



Minutes of a Meeting of the Press Distribution Review Panel held on Thursday 29th January 2015 at 1.00pm at the Offices of Marketforce, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU

Present:	Neil Robinson	Chairman
	Debbie Dalston	SN
	Linda Gardner	MD
	Mark Pardon	PPA
	Mark Gilhespie	NMA (News Media Association)
	Rajiv Chotai	Independent Retailer
	Graham Read	Independent Retailer
	Steve Archer	Independent Retailer
In Attendance:	Dorothy King	PDRP Administrator

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Paresh Vyas.
- 1.2 Raj Chotai apologised for lateness.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting – 27th November 2014

- 2.1 The minutes of the November Meeting were adopted. Regretfully the September's Minutes remain outstanding and hopefully will be published in the near future.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 MG to forward publisher contact numbers details for updating on PDF website.

NUKL's previous number was not operative. NUKL has utilised a separate line for new business queries to two dedicated people and this number will be incorporated to handle the PDF complaints process. The complaints will remain being escalated to Jason Ingold.

The number for this service will be circulated shortly.

Richard Johnson is raising the issue of publisher contact numbers at the next NMA meeting and will report back to MG.

- 3.2 DD reported that, in the short term, SN does not intend to publish RDT's on its daily paperwork .If a retailer wishes to enquire about their RDT, they should ask the operator from the contact centre.

DK informed the panel that, printing RDTs on delivery sheets was discussed at a recent PDF meeting. The output contradicted comments raised at the PDRP meeting of 29/11/2015, when the panel was informed by Raj Chotai that MD publish its RDT's on its delivery paperwork RC's information was inaccurate.

LG confirmed that MD does not publish retailer's RDTs on delivery sheets.

MD has no immediate plans to publish RDTs on paperwork, but retailers can readily get this information and confirmation of arrival times by contacting the contact centre.

Both wholesalers stated that all retailers have a written copy of the agreed RDT or assigned SDT on opening their account.

MG informed the panel that NUKL is looking to publish RDTs on its customer's paperwork within the next three months. This is something that was already being looked at on another internal initiative within NUKL so this has tied in well without any additional cost.

The panel noted that this is easier for NUKL than it is for SN and MD, as it distributes fewer titles and requires less space on the sheet of paper.

It was agreed to issue a PDRP press release informing retailers how best to obtain their RDT or SDT from wholesalers.

- 3.3 DD has been monitoring the SN wholesale responses of Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints from managers and has noted an improvement in both content and quality.

Complaint handling had been discussed at an SN conference, with focus on improvement.

- 3.4 It was agreed that SN and MD still compare complaint responses (best and worst) and compile an internal training document on best practises of complaint handling.

4. PDRP Administration

- 4.1 DK apologised for the lateness of minutes and reported that she has taken steps to improve her work flow.

DK raised the issue with the PDF board and it has agreed to stagger the PDF and PDRP meeting, with the exception of one meeting a year when NR attends his annual PDF meeting, thereby eradicating 'minute bunching'.

DK reported on retail members of the panel delaying expenses submissions and it was agreed that expense claims must be made within 48 hours of the meeting.

5. Standardisation of Restitution Payments

- 5.1 The draft 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' had been circulated to the panel.
- 5.2 NR proposed that the publisher/distributor representatives take the 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' to their respective bodies for approval.
- 5.3 MP had circulated suggested grammatical amendments to the guidance notes and DK will activate the amendments and circulate the revised document to the panel for approval/comment.
- 5.4 MP expressed concern at the conflict between the content of the Charter and the guidance notes. NR responded by pointing out that the 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' is still a draft working document, and will remain as such until the publishers have had an opportunity to approve it.

When the work on harmonisation is completed and the 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' finalised, the PDRP will make a request to the PDF to have the necessary amendments to the Charter carried out. There will be no printing involved as the Charter is a live document on the PDF website.

- 5.5 DD requested that the complaint document within the guidance notes be referred to as the "PDC Formal Complaint Form", not the "PDF Formal Complaint Form".
- 5.6 NR advised the panel that he understood that the NMA had increased the upper limits on newspaper publisher's restitution payments and requested that MG confirm this.

NR intimated to the panel that he would like to see the cap on restitution for any one claim and any one incident removed, and would encourage the NMA to reconsider them altogether.

The PDRP is suggesting to publishers that:

- a) The publisher's matrix calculation for restitution is discontinued and replaced with a 55p per copy set tariff.
 - b) The universal definition of 'persistence' becomes "The same problem occurs more than three times in three weeks for Monday to Friday newspapers, or more than twice in six weeks for weekend newspapers and for magazines".
 - c) Wholesalers should pass Stage 2 complaints directly onto publishers rather than just advice a complaining retailer of the publisher contact details.
- 5.7 NR to prepare a letter to accompany the draft 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' and circulate it to the panel, prior to MG presenting to the NMA in February.
 - 5.8 MG asked for the reasons why the Express Group and Financial Times are not engaged with the PDC.

DK advised that 'The Financial Times' withdrew from the NPA last year and the Express Group had never been a member of the NPA.

Both publishers have been approached recently by the PDF for engagement, but the publishers were happy to be independent.

6.0 Stage 2 Complaints Audit

- 6.1 DK reported that the initial Stage 2 Complaints Audit had been encouraging and positive, with only one issue showing negativity - 'Did you receive acknowledgement that your completed form had been received within 48 hours?'

The majority of retailers contacted replied either 'Can't remember' or 'No', with only two retailers stating that they had received an acknowledgement within the 48 hours.

- 6.2 DK expressed concern at the volume and duration of telephone calls required in surveying retailers. She suggested that consideration be given to conducting sample audits rather than contacting every Stage 2 retailer.
- 6.3 Consideration was given to including an internet link within the Stage 2 written responses to the retailer that connected to an electronic survey which could be completed in seconds it was agreed that DK prepare a sample electronic survey.
- 6.4 It was further agreed that when the format of the electronic survey has been finalised, a press release should be issued advising retailers that the PDRP require their feedback/comments regarding the engagement of the complaints process.

7.0 PDRP Plans for 2015 and 2016

- 7.1 The Chairman reminded the panel that over the previous 12 months the PDRP had paid attention to the following projects:
- Standardisation of the restitution payments,
 - Reviewing the 'Guidance Notes for Retailers'
 - Compiling a quality assurance questionnaire for auditing the complaint process
- 7.2 He suggested that, with a newly constituted panel, it would be a good opportunity to consider fresh areas of operation.
- 7.3 The panel considered that it would like to recommend amendments to the Charter as there had been no such review for two years. It was recognised as an area which requires constant attention and falls within the PDRP remit to encourage compliance with the Charter.
- 7.4 The panel recognised its failure to self-publicise. Through self-publicity awareness of the Charter could be generated together with advising retailers as to the work and attainments of the PDRP.

In furtherance of PR, consideration was given to attending trade shows. The PDRP decisions affect everybody within the news supply chain, but virtually none of the retailers are aware where these decisions are being made.

It was agreed that following every PDRP meeting the PR Sub-Group prepare and publish a press release briefly outlining the outputs.

Press Releases should also be prepared on specific issues as appropriate.

7.5 It agreed to form two sub groups:

- PR Sub-Group
 - Steve Archer
 - Debbie Dalston
 - Graham Read
 - Mark Gilhespie
- Standards Review Sub-Group
 - Mark Pardon
 - Linda Gardner
 - Raj Chotai
 - Paresh Vyas

SA stated that he had spoken with Stefan Appleby (Editor of Retail Express 15,000 circulation), as to whether he would consider having an ongoing feature on the PDRP and its work in the publication.

He reminded the panel that in 'Retail News' (circulation 14,000) there is a page dedicated to profiling individuals within the industry which would be perfect for the Chairman, to promote the PDRP.

The panel gave consideration to applying to the NFRN for the PDRP to have a trade stand at the NFRN conference to engage with retailers and raise awareness to the Charter. The panel requested that the retail representatives approach the NFRN and request that the PDRP attends free of charge, if not, what would the cost be for a stand. If a cost was to be applied the PDRP will ask the PDF if they are able to fund the campaign.

It was also suggested that the PDRP/PDC could sponsor a NFRN award for approximately £100.00.

SA suggested that NR should consider attending the NFRN conference in June and have a stage presence for five minutes, to promote the PDC/PDRP to the NFRN delegates.

7.6 RC suggested that the retailer's serving on the panel should publish their email addresses and, should other retailers have concerns, they can contact a retailer representative on the panel. This could be particularly helpful for retailers where English is not their first language.

7.7 It was agreed that the PR sub group organise a conference call within the next couple of weeks to discuss press releases in general, columns within the trade press, and trade shows with particular reference to the NFRN conference in June.

It was also suggested that retailers who have engaged with the complaint process and had a positive outcome could perhaps be approached for their comments with a view to them being published.

SA advised the panel that he had received an email from Brian Murphy, Head of News Operations within NFRN. He would be very interested in a chat with SA as he is now a representative on the PDRP.

- 7.8 MP is happy to organise a conference call and start reviewing the standards with the review sub-group.

8.0 Report on Complaints Resolved Via PDF Help Line

- 8.1 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:

15 complaints received and 42 breaches.

	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Smith's News	10	0	10
Menzies	5	2	5

Breached of Standards – 42 Breaches

T&C	DT	Del Q	OSM	SBR	RM	Inv	VP	Sub R	C/S	C/C
0	5	10	7	0	3	3	0	0	14	0

- 8.2 NR stated that he had started reviewing the 14 month extended Annual Report, he commented on the improvement of quality of data, and accuracy.

Below are the snap statistics covering the period 01/11/2013 - 31/12/2014 during which time there were 175 Stage 2 complaints generating 283 breaches of PDC standards.

T&C	Del T	Del Q	OSM	SBR	RM	Inv	VP	Sub Ret	CS	CC
3	91	49	49	N/A	17	23	10	2	38	1

10.0 Dates for Meetings 2015

- 29/01/2015 1pm Blue Fin Building
- 30/04/2015 1pm Blue Fin Building
- 23/07/2015 2pm Conference Call - **Call: 0845 351 0342 – Participant passcode:610500**
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- 03/09/2015 1pm Blue Fin Building
- 12/11/2015 1pm Blue Fin Building (TBA)

Meeting closed at 15.30pm with thanks to the Chairman.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 30th April 2015 at 13:00 at the Marketforce Offices – Blue Fin Building.

**MEETING –29th January 2015
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

Item	Action	By Whom
3.1	Publisher contact numbers to be updated on PDF website, MG to speak to Richard Johnson (NMA) and forward NUKL's number.	MG
3.2	Press release on how to obtain RDTs from wholesale	PR Group DD/GR/MG/ SA
3.4	SN & MDL to compare complaint responses (best and worst) to compile an internal document on best practises of complaint handling	DD/LG
4.1	Travel expenses from retailers to be submitted within 48 hrs of the meeting to the administrator.	PV/SA/GR/ RC
5.3	To carry out MP suggested amendments to the 'Guidance Notes for Retailers' and recirculate to panel.	DK
5.6	To confirm the value of NMA caps	MG
5.7	NR to draft a letter for MG to present to the NMA re 'Guidance Notes for Retailers'	NR
6.3	Prepare sample of electronic survey form	DK
6.4	Organise Press Release regarding the Electronic Survey on the Complaints Process	PR Group DD/GR/MG/ SA
7.7	Organise conference call re press releases/ columns within trade press/ NFRN conference.	PR Group DD/GR/MG/S A
7.8	Standards Review Group to organise a conference call to focus on the current standards.	Standards Group MP/LG/RC