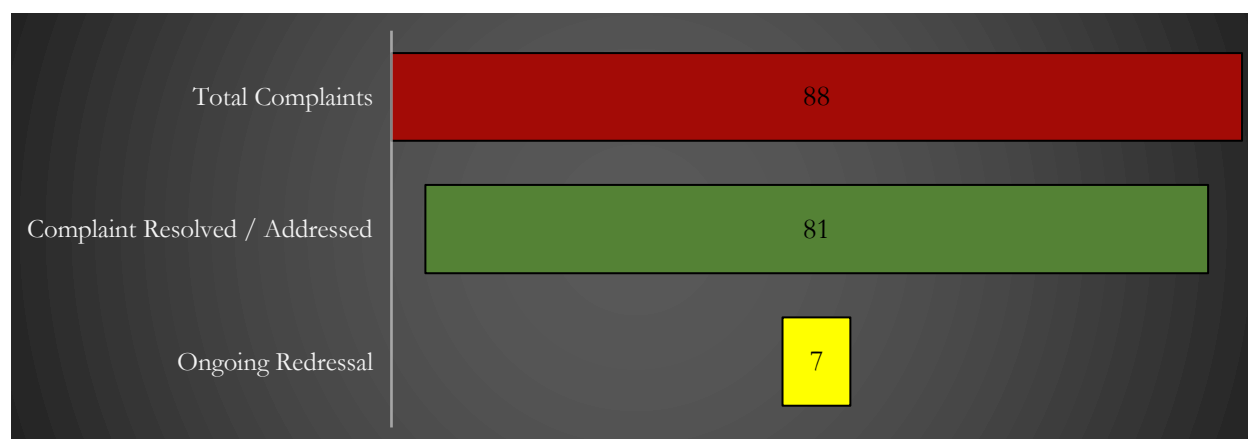
### 1. Enforcement and Redressal

One of the principal functions of the Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) is the application and enforcement of consumer protection laws and redress aggrieved consumers, through mediation and other means. Commonly, it is to monitor and investigate dubious trade practices to ensure safety and protect the economic interest of all consumers.

### 2. Overview of Complaints and Redressals during January and February, 2022

From a total of 88 complaints registered for the months of January and February, 2022, 81 complaints have been fully resolved – either aggrieved consumers were compensated where complaints were authentic, unethical practices were rectified or where necessary, business have been penalized; while seven are under mediation or investigation.

*Fig. I Number of complaints received and addressed (January & February, 2022)*



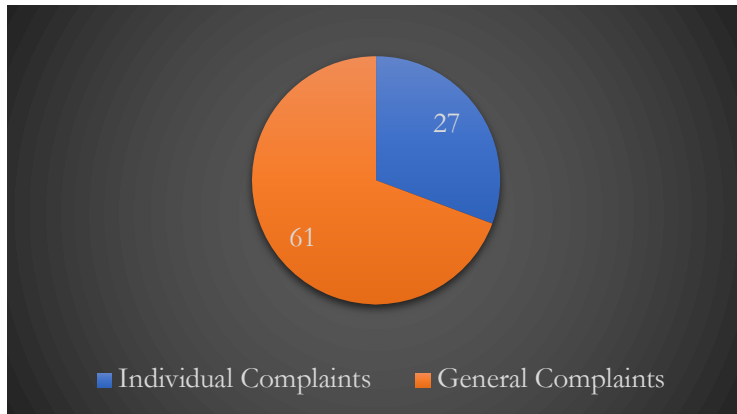
### 3. Types of complaints

Complaints are categorized into two - **general** or **individual**. General complaints are those made against a business entity for an unethical practice that generally affects all consumers; while individual complaints are those made by an aggrieved individual or a party against a business entity for which redressal or compensation is sought.

From a total of 88 complaints during the two months, 61 were individual complaints (Figure II). Majority of the individual complaints pertain to business charging higher than the prices fixed by the government<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Prices of POL products such as LPG, petrol and diesel are fixed by the government at all times, including delivery charges. During lockdowns, the government also fixes maximum selling prices for fresh fruits and vegetables.

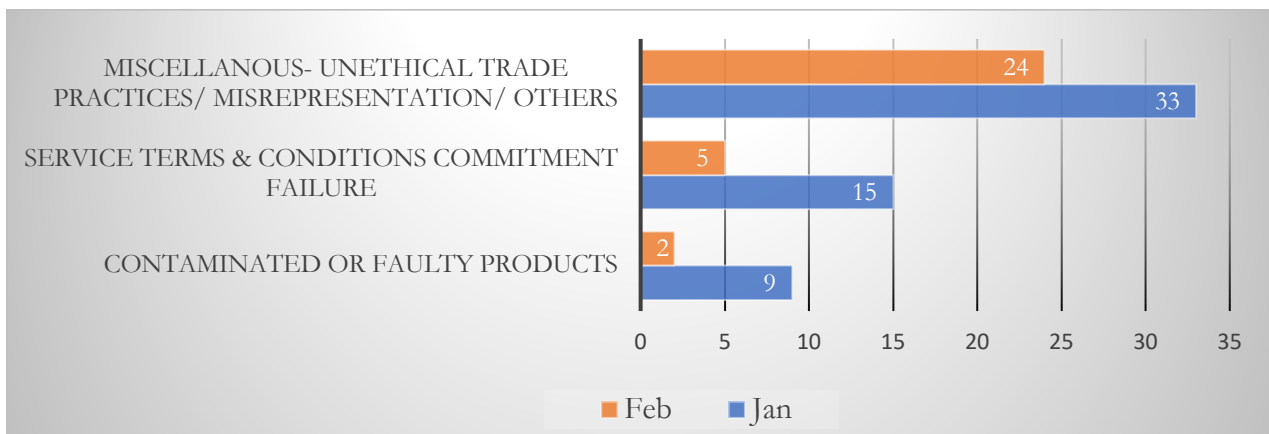
Fig. II: Ratio of type of complaints received for the month of January and February, 2022.



#### 4. Classification of unfair trade practices at glance

Complaints are generally categorized into three main types, namely (i) contaminated or faulty products, (ii) service terms and Conditions commitment failure, and (iii) miscellaneous – covering other unethical business practices.

Fig. III. Number of consumer complaints by nature of violation during January and February, 2022



#### 5. Protocol for Enforcement and Redressal

Consumers are advised to exercise due diligence before making any purchases or before undertaking any business transactions. Always check, reasonableness of price, quality, date of expiry, integrity of the package, terms and conditions (if it involves making advance payments, if it covers repairs and maintenance and if product warranty is offered). Always insist of proper receipts and other purchase documents, wherever relevant.

Having done all that, if any consumer feels cheated or wronged by a business entity, he/she can lodge complaints to the OCP by either calling 1214 (Toll-free), OR by submitting an online complaint via [www.ocp.gov.bt](http://www.ocp.gov.bt) OR by visiting the office during working hours.