



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Press Distribution Review Panel held on Thursday 10th
December 2015 at 1.00pm at the Offices of Marketforce, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark
Street, London, SE1 0SU.**

Present:	Neil Robinson Trevor Hudson Graham Read Paresh Vyas Raj Chotai	Chairman PPA Independent Retailer Independent Retailer Independent Retailer
Joined by Conference Call:	Linda Gardner Andy Smith Mark Gilhespie	MD SN NMA
In Attendance:	Dorothy King	PDRP Administrator

1. Apologies for Absence and Welcome

- 1.1 Mark Pardon and Steve Archer.
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed Trevor Hudson of Marketforce, who represented the PPA in the absence of Mark Pardon.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting - 3rd September 2015

- 2.1 The minutes of 3rd September 2015 were adopted.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Timeliness of Minutes (Minute 3.1)

NR reported that he had written to the PDF Chairman, but had not received a response.

3.2 PR Sub Group (Minute 3.2)

AS was to have internally enquired as to Smiths News's protocol when a retailer requested his RDT or STD and the PR Sub Group would then prepare a press release on the subject.

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting and for AS to prepare a draft press release as soon as he had the required information.

3.3 SN & MDL Internal Document on Best Practises of Complaint Handling (Minute 3.3)

AS reported that he had compared the MDL and SN complaint processes and that they are virtually identical in terms of process.

He suggested that it would be difficult for the wording to be identical from two different companies, although this would be preferred for consistency. He added that the quality of response is more important.

3.4 NFRN Conference and Trade Events (Minute 3.4)

The Chairman thanked SA for arranging a one page feature on the PDRP with Chris Gamm, Editor of 'Retail newsagent'. He believed that the PDRP profile has been raised as a consequence.

3.5 Standards Sub Group (Minute 4)

For the benefit of AS, MP explained that this action was to seek the SN perspective on the proposed revisions to the PDC and their compatibility with the MD Customer Service Pledge v3.

He informed the Panel that, until SN had joined the discussion, the sub group would prefer to hold back of its findings.

A conference call had taken place on 29 or 30th October 2015 and AS had referred back to SN. The only issue which remains outstanding for SN is to reach an agreement regarding Voucher Processing, which will be covered off on the Agenda.

The final paper was to be circulated prior to the December meeting following the conference call.

3.6 Jerry Hayes NFRN (Minute 6.1)

NR reported that he had now formally responded to Jerry Hayes of the NFRN on the email dated 07/07/2015. There has been no further communication received back.

3.7 Definition of Publisher Lateness (Minute 6.1)

MG confirmed that the definition of NMA publisher's lateness to wholesaler is cut off less 15 minutes.

3.8 Restitution for Regional Titles Minute 6.1)

NR reported that he had written to the NMA seeking guidance on whether the PDC Complaints Process applied to regional titles.

This had been passed onto the Circulation Executive Board, who are referring it to the Newspaper Society.

4.0 Standards Sub Group

4.1 TH reported that MP and AS had held a conference call at the end of October 2015.

On the committee are:

Mark Pardon – Sub Group Leader
Linda Gardner
Paresh Vyas
Raj Chotai

4.2 Trevor Hudson reviewed the paper dated 25th March 2015 on behalf of Mark Pardon and advised the panel of the following:

- **Page 1 point 2** - Newspaper supplement insertion & voucher handling processes and payments. – The PDRP is unable to get involved with this as it is a financial issue and the panel is not permitted to become involved.
- **Page 1 point 3** - Order and Supply Management. – It was agreed to keep this point for newspapers and leave magazines out of this standard.
- **Page 1 point 4.5** should read – *A retailer can manage his newspaper supplies, provided this is within publishers' sales promotion and unsold guidelines.*

Wholesalers (Menzies) will honour any change made to Newspaper standing order value for the next two issues corresponding to the day of the week. Such changes will not be honoured if it is impossible to do so within publisher supply constraints.

In such cases the publisher will authorise the wholesaler to include the retailer's request as part of their allocation system process, for the publisher's titles. In the event that a retailer fails to meet the unsold guidelines, the facility will be withdrawn.

Page 1 point 4.6 - *When a retailer delists a title, the request will be honoured immediately. In order to relist the title, the retailer must notify the wholesaler.*

It was agreed to include: *Where there is evidence that a retailer has not sold a single copy of a magazine title for three consecutive issues, wholesalers will nil the standing order.*

- **Page 2 point 2.1** Delivery Timeliness - Agreement for this to read as: *The wholesaler will deliver all titles and their appropriate sections, no later than Retailer Delivery Time (RDT), or Scheduled Delivery Time (SDT), for the day of sale.*

Discussion had been based upon 'bunching'. When multiple deliveries arrive within the cut off time, less 15 minutes, it causes logistic issues for wholesale with high volume of product being delivered within the short time frame. It was agreed that LG and AS to discuss 'bunching' with their respective companies. If problems continue to increase the wholesalers may need to re-negotiate cut off times with publishers.

It was also noted that there is also added pressures of more overnight major roadworks which cause delays or alternative routes being sourced.

These pressures are passed along to retail HND routes and staff.

Publishers sharing wagons are seen as cost savings by consolidation of the services, but the retailer suffers loss of sale and revenue, and this impact's along the chain.

- **Page 2 point 3.2** Delivery Quantity - It was agreed to include the following: *Wholesalers will record the number of Totes Boxes and/or parcels and time of delivery in order to produce traceable delivery information in the event of a delivery dispute.*
- **Page 2 point 3.5** It was agreed to retain the Smith News 3pm deadline for reporting magazine shortages on the day of delivery, due to operational reasons. Menzies Customer Service Pledge state 4pm. It reads as: *Retailers are advised to report shortages of magazines to their wholesaler by 3pm on the day of delivery. For retailers undertaking automatic claims processes the deadline for claims receipt will be agreed between the retailer and the wholesaler.*
- **Page 2 point 3.12** Agreed wording to include as: *Delivery returns parcels and Tote Boxes will be securely bound and not exceed 18kg, or the regulatory limits set by the Health and Safety Executive.*
- **Page 2 Point 4.5** Agreed not to include magazine, reads as: *A retailer can manage his newspaper supplies, provided this is within publishers' sales promotion and unsold guidelines.*

Wholesalers will honour any change made to a Newspaper standing order value for the next two issues corresponding to the day of the week. Such changes will not be honoured if it is impossible to do so within publisher supply constraints.

In such cases the publisher will authorise the wholesalers to include the retailer's requests as part of their allocation system process, for that publishers titles. In the event that a retailer fails to meet the unsold guidelines, the facility will be withdrawn.

- **Page 2 point 4.6** Agreed wording as: *When a retailer delists a title, the request will be honoured immediately. In order to relist the title, the retailer must notify the wholesaler.*

Where there is evidence that a retailer has not sold a single copy of a magazine title for three consecutive issues, Wholesalers will nil the standing order.

- **Page 3 Point 6 Invoicing** - Retailers can expect to receive a detailed invoice on a daily or weekly basis, showing supplies, credits and any additional charges. Wholesalers will have a clear process to record and swiftly answer queries. Claims and overs under charges will be clearly marked on the subsequent invoice.

Menzies have agreed to provide deferred payment on Stickers and Collectable items for a period of one week, which is aimed at retailers stocking these products without an adverse impact on their cashflow. If a retailer prefers not received deferred terms on these items, Menzies will remove them on request.

AS advised this has not been agreed with SN and is being discussed at a meeting the following week. He agreed to report back the SN position on deferred payments for stickers and collectables by next meeting.

- **Page 3 Point 7.3 Voucher Processing** - *All vouchers returned will be credited within 14 days of return.*

Consideration was given to reducing this to 7 days from 14 days to assist retailers with cashflow. AS was asked to ascertain SN's position on this and to report back at the next meeting if SN is able consider this request.

- 4.3 The Standards Sub Group was thanked for drafting the document so far and MP was asked to prepare a final document with the agreed amendments for presentation to the PDF.

NR to write a letter to the PDF regarding the PDRP Standards Review upon receipt of the final document.

5.0 Report of PR Sub Group

Members are:

Andy Smith - Sub Group Leader

Mark Gilhespie

Steve Archer

Graham Read

- 5.1 The PR Subgroup had met immediately following the 3rd September PDRP meeting.

There had been a request to wholesalers that they publish a PDRP link on the bottom of their paperwork. SN declined the request on the basis that it wished to handle its own complaints directly in the first instance.

- 5.2 SN's official statement on how retailers may obtain their RDT, SDT and ADT is that customers can phone, and they will be supplied with the requested information for RDT and/or SDT. ADT is data written and has manual intervention, and the Sub Group is awaiting a formal statement from SN as to what can be disclosed within a formal press release.

LG advised that MDL customers can call and request their RDT or SDT and will be informed of such. Should a retailer be unhappy with the RDT or SDT there is a process for the retailer to follow in order to determine if a change to the RDT or SDT is feasible or possible.

ADT will be supplied on a request by request basis.

6.0 Stage 2 Complaints Audit

- 6.1 An article on the Stage 2 Audit had been published in the 'Retail Newsagent' encouraging retailers to use the link to the questionnaire provided on the final formal paperwork of the complaint process.

The article had caused a mixture of responses, but the Chairman had made it clear that the panel would be happy to consider any constructive comment which retailers may wish to share after their engagement to the formal complaint process.

It was noted that the retailer who communicated with the RN (06/11/15), criticising the process, had not raised a formal complaint, nor submitted his view point formally as yet, although NR has invited him to do so.

DK reported that to date the PDRP had not received any completed Stage 2 audit survey forms.

- 6.2 DK suggested that it may be a good idea to invite Jac Roper of 'Convenience Store' - 'Ask Jac' – Agony Page, to attend a future meeting. Jac frequently refers retailers to the PDRP Helpline, and by attending a meeting as an observer, it will assist in her understanding of the Charter and the PDRP and may also help raise the awareness of the self-regulatory body.

DK to contact Jac Roper to see if she would like to attend the March meeting.

7.0 Report on Complaints Resolved Via PDRP Help Line

- 7.1 The PDRP Administrator stated that all the complaints handled by the PDRP Help Line are conducted in the nature of a Stage 2 Customer Complaint; she informed the panel that there had been:

62 complaints received and 127 breaches between 03/09/2015 – 04/12/2015.

	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Smith's News	27	1	28
Menzies	20	0	20
NIDL	13	0	13
NMA	1	0	1

Breached of Standards – 127 Breaches

T&C	DT	Del Q	OSM	SBR	RM	Inv	VP	Sub R	C/S	C/C
1	23	16	8	4	17	19	5	0	31	3

- 7.2 An increase of 47 complaints from previous meeting.

SN complaints increased by 25
MDL complaints increased by 19
NMA complaints increased by 1
NIDL complaints increased by 3

- 7.3 Customer Service seeing the greatest increase of standard breach, followed by Delivery Timeliness, and Delivery Quality.
- 7.4 DK indicated that the formal monthly Stage 2 and Stage 3 do not reflect the increase of the helplines influx of complaints, because they are nipped in the bud at the point of referral on to the associations.
- 7.5 Monthly Stats by the PDRP Helpline have been requested so that a year on year comparison can be carried out.

8.0 PDRP Tenure of Office

- 8.1 The Chairman reported that the tenure of office of PDRP members is set by the Constitution at 2 years, but with consideration of the work undertaken and continuity he thought that this may not be a reasonable time and that a further extension of 1 or 2 years might be appropriate.

RC, who is the longest serving member, agreed that 2 years is not quite enough, and supported an extension to 4 years.

The Chairman had mooted this point with the PDF and it had suggested that 4 years tenure of office may put some retailers off from applying due to the length of commitment. It recommended that the positions be advertised as a 2 year post with the option to serve a further 2 years of office, giving the retailers the option of continuing service or resigning.

- 8.2 NR to amend and circulate the PDRP Constitution to reflect two year tenure of office for panellists with an option to serve a further two years.

9.0 Any Other Business

- 9.1 Meeting dates for 2016 – NR suggested to the panel that meeting dates should be given consideration to:

Late March 2016

Late June 2016

September 2016 – to synchronise with the PDF Meeting early September

December 2016

Meeting closed at 14:56pm with thanks to the Chairman.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 31st March 2016 at 13:15.

MEETING 10th December 2015 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Item	Action	By Whom
3.2	AS to obtain a formal response from SN as to how retailers can obtain RDT, SDT and ADT, and prepare a draft press release.	AS
4.2	AS & LG to refer 'bunching' to their respective companies. If problems have increased, there may be a need for wholesalers to re-negotiate cut off times with publishers.	AS/LG
4.2	AS to ascertain SN's position on deferred payment for stickers and Collectables. MDL has introduced the same in an attempt to generate sales.	AS
4.2	AS to report back at the next meeting if SN are able to assist with crediting vouchers within 7 days rather than the current 14 days, helping retailers with their cashflow.	AS
4.3	MP to redraft document for presentation to the PDF for consideration	MP
4.3	NR to write a letter to the PDF regarding the PDRP Standards Review	NR
5.2	PR Sub Group to draft a press release advising retailers how they can obtain their individual RDT or SDT from their wholesaler.	AS
6.2	DK to invite Jac Roper of Convenience Store Problem Page – 'Ask Jac' to attend the next PDRP meeting as an observer.	DK
7.5	DK to start correlating monthly Helpline Stats in preparing year on year data	DK
8.2	NR to amend and circulate the PDRP Constitution to reflect two year tenure of office for panellists with an option to serve a further two years.	NR
9.1	DK to circulate proposed meeting dates and venues	DK

Dates for Meetings 2016

- 31/03/2016 1pm News UK Offices, 1 London Bridge Street, SE1 9GF
- 30/06/2016 1pm Marketforce Offices, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, E14 5HU
- 01/09/2016 1pm PPA Offices, Second Floor, 35 – 38 New Bridge Street, EC4V 6BW
- 08/12/2016 1pm Marketforce Offices, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, EC14 5HU