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PRESS DISTRIBUTION REVIEW PANEL (PDRP) Annual Report 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2016

The Press Distribution Review Panel's Annual Report comprises statistics, trends and observations drawn from the 2016 year of operation.

During the twelve months under review a total of 166 PDC Stage 2 complaint forms were issued generating a total of 264 breaches of Press Distribution Charter (PDC) standards. The complaints originated from 40 wholesale houses.

Of the 264 breaches that were reported 0 related to Terms & Conditions, 90 Delivery - Timeliness, 42 Delivery Quality, 31 Order and Supply Management, 16 Returns Management, 14 Invoicing, 13 Voucher Processing and 58 Customer Service.

Menzies Distribution dealt with 13 Stage 2 complaints, Smiths News 125 and DTR London 28. There were no complaints regarding newspapers or magazines publishers/distributors.

Twenty one Stage 2 complaints failed to be completed within the 28 day time limit, but all complaints were ultimately resolved satisfactorily. The overall average time taken to process Stage 2 complaints rose.

The Independent Arbitrator received 9 cases to adjudicate on at Stage 3.

Neil Robinson, Press Distribution Review Panel Chairman, said "In 2016 the Press Distribution Charter's complaints process handled a record number of complaints. I firmly believe that this was due to greater retail awareness of its existence rather than deterioration in service levels. That having been said, Delivery Timeliness has once again become the top category for complaints. The PDRP has always been aware that this category dominates the complaints process and it has considered the matter at some length during its meetings. The PDRP recognises that publishers and wholesalers are addressing these problems and expects timeliness of delivery to improve significantly following the next round of contract negotiations.

Customer Service complaints suffered a big increase in 2016. Customer Service is the act of taking care of the customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high quality service before, during and after the customer's requirements are met. With this in mind, the year on year increase figure recorded is totally unacceptable. The PDRP urges wholesalers and publishers to pay

attention to customer service with a view to reinstating professionalism into the after care service that customers deserve."

- ENDS -

Notes to editors

- The Press Distribution Charter (PDC) came into effect on 1st November 2010 and serves as a promise of good service to all retailers of newspapers and magazines. The Charter sets out the standards that retailers should expect to receive from wholesalers and publishers and is supported by a complaints resolution process.
- The Press Distribution Review Panel (PDRP) is an independent body that encourages compliance to the Charter, ensures continuity of arbitration decisions, identifies trends relating to retailer complaints, monitors and publishes data on compliance.
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