

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Press Distribution Review Panel  
held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at the Offices of the  
News International, 5 Thomas More Square, London, E98 1XY**

Present:	Neil Robinson	Chairman
	Darren Barker	NPA
	Carrie Rooks	PPA
	Dave Shedden	MD
	Debbie Dalston	Smiths News
	Raj Ganatra	Independent Retailer
	Mark Williams	Independent Retailer

In Attendance:	Dorothy King	Call On Us
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**1. Apologies – Jonathan Denton**

**2. Minutes of Last Meetings: - 8<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

2.1 The minutes were adopted as a true and accurate record.

**3. Matters Arising**

3.1 “Nightly Miracle” – The PDRP Retailers (Raj Ganatra and Mark Williams), visited Broxbourne print centre 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011, courtesy of News International to observe a live print run through to distribution to wholesale. It was planned for RG to follow through onto wholesale with live distribution to retail from wholesale to retailer’s morning of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

Due to an RTA, Mark Williams was unable to complete the live distribution from wholesale to retail, which was scheduled for early hours Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011; this is to be arranged at a later date.

- 3.2** PDF database and website reporting functionality to facilitate the associations to enter complaint information direct onto database of website at the point of complaint raised and registered.

The cost indicated from our web developer is £630.00 + VAT this is for the following:

- To develop a SQL database (to cater and recording of complaint information)
  - To develop an export of the excel data into SQL database
  - To develop an import routine to the PDF website
  - To develop user interface for the viewing of data within the PDF Website
  - Timescale TBA
- 3.3** PDC One Page Flyer – NR made a further request to the PDF board for funding of the One Page Flyer as requested by the PDRP Panel.

The PDF have approved this cost as long as cost is circa £1k.

The Pop-up Banner will be ready on 6<sup>th</sup> October for the PDF Retail Form event at Broxbourne.

MDL/SN to link to PDF website for the PDC Complaints Resolution Process – Your 3 Step Guide to populate awareness.

#### **4. Six Month PDC Report**

- 4.1** For the initial periods November 2010 – June 2011 the Stage 2 complaints were published and circulated, showing that there 40 complaints made and registered generating 42 breaches of PDC standards. These complaints originated from 12 wholesale houses and 2 newspaper publishers as follows:

- 86% complaints related to delivery timeliness
- 7% related to order supply and management
- 5% related to returns management
- 2% related to customer service
- 55% complaints against Menzies Distribution
- 30% complaints against NPA
- 15% complaints against Smiths News

## 4.2 Categories

Discussion on headings of complaint categories

<b>T&amp;C</b>	Terms & Condition of Supply	<b>RM</b>	Returns management
<b>D/T</b>	Delivery Timeliness	<b>INV</b>	Invoicing
<b>OSM</b>	Order and Supply Management	<b>VP</b>	Voucher Processing
<b>SBR</b>	Sales Base Replenishment	<b>CS</b>	Customer Service

It is apparent that there is differing of opinion regarding categories of pack quality (short in packing) and short supplied via quantity on pack sheet.

NR suggested that the PDC Review panel should consider these categories as part of the Charter review, and that the headings on all paper work should be in accord

## 5. Actions resulting from the Report

5.1 NR asked the panel if it considered the report detailed enough, whether it contained too much information and what should now happen with the report.

It was agreed that:

- DK should check with Data Protection as to whether the PDRP/PDF needs a Data Protection licence in order that retailer's details can be published on website/press release.
- The report should be available via a link to wholesale websites
- The data should be reviewed and analysed in order to identify recurring complaints by category and/or 'offenders', and refer the same to PDF Board to take action accordingly.

## 6. Data Collection

6.1 Report 01/07/11 – 31/08/11

The report shows that in a 2 month period there were 35 complaints raised with 41 breaches of standards compared with the previous 8 month's total of 40 complaints raised.

The breakdown of type of complaints is as follows:

- 22 complaints re order and supply management
- 15 complaints re delivery timeliness
- 4 customer service

The panel considered the sudden increase in the number of complaints and came to the conclusion that it may have been as a result of a greater awareness of the Charter and its Complaint Resolution Process. However, the Chairman expressed his concern at the recording and reporting of Stage 2 Complaints and invited the panel to consider the same.

## **6.2 PPA stage 2 complaints**

The panel was perplexed that, to date, there had been no complaints registered with the PPA, although there was industry concerning part works and Order and Supply Management.

Retailers present raised the concern that, with part works and/or magazines, supplies were good at launch, but deteriorated rapidly thereafter. Sometimes the reductions prevent the retailer satisfying demand and growing sales.

This leads to retail frustration as often the independent retailer will see the same title available for opportune sale in multiple retailers or supermarkets and they are unable to meet their consumer's requirement.

Sometimes there is a commercial sales promotion with multiple outlets and the publisher/ distributor, where wholesale are unable to adjust/ amend figures until end of promotion.

On contacting wholesale, they may be told that the print figure had been cut back and therefore their supply figure had been adjusted accordingly.

It was agreed that, at Stage 1, the retailer should contact their wholesaler and if the wholesaler is unable to meet or satisfy the retailer's complaint then it should be passed through to Stage 2 via the PPA.

Upon receipt of the completed Stage 2 PPA (Nicola Rowe) will refer the complaint to the appropriate distributor/publisher and aim to resolve the retailers concerns within 14 days but no longer than 28 days.

Due to these problems, it was felt that the retailer gives up and just tells consumer "Sorry I can't get your copy, they've printed less copy", and no further complaint is progressed, all miss out on growing sales, due to communication.

The panel was of the opinion that:

- Most publishers carry a trade counter overstock for every issue.
- Wholesalers should seek additional copy – although this is more of a challenge when dealing with weekly publications.
- On weekly titles retailers will go and purchase additional sales from garage forecourt or supermarkets to meet their customer requirements.
- Stage 2 states “**...for magazines details will be provided for the periodical (Professional) Publishers Association who will then in turn contact the relevant publisher, on behalf of the retailer**”.

**6.3** SN reported that it aims to resolve issues to minimise Stage 2 complaints being registered, hence complaints logged is minimal.

If there is a wholesale house underperforming, then SN will request a performance report detailing what they are doing to improve.

**6.4** During the course of the discussions it became apparent that within MD there had been a misunderstanding as to what properly constituted a Stage 2 complaint. This had led to restitution affidavits forming part of a Stage 1 process being recorded as Stage 2 complaints. Consequently, MD Stage 2 complaints had been overstated in the report under review.

In these circumstances, DS will resubmit MD figures, and NR will submit a 12 monthly report up to the end of October.

## **7. Any Other Business**

**7.1** As the retail representation on the PDRP is down to 2 members after Richard Church’s resignation – at the PDF Retail Forum on 6<sup>th</sup> October, attendees will be invited to consider application to join the panel.

## **8 Dates of Next Meetings**

### **Date of Next Meetings:**

<b>PDRP Mtgs</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
19.01.12	1.30pm	NPA Offices
26.04.12	1.30pm	NPA Offices
28.06.12	2.00pm	PPA Offices
20.09.12	1.30pm	NPA Offices
29.11.12	1.30pm	NPA Offices

**MEETING –29<sup>th</sup> September 2011**  
**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>PDC One Page Flyer to be printed and distributed</b>	<b>DK</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Write to PPA re complaint handling</b>	<b>NR</b>
<b>6.4</b>	<b>MD Stage 2 submissions to be adjusted</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Letters to Retail Forum attendees re PDRP Panellists</b>	<b>NR/DK</b>