



## **Press Distribution Charter**

### **Quarterly Report 01/04/2017 – 30/06/2017**

During the three month period between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and 30th June 2017 a total of 31 completed PDC Stage 2 complaint forms were submitted generating 37 breaches of PDC standards. The complaints originated from 17 wholesale houses. There were no complaints made against the NMA or PPA.

During this period 3 complaints were escalated to Stage 3.

During the period under review there were 66 complaints resolved via the PDF helpline which generated 193 breaches. During the corresponding period last year there were 50 telephone resolutions.

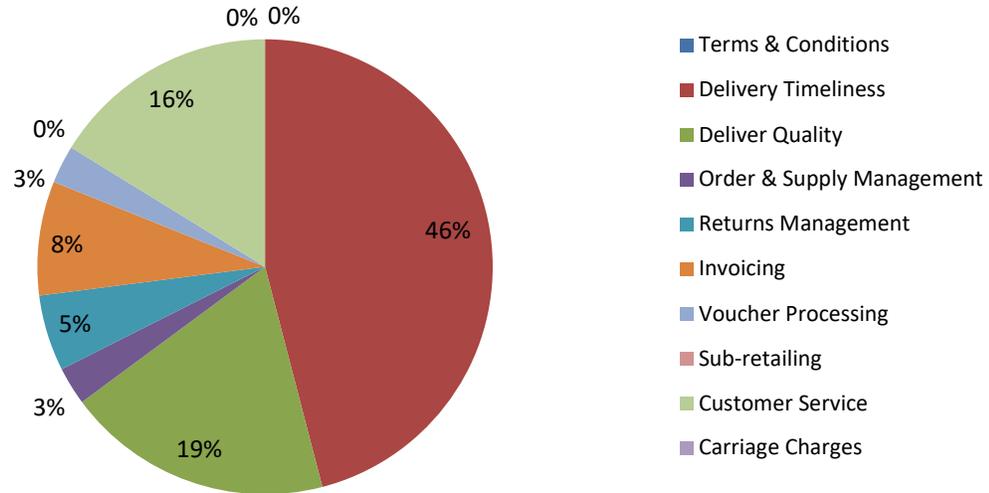
In the corresponding period last year there were a total of 50 PDC Stage 2 complaints that generated 76 failures to meet PDC standards. The complaints originated from 35 wholesale houses. There were no complaints made against the NMA or PPA.

### **Complaints by Standard**

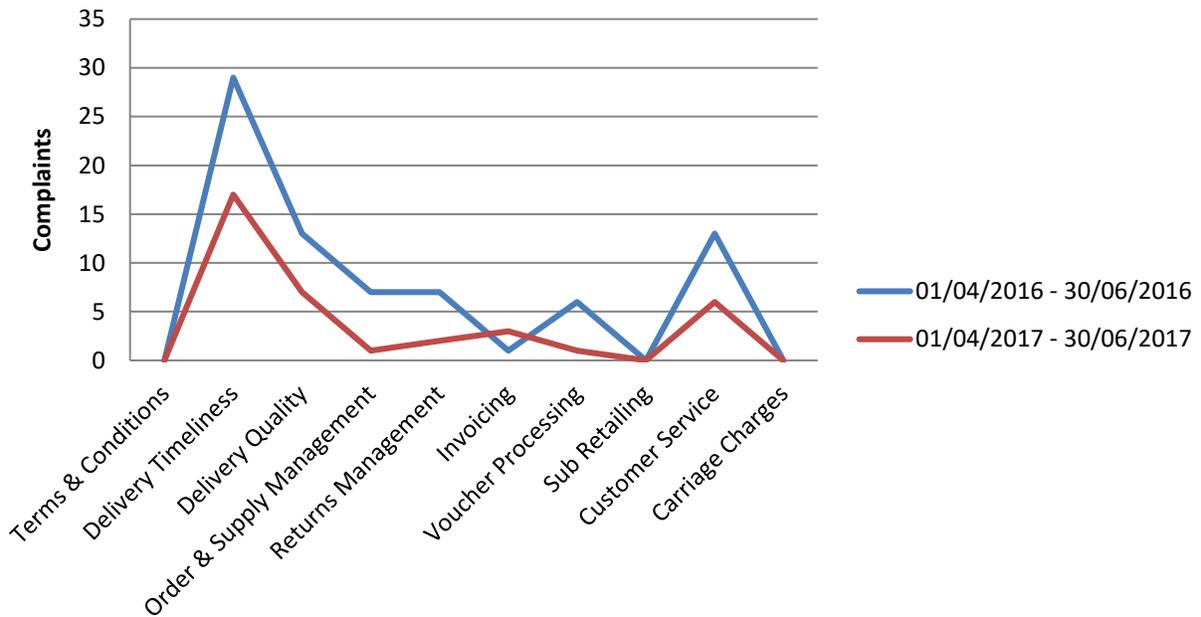
Of the 37 breaches that were reported 0 related to Terms & Conditions, 17 Delivery Timeliness, 7 Delivery Quality, 1 Order and Supply Management, 2 Returns Management, 3 Invoicing, 1 Voucher Processing, 0 Sub-retailing, 6 Customer Service and 0 Carriage Charges.

Between 01/04/2016 and 30/06/2016 of the 76 failures, 0 related to Terms & Conditions, 29 Delivery Timeliness, 13 Delivery Quality, 7 Order and Supply Management, 7 Returns Management, 1 Invoicing, 6 Voucher Processing, 0 Sub-retailing, 13 Customer Service and 0 Carriage Charges.

## Complaints by Standard 01/04/2017 - 30/06/2017



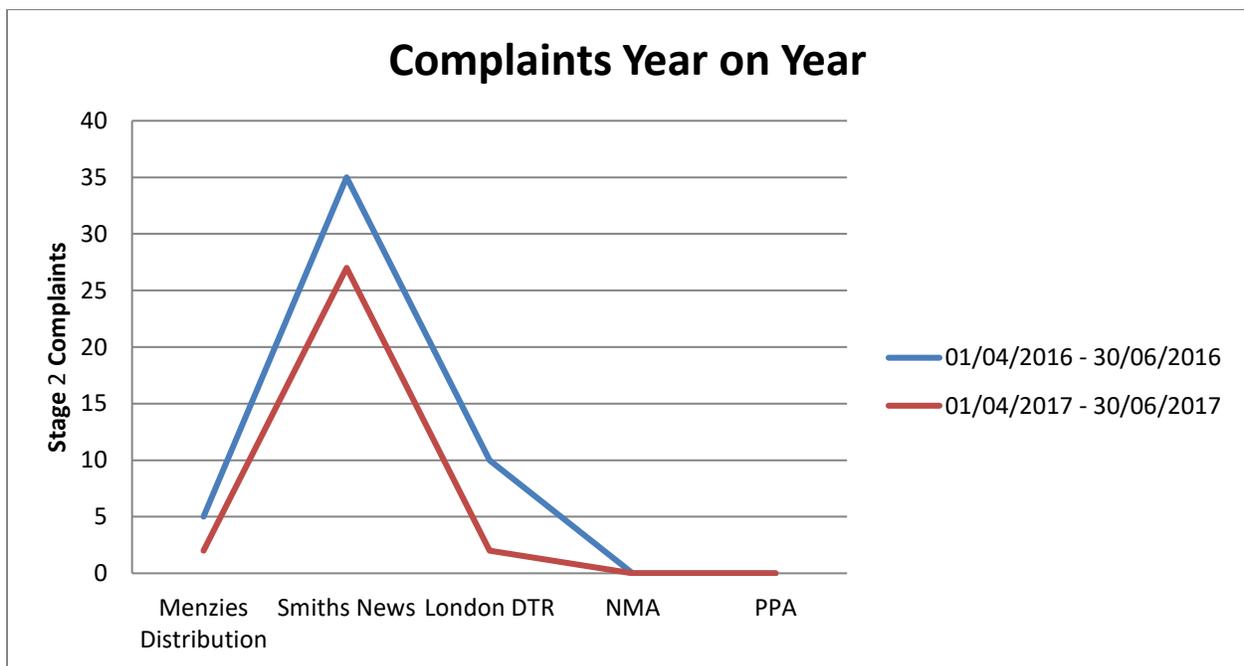
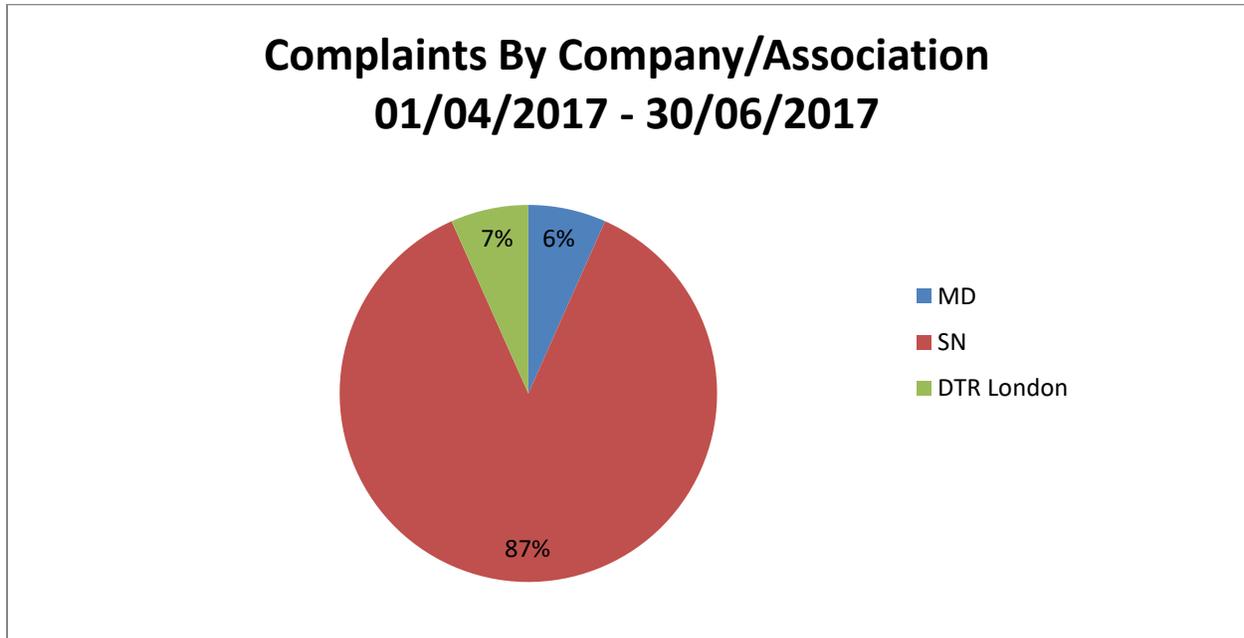
## Complaints Year on Year



## Complaints by Company/Association

DTR London dealt with 2 Stage 2 complaints, Menzies Distribution 2 and Smiths News 27. There were no complaints made against newspaper publishers or magazine publishers/distributors.

In the same period last year DTR London had 10 Stage 2 complaints made against them, Menzies Distribution 5 and Smiths News 35. 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>	Linwood		1								
<b>Dist.</b>	S E London		1								
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</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>	Birmingham		1	1			1				
<b>News</b>	Borehamwood		1							1	
	Gloucester			1		1				2	
	Hammersmith		1								
	Hornsey									1	
	Leicester		1								
	Newport			1							
	Nottingham		1								
	Peterborough		1								
	Reading		1			1	1	1		1	
	Slough		2	1							
	Stevenage		3	1	1		1				
	Stockport		2							1	
	Wednesbury		1								
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>DTR London</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

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

The corresponding table for the period 01/04/2016 - 30/06/2016 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>	Linwood		1								
<b>Dist.</b>	Maidstone		1								
	Rhyl		1								
	Sheffield		1	0							
	York			1							

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</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>	Birmingham		<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>							
<b>News</b>	Borehamwood				<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>					
	Bristol				<b>1</b>						
	Croydon		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>	
	Gloucester					<b>1</b>					
	Hornsey					<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			
	Leicester									<b>1</b>	
	Liverpool				<b>1</b>						
	Milton Keynes		<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>				<b>1</b>	
	Newcastle							<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	
	Newport		<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>				<b>1</b>	
	Oxford		<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>3</b>	
	Peterborough				<b>1</b>						
	Plymouth					<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>			
	Reading		<b>2</b>							<b>2</b>	
	Slough		<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>						
	Southampton									<b>1</b>	
	Stockport		<b>1</b>								
	Wednesbury							<b>1</b>			
	Yeovil		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>					<b>2</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>DTR London</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</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	2	0	11.00
Menzies Distribution	2	0	11.50
Smiths News	26	0	5.96

Timeliness for the second quarter last year was as follows:

Wholesaler/Publisher	Number of Complaints	Not completed in 28 days	Average Time for Completion
DTR London	10	6	25.80
Menzies Distribution	5	0	18.40
Smiths News	35	3	8.57

All three Stage 3 complaints were adjudicated within the 14 day limit.

## Press Distribution Forum Help Line

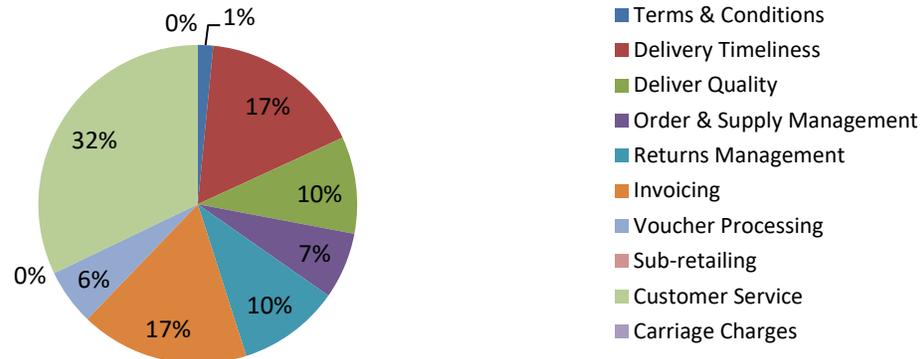
There were 66 telephone complaints raised via the PDF help Line which generated 193 separate category complaints as follows:

T. & C.	Del. T.	Del.Q.	O.S.M.	R.M.	Inv.	V.P.	Sub. R	Cus. S	C.C.
3	32	19	13	20	33	11	0	62	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

## Help Line Complaints by Standard 01/04/2017 - 30/06/2017



## Trends

The chart below shows the movement by Charter category when measured against the quarter 01/04/2016 - 30/06/2016.

	Total	T. & C.	Del. T.	Del. Q.	Ord. & Supp.	R M.	Inv.	V. P.	Sub. Ret.	C. S.	C. C.
01/04/2016 - 30/06/2016	76	0	29	13	7	7	1	6	0	13	0
% of Total		0%	38.16%	17.11%	9.21%	9.21%	1.3%	7.89%	0%	17.11%	0%
01/04/2017 - 30/06/2017	37	0	17	7	1	2	3	1	0	6	0
% of Total		0%	45.95%	18.92%	2.70%	5.41%	8.11%	2.70%	0%	16.22%	0%

The PDRP welcomes the fall in the total number of complaints for the quarter under review when measured against the like period in 2016.

Timeliness of Delivery is, yet again, the largest single category.

Delivery Quality remains little changed.

Order and Supply Management shows a significant drop over last year as does Voucher Processing.

Customer Service appears to have started to reverse its recent upward trend and the PDRP is pleased that the after care service that customers deserve has been to some extent reinstated.

The timeliness of the Press Distribution Charter's complaints process continues to improve and, once again, no complaints that have exceeded the maximum 28 days required by the PDC complaints process. The average time for the completion of all Stage 2 complaints is at an all time low of just 6.65 days. The industry boasts a "Fast Track Resolution Process" and that is truly being delivered. Well done to all concerned.

## **Complaints Process**

The Press Distribution Charter sets out to improve the efficiency and consistency of, what is recognised as, a 'special' supply chain. As such, it is established to encourage positive as opposed to counter-productive behaviour. With this in mind the industry developed a suite of transparency and performance measures which would:

- a) Provide a simple and comprehensive measure of performance across the supply chain.
- b) Highlight areas of under performance by participants or more general 'pinch points' that could be investigated/reviewed as needed.
- c) Act as an 'early warning' for developing issues and concerns.
- d) Give assurance that agreed standards are being met and processes adhered to.

As the Charter project was, and is, an industry wide exercise designed to service a wider audience e.g. the Competition and Markets Authority, it was essential that:

- 1. The information gathered should be measured like-for-like.
- 2. The measures should relate to standards and supporting data which should be objectively verifiable rather than 'self reported'.
- 3. The whole process is sustainable and accurate.
- 4. The process is robust and consistently applied.
- 5. It is at an adequate (necessary and sufficient) level of objective detail.
- 6. A summary of industry performance is published on a regular basis.

There are three critical elements of the scheme are transparency, accountability and consistency. These elements are carefully monitored by the PDRP, a self regulatory body which is independent of the body representing the industry's interests (the PDF).

We now have a set of standards which are quite simple, comprehensive and clear across the key areas that reflect performance in the supply of product to the retailer. There is a simple three point complaints process which offers an initial stage allowing

informal local discussion between the wholesaler/publisher and the retailer which is not monitored and reported on. If this informal discussion does not yield a resolution within 48 hours the retailer is able to escalate to a formal Stage 2 complaint. It is at this point that capture of the complaint is essential in order to monitor and report. Finally, there is a Stage 3 to an independent arbitrator.

Unfortunately, it would seem that the PDC complaints process has not been operating in its pure form at a local level. Variants are occurring as follows:

1. A two-tier structure which provides for an internal process dealing with "less serious issues". These complaints are not captured by the PDRP as they are not logged or regulated outside of the company concerned. As such they circumnavigate the PDC process because they are not being monitored, recorded or reported on.
2. The introduction of a form at Stage 1 of the PDC complaints process.
3. An extension of the time frame for the resolution of a Stage 1 complaint from 48 hours to five days.

These departures from the PDRP complaints process are currently the subject of examination and debate with a view of ensuring that the PDC model is adhered to and the capture of formal complaints is achieved at the same point throughout the industry.

It is essential to the credibility of the industry self regulatory process that the complaint data we collect has been measured on a like for like basis, it is objectively verifiable rather than 'self-reported' and it is consistently applied.

Should retailers believe that they have been denied access to the PDC complaints process, they should contact the PDRP Administrator for a Complaint Form and gain access to the official process via that route.

For the avoidance of doubt, the PDC Complaints Process is:

### **Informal Discussion**

Contact your wholesaler  
Discuss the issue(s)  
Resolved within 48 hours or move to Stage 2

### **Fast Track Resolution**

Complaint remains unresolved  
Is it serious or persistent?  
Contact company responsible  
Use company's Fast Track Resolution process  
Normally completed within 14 days but no longer than 28 days

## **Independent Arbitration**

Complaint remains unresolved?  
Refer it to Chairman of PDRP  
Independent Arbiter  
Arbiter's decision concluded within 14 days

## **Press Distribution Review Panel Membership**

Following the recent Appointments Committee selection process, Brian Murphy was welcomed to the panel representing the retail sector in an independent capacity.

**Neil Robinson**  
**Chairman – Press Distribution Review Panel**  
**11/08/2017**