

Minutes of the Press Distribution Review Panel Held on Wednesday 28th May 2025.
Via conference call

Present:	Steve Cripwell	Chair
	Brian Murphy	Retail Representative
	Graham Read	Retail Representative
	Paresh Vyas	Retail Representative
	Fiona Campbell	In Post Newstrade (IPN)
	Trevor Hudson	PPA
	Paul Smith	Smiths News (SN)

Item	
1.0	Apologies for absence
	Diane Sampson (NMA)
2.0	Minutes of previous meeting 26th March and matters arising
	The previous minutes were agreed.
3.0	Update on actions from previous minutes
	No updates, covered on agenda.
4.0	Pre-Stage One update
	YTD data showed a reduction in pre formal complaints of 28%, notably due to the volumes reported by SN which are down by 49%. IPN volumes have increased by 48% YoY. FC commented that late delivery complaints have recently slipped to the lowest levels on record.
5.0	Retailer survey
	SC updated on the results of the recent retailer survey. The results are yet to be presented however the volume of responses was low with eight responses received from 45 retailers surveyed. The next meeting will discuss the 2026 survey in more depth, potentially to include a wider retailer audience. However, it was sensibly suggested that in order to improve response rates we move to sending an individual survey each time a retail complaint is concluded, with the potential offer of a small incentive for its return. Actions: SC to add 2026 survey to next agenda. SC to contact Mark Farris & PDF about individual surveys and the incentivising the retailers to respond.
6.0	Charter / Service issues
6.1	Automation of online complaints to ensure that retailers provide all relevant information about their complaint prior to submission remains under review. Action: SC to update when relevant feedback is received.

6.2	Voucher Processing There was a useful discussion exploring current retailer frustrations with the processing of Vouchers. The group considered if the current wording in the Charter actually sets out the minimum service standards that retailers should expect in processing Vouchers. It is clearly a contentious issue to some extent amplified by changes in voucher practices and the introduction of electronic vouchers. The following areas were discussed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved Voucher processing documentation for retailers; Creation of some form of rolling “accounting” statement for retailers summarising credits given, credits due etc. 2. An improved escalation process that avoids the need to open a formal complaint, notably given the wholesaler and publisher responsibility to provide accurate and speedy feedback to queries (therefore improved QA in available records). 3. Reconsider the response to late vouchers received when due to consumer issues as numerous late claims are often rejected. Actions: SC to include further discussion at next PDRP meeting. SC will discuss initial response with Mark Farris to update PDF.
7.0	Any Other Business
7.1	None

Voucher Processing

An effective system for processing and crediting vouchers.

Publishers and wholesalers will provide an easily administered system for the redemption of vouchers, allowing for swift confirmation, crediting and resolution of any queries. Retailers should receive credit no more than 14 days after submitting voucher claims, minimising the impact on cash flow. All voucher credits and rejections will be clearly detailed on the invoice.

7.1 The wholesaler will receive/ collect and credit vouchers on a weekly basis.

7.2 The wholesaler will send the retailer a Voucher Recall Note to be returned to the wholesaler or designated voucher handling agency.

7.3 All valid vouchers returned will be credited within 14 days of return.

7.4 Voucher Recall Notes will provide a facility to manually insert vouchers for return which are not pre-printed on the recall note.

7.5 The return date for vouchers will not be less than 28 days from the final cut-off date to customers for redemption.

7.6 All genuine voucher redemptions will be credited by the wholesaler. Wholesalers reserve the right to reclaim monies for vouchers found to be inaccurately redeemed.

7.7 Retailers who want to return vouchers for redemption using Royal Mail are advised to use Recorded Delivery as proof of receipt.