



## **Press Distribution Charter**

### **Quarterly Report 01/01/2017 – 31/03/2017**

During the three month period between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 a total of 38 completed PDC Stage 2 complaint forms were submitted generating 64 breaches of PDC standards. The complaints originated from 19 wholesale houses. There were no complaints made against the NMA or PPA.

During this period 4 complaints were escalated to Stage 3, however one was resolved prior to adjudication.

During the period under review there were 53 complaints resolved via the PDF helpline. During the corresponding period last year there were 55 telephone resolutions.

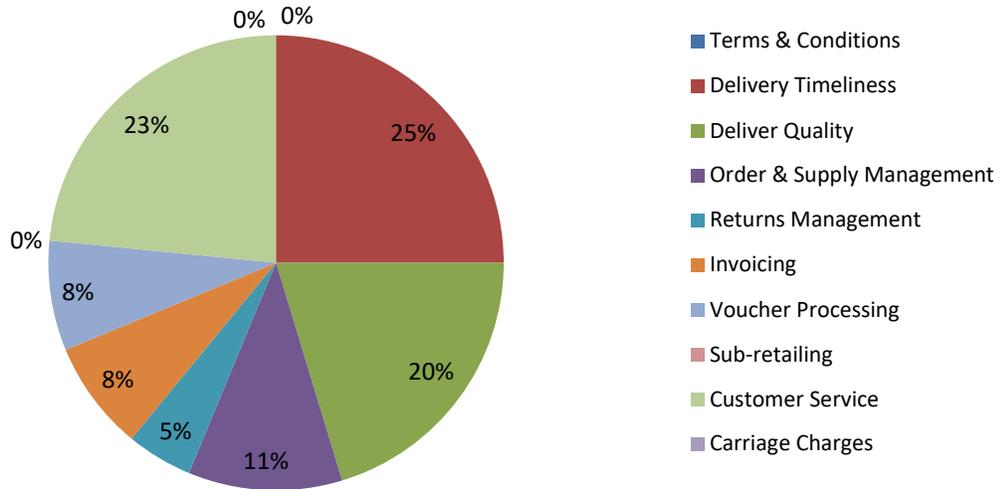
In the corresponding period last year there were a total of 38 PDC Stage 2 complaints that generated 60 failures to meet PDC standards. The complaints originated from 22 wholesale houses. There were no complaints made against the NMA or PPA.

### **Complaints by Standard**

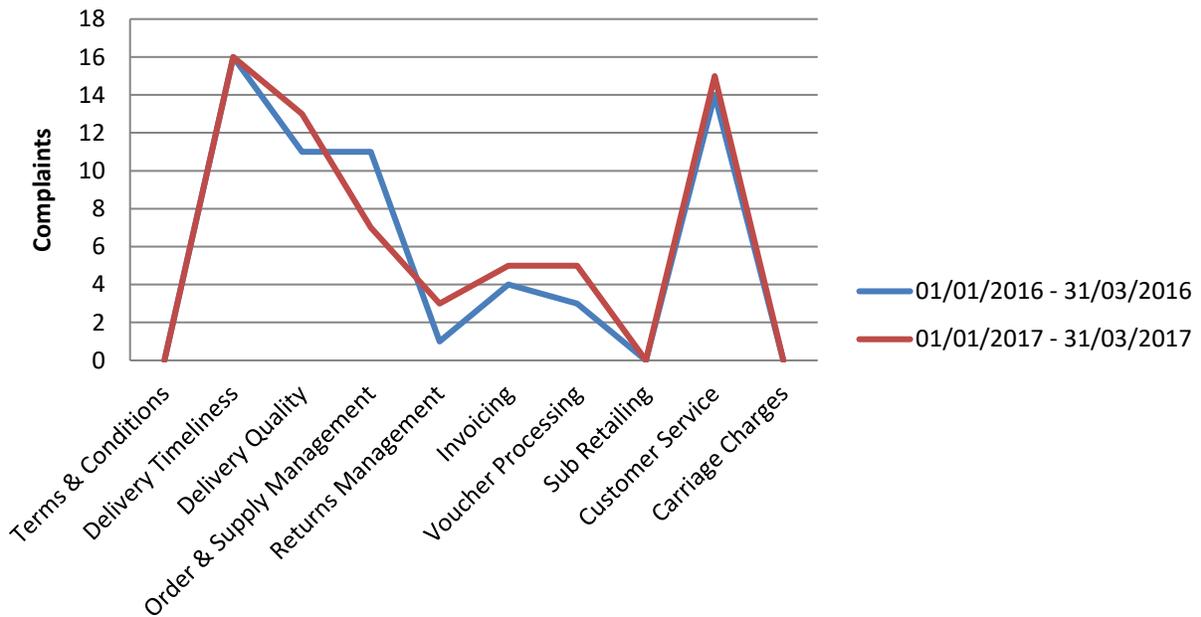
Of the 64 breaches that were reported 0 related to Terms & Conditions, 16 Delivery Timeliness, 13 Delivery Quality, 7 Order and Supply Management, 3 Returns Management, 5 Invoicing, 5 Voucher Processing, 0 Sub-retailing, 15 Customer Service and 0 Carriage Charges.

Between 01/01/2016 and 31/03/2016 of the 60 failures, 0 related to Terms & Conditions, 16 Delivery Timeliness, 11 Delivery Quality, 11 Order and Supply Management, 1 Returns Management, 4 Invoicing, 3 Voucher Processing, 0 Sub-retailing, 14 Customer Service and 0 Carriage Charges.

## Complaints by Standard 01/01/2017 - 31/03/2017



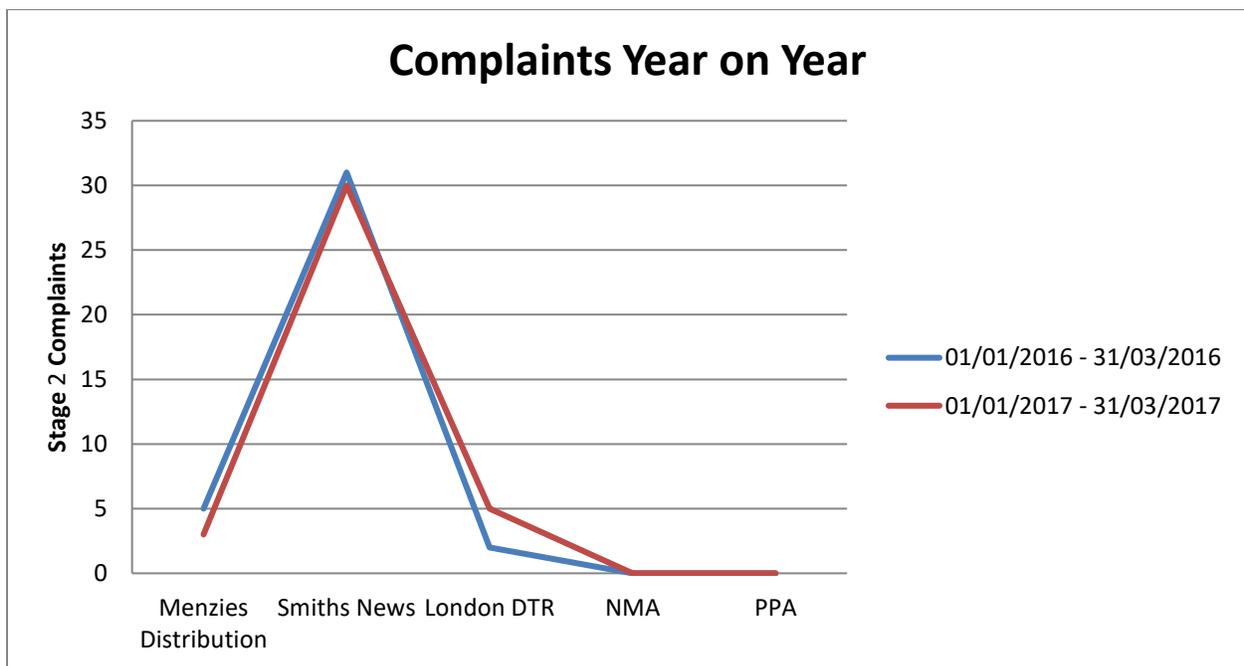
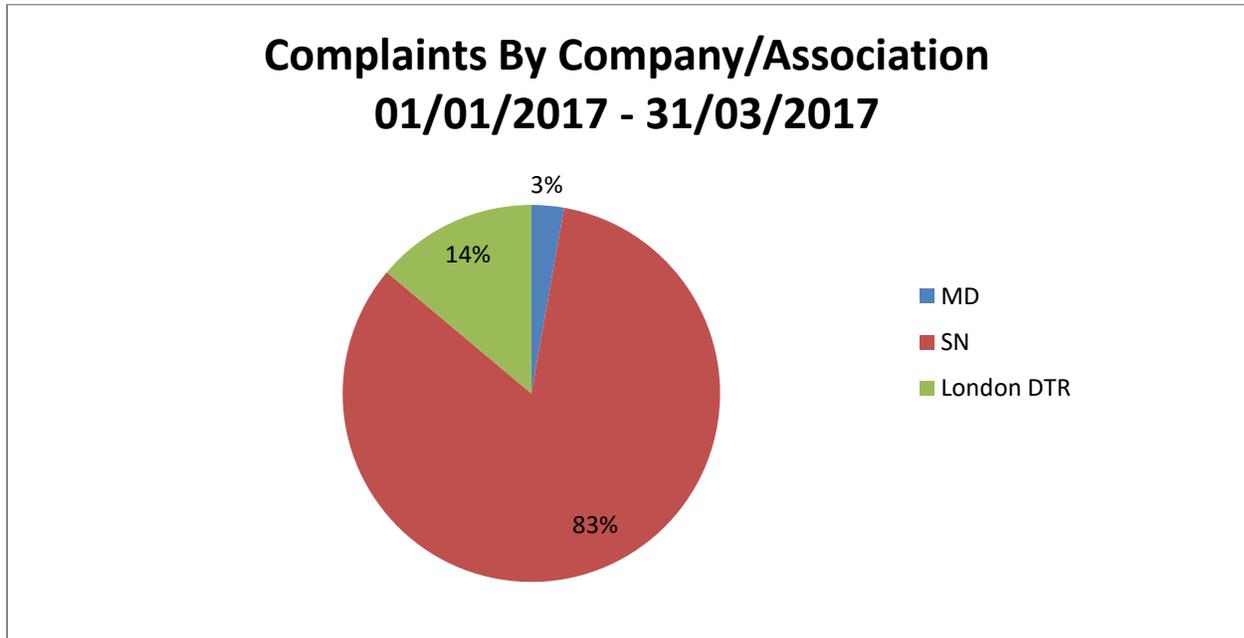
## Complaints Year on Year



## Complaints by Company/Association

Menzies Distribution dealt with 3 Stage 2 complaints, Smiths News 30 and DTR London 5. There were no complaints made against newspaper publishers or magazine publishers/distributors.

In the same period last year Menzies Distribution had 5 Stage 2 complaints made against them, Smiths News 31 and DTR London 2. There were no complaints recorded against the NMA or PPA.



## Type of Complaint by Branch

Wholesaler/ Publisher	Area	T. & C.	Del. T.	Del. Q.	Ord. & Supp.	R M.	Inv.	V. P.	Sub. Ret.	C. S.	C. C.
<b>Menzies</b>	Leeds		1								
<b>Dist.</b>	Linwood		1								
	Sheffield		1								
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Smiths</b>	Borehamwood		1	2	1	1	1			2	
<b>News</b>	Croydon		1								
	Exeter									1	
	Gloucester				1	1					
	Hammersmith									1	
	Hornsey			2							
	Leicester		1	1		1					
	Milton Keynes		1							1	
	Newport									1	
	Nottingham		3	1	1					2	
	Peterborough		2					1		1	
	Slough		1	1	1					1	
	Stevenage		2	2	1		2	2		2	
	Stockport			2			1			2	
	Wednesbury		1	1				1		1	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>London DTR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

\*NB Numbers indicate breaches of Press Distribution Charter complaints and therefore include multiple complaints.

The corresponding table for the period 01/01/2016 - 31/03/2016 is as follows:

Wholesaler/ Publisher	Area	T. & C.	Del. T.	Del. Q.	Ord. & Supp.	R M.	Inv.	V. P.	Sub. Ret.	C. S.	C. C.
<b>Menzies</b>	Maidstone			1	1		1				
<b>Dist.</b>	Ryde			1							
	S E London			1			1				
	Swansea				1						

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Smiths</b>	Birmingham		1	1	1					1	
<b>News</b>	Borehamwood			1	1						
	Crawley							1		1	
	Hammersmith		2	1	1					2	
	Hornsey									1	
	Lancing		2	1						1	
	Liverpool									1	
	Newport		1	1	1	1					
	Northampton		1		1					1	
	Nottingham		2	1	3					2	
	Oxford		2							1	
	Peterborough		1				1				
	Southampton		1	1							
	Stevenage		1								
	Southport						1			1	
	Taunton			1	1					1	
	Warrington									1	
	Wednesbury							2			
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>DTR London</b>		<b>2</b>								
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>

\*NB Numbers indicate breaches of Press Distribution Charter complaints and therefore include multiple complaints

## Timeliness of Stage 2 Process

The Press Distribution Charter provides that Stage 2 complaints should normally be completed within 14 days, but no longer than 28 days. The table below records the average time it took for completion of Stage 2 Complaints.

Wholesaler/Publisher	Number of Complaints	Not completed in 28 days	Average Time for Completion
London DTR	5	0	16.60
Menzies Distribution	3	0	5.33
Smiths News	30	0	4.17

Timeliness for the first quarter last year was as follows:

Wholesaler/Publisher	Number of Complaints	Not completed in 28 days	Average Time for Completion
DTR London	2	0	6.00
Menzies Distribution	5	0	1.60
Smiths News	31	2	10.70

One Stage 3 complaint was adjudicated outside of the 14 day limit, but required further and better particulars.

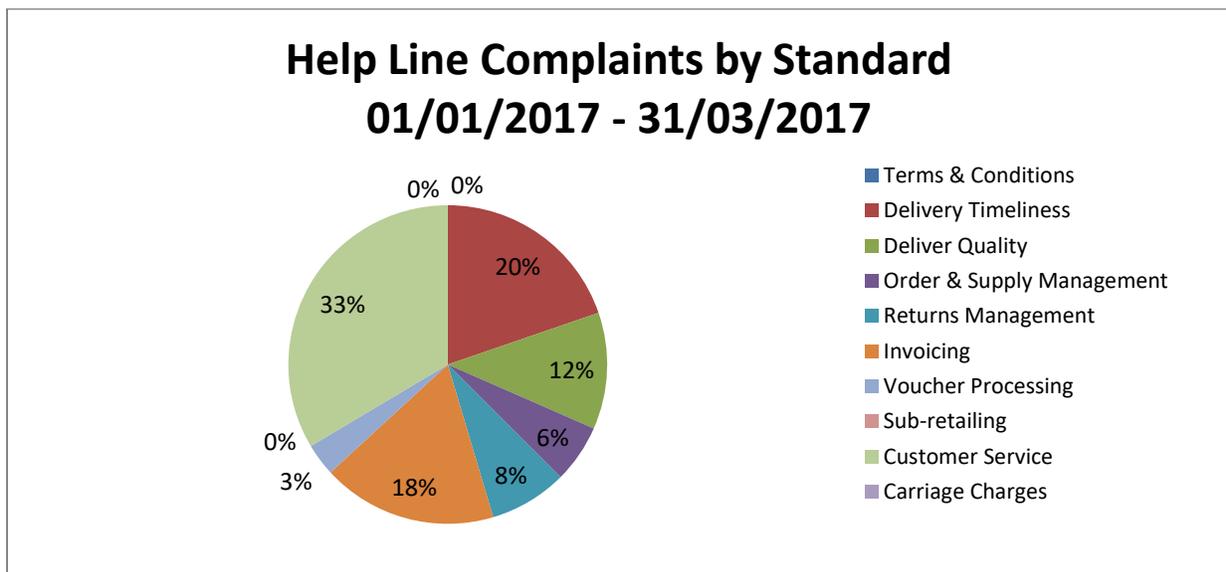
## Press Distribution Forum Help Line

There were 53 telephone complaints raised via the PDF help Line which generated 152 separate category complaints as follows:

T. & C.	Del. T.	Del.Q.	O.S.M.	R.M.	Inv.	V.P.	Sub. R	Cus. S	C.C.
0	30	18	9	12	27	5	0	51	0

T & C - Terms and Conditions  
 Del. T. - Delivery Time  
 Del. Q. - Delivery Quality  
 O.S.M. - Order & Supply Management  
 R.M. - Returns Management

Inv. - Invoicing  
 V.P. - Voucher Processing  
 Sub R. - Sub Retailing  
 Cus. S - Customer Service  
 C.C. - Carriage Charges



## Trends

The chart below shows the movement by Charter category when measured against the quarters 01/01/2016 - 31/03/2016 and the previous quarter 01/10/2016 - 31/12/2016.

	T. & C.	Del. T.	Del. Q.	Ord. & Supp.	R M.	Inv.	V. P.	Sub. Ret.	C. S.	C. C.
01/01/2016 - 31/03/2016	0	16	11	11	1	4	3	0	14	0
% of Total	0%	26.67%	18.34%	18.34%	0.17%	0.67%	5.0%	0%	23.33%	0%
01/10/2016 - 31/12/2016	0	22	10	8	4	6	3	0	19	0
% of Total	0%	30.56%	13.89%	11.11%	5.56%	8.33%	4.17%	0%	26.39%	0%
01/01/2017 - 31/03/2017	0	16	13	7	3	5	5	0	15	0
% of Total	0%	25%	20.31%	10.93%	4.69%	7.81%	7.81%	0%	23.44%	0%

The total number of complaints recorded in the quarter 01/01/2016 - 31/03/2016 was 60 and in 01/10/2016 - 31/12/2016 the figure was 72. The PDRP welcomed the drop in complaints against the previous quarter.

Once again Timeliness of Delivery remains the largest single category, although it shows a significant drop from the previous quarter. Unfortunately, Delivery Quality shows an increase over both cited periods.

Customer Service shows improvement and it is to be hoped that this trend continues.

Interestingly the statistics for the PDF Help Line reveal that complaints related to Delivery Timeliness as a percentage of the total number of complaints were exactly the same as those recorded for PDC Stage 2 complaints i.e. 25%. Invoicing complaints far exceeded the Stage 2 complaint figures, recording 17.76% as against 7.81% and Customer Service complaints hit 33.56% of all Help Line complaints whereas the figure for PDC Stage 2 complaints was 23.44%.

The timeliness of the Press Distribution Charter's complaints process shows a dramatic improvement over the previous quarter and it is the first time since records began that there have been no complaints that have exceeded the maximum 28 days required by the PDC complaints process. Average times for completion of complaints have also seen considerable improvement. Well done to all concerned.

## Press Distribution Review Panel Membership

Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to secure a retailer panellist to fill the vacancy that exists. Letters/invitations have been sent out to all retailers who have shown an

interest in the work of the PDRP, but response has been poor. I am currently in the process of writing a press release promoting the Charter, its complaints process and the PDRP which, it is to be hoped, will reward us with suitably qualified candidate.

## **RDTs and SDTs**

RDTs and SDTs seem to be causing confusion throughout the industry. This is manifesting itself in the complaints at Stage that are being instigated. It would appear that RDTs are being 'converted' into SDTs without proper consultation with the retailers concerned.

The first point to bear in mind is that a retailer does have the right to request his own RDT or SDT from his wholesaler and the same must be given.

As has been stated before in these reports, the RDT is the time agreed by the wholesaler and retailer as the latest time by which it is operationally feasible for the retailer to receive his newspaper delivery and an SDT is the time given to a retailer where an RDT could not be agreed. The SDT is the time by which the wholesaler is able to deliver to the retailer, based on current arrival times to the wholesale house.

The retailers RDT or SDT is vitally important as it sets the basis for determining whether a retailer's delivery is late as Standard 2.1 of the Charter clearly provides that "the wholesaler will deliver all titles and their appropriate sections, no later than the Retailer Delivery Time (RDT) or Scheduled Delivery Time (SDT), for the day of sale."

The Charter clearly establishes the definitions of RDT and SDT as cited above. It then goes further by protecting the sanctity of them. Standard 2.2 provides that an RDT "will only be amended with the prior agreement of the retailer". For the avoidance of doubt the dictionary defines "amended" as:

1. To make better; improve.
2. To remove the faults of; correct; emend.
3. To change or revise.

There is not as much protection offered to an SDT, however Standard 2.3 provides that "If a wholesaler changes an SDT, he must notify the retailer at least 14 days in advance"

Both retailers and wholesalers are advised to take note.

## Publicity

At its last meeting, the PDRP discussed the promotion of the PDC and its complaints process at length. It was ultimately decided that the best way of improving retail awareness was through a second distribution of the 3 point complaints process leaflet and the PDRP will be approaching the PDF for support in facilitating the same.

## Process Issues

I am pleased to report that the data on Stage 2 complaints was on time for this quarter's report. Thank you to all concerned and please let it be a habit!

## New Standards

Some time ago a Sub Group was established to consider comparisons between Menzies Distribution 'Customer Service Pledge' 2nd Edition and the Press Distribution Charter 2nd Edition with a view to better unification of industry standards.

Both the Sub Group and the PDRP were made aware that they could not consider any commercial issues and it was clearly understood that the PDRP was making recommendations to the PDRP for consideration as and when the PDC is next reviewed.

The PDRP recommendations have been submitted to the Press Distribution Forum and the following amendments have been agreed:

**3.2** *Wholesalers will record the number of **tote boxes, parcels, full bundles** and time of delivery in order to produce traceable delivery information in the event of a delivery dispute.*

**3.12** *Delivery **tote boxes, parcels and full bundles** will be securely bound **by the wholesaler** and not exceed 18kg, or the regulatory limits set by the Health and Safety Executive.*

The text in red denotes the changes that are to be made.

Three recommended standard amendments were rejected by the PDF.

**Neil Robinson**  
**Chairman – Press Distribution Review Panel**  
**02/05/2017**