

Maine Public Utilities Commission



Interconnection Ombudsman Briefing

October 30, 2025

Position Overview

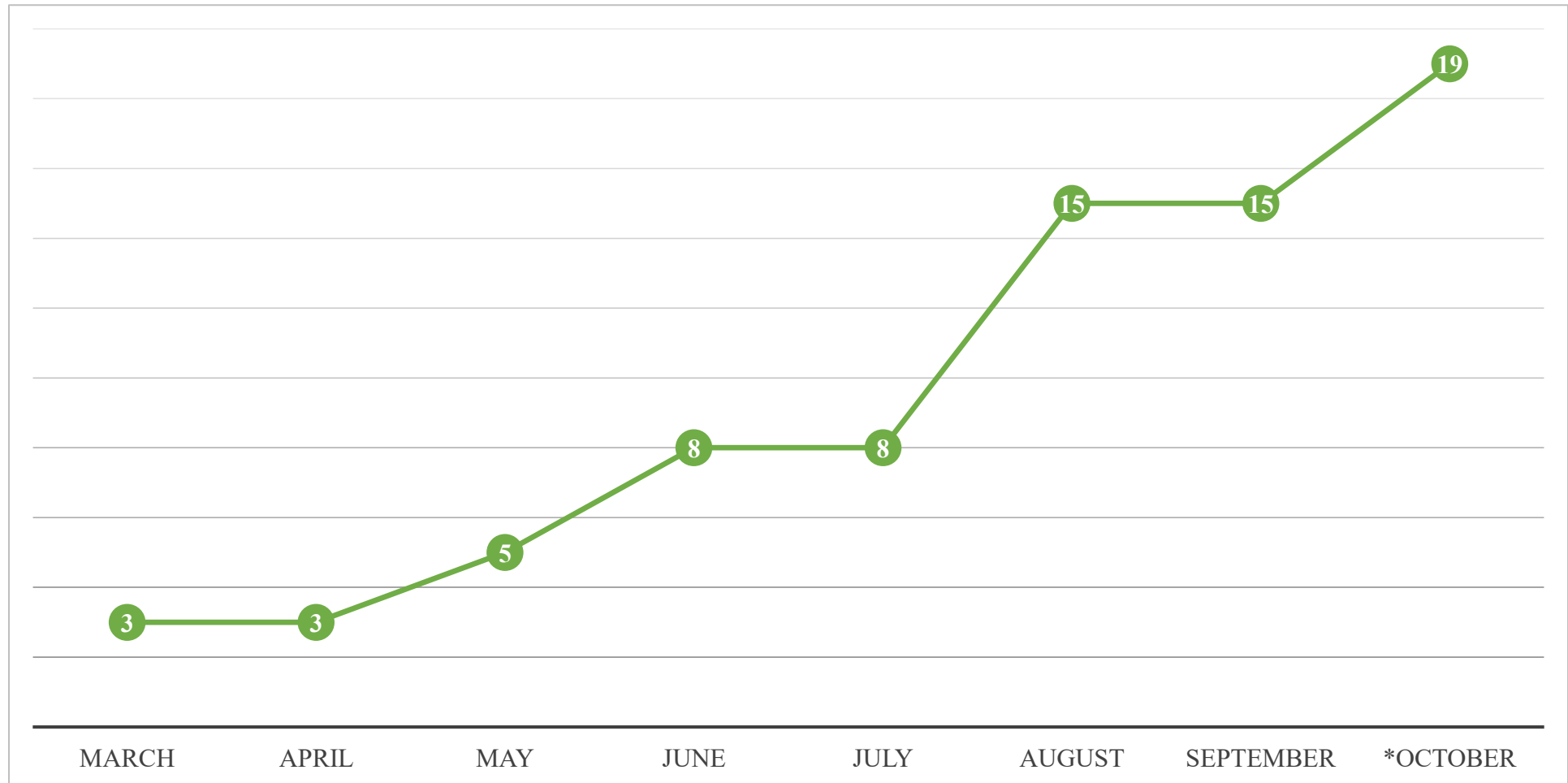
The position of an interconnection ombudsman was established under Public Law 2023, Chapter 307, now codified at 35-A M.R.S. sections 107 and 3474(4).

The duties of the interconnection ombudsman include, but are not limited to:

1. Tracking interconnection disputes;
2. Facilitating the efficient and fair resolution of disputes between customers seeking to interconnect and investor-owned transmission and distribution utilities;
3. Reviewing investor-owned transmission and distribution utility interconnection policies to assess opportunities for reducing interconnection disputes;
4. Convening stakeholder groups as necessary to facilitate effective communication between interconnection stakeholders;
5. Preparing reports that detail the number, type, resolution timeline and outcome of interconnection disputes; and
6. Any other technical or regulatory work involving public utilities.

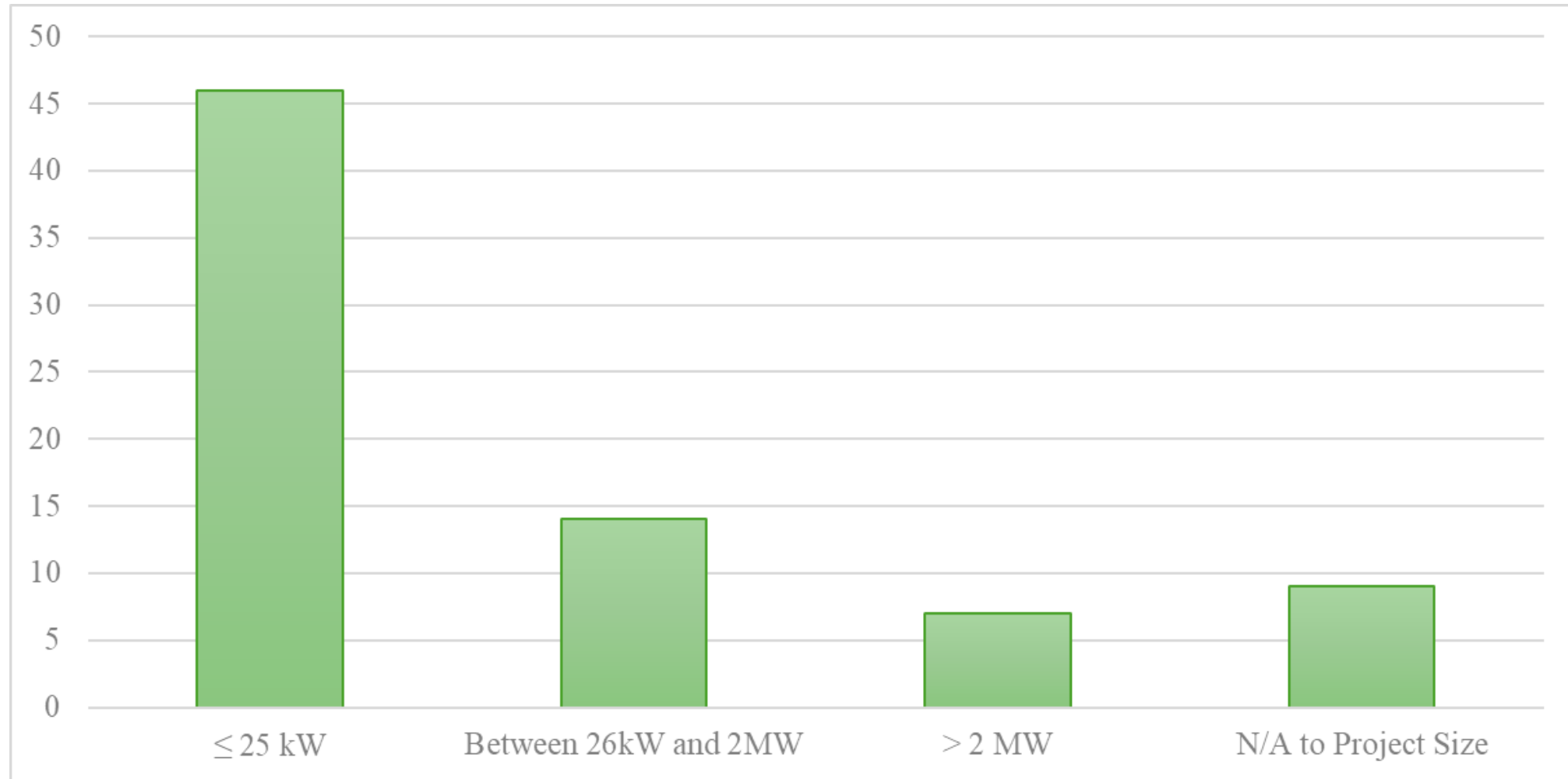
This presentation is reflective of information and data that's been collected following official appointment to this position on March 17, 2025.

Ombudsman Inquiries Received



* As of October 22, 2025

Ombudsman Inquiries Received by Project Size



Example 1:

Inquiry Date: April 4th, 2025

Project Size: ≤ 25kW

Summary: Incomplete forms, unpaid fees, communication issues between installer and utility.

Resolved Date: April 22nd, 2025

Resolution: Resolved communication issues, forms completed, fees paid, and customer received permission to operate.

Example 2:

Inquiry Date: August 4th, 2025

Project Size: ≤ 25kW

Summary: Failed screens, additional review, next-steps.

Resolved Date: September 26th, 2025

Resolution: Project opted to undergo additional review August 12th and was later approved on September 26th.

Example 3:

Inquiry Date: August 25th, 2025

Project Size: ≤ 25kW

Summary: New home construction; incomplete application; communication issues between solar installer, home builder, and utility.

Resolved Date: August 26th, 2025

Resolution: Resolved communication issues, application issue resolved, and completed application submitted.

Inquiry Examples

Chapter 324 § 17 - Dispute Resolution

§ 17(A) - Good Faith Negotiations

- Involves the Interconnection Customer and/or their Installer and the Utility (collectively, “the Parties”).
- No requirement for Parties to inform Ombudsman when initiating and undergoing this step of the process.

§ 17(B) - Informal Dispute Resolution

- Initiated by Ombudsman once:
 - Parties have undergone Good Faith Negotiations, but the dispute remains unresolved;
 - A Party requests Informal Dispute Resolution under Chapter 324 § 17(B); and
 - Parties have provided a written description of dispute and proposed resolution to Ombudsman.
- Involves the Parties, Ombudsman, and MPUC Staff Attorney.
- **Five (5)** disputes initiated after March 17th, 2025, have requested Informal Dispute Resolution.

§ 17(C) - Maine Public Utilities Commission Resolution

- Initiated by MPUC Staff Attorney once:
 - Parties have undergone Good Faith Negotiations **and** Informal Dispute Resolution, but the dispute remains unresolved; and
 - A Party has requested MPUC Resolution under Chapter 324 § 17(C).
- Involves the Parties, Staff Attorney(s), Staff Analysts, and a decision gets deliberated and issued by Commissioners.
- **Zero (0)** disputes initiated after March 17th, 2025, have requested MPUC Resolution.

Working Groups & Commission Dockets

LD 327 Working Groups

- **April 24th, 2025**
 - Reserved capacity for small projects
 - Waitlist for small projects on circuits without capacity.
 - IREC Supplemental Review process.
- **May 30th, 2025**
 - Chapter 324 redline clean-up for Notice of Inquiry
 - Definition changes
 - Current standards
 - Screening updates and transparency
 - Additional Review process and transparency
 - Reserved capacity and waitlist for small projects
- **July 16th, 2025**
 - Additional Review process presentations by each Utility
- **September 11th, 2025**
 - Flexible Interconnections (Public Law 2025, Chapter 293)

Commission Initiated Inquiries

- **October 15th, 2025**
 - Chapter 324 Notice of Inquiry, Docket: 2025-00303
- **October 20th, 2025**
 - Flexible Interconnections Notice of Inquiry, Docket: 2025-00312

Questions?

Contact Information:

Romayn Richards

26 Katherine Drive, Hallowell

(207) 287-6629

ombudsman.puc@maine.gov

