



August 2011

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Dear Sir/Madam,

ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards (UK)

Changes have been agreed to the ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards. We have updated the latest Reporting Standards – 2011 Version 3 – to incorporate these changes and you can now view or download these from our website www.abc.org.uk.

1. Monitored Free Distribution – change to analysis of distribution points

To provide greater transparency in the analysis of Monitored Free Distribution claims by distribution point there will be two new categories added to the breakout from audit periods ending January 2012 onwards:

Food and drink outlets
Other travel points

The existing category 'trains' will be removed and distribution points and copies you currently analyse under trains will be included under other travel points.

You can find the full list of distribution point categories in section 15.3.4 of the Reporting Standards.

2. Monitored Free Distribution: documentation requirements and controls

Changes have been made to clarify the information and requirements that are expected for monitored free distribution claims. These include ABC's right to access distribution points and the controls a publisher should have in place to record and monitor their distribution. The changes, summarised below, are effective from September 2011 and ABC will agree and work with publishers to ensure these are achieved.

- It is now specified that ABC must have the right to visit or call distribution points to verify the distribution process (section 15.3).

Setting the standard



- The information relating to the Master Distribution lists which must be maintained has been revised as follows (section 15.4.3):

We would expect this [master list of distribution points] to include the following for each distribution point:

- Unique point ID (to enable clear identification when changes are made).
- Address, including postcode.
- Audience Type. *For example airline, hotel – as analysed on the certificate.*
- Whether the point is a manned point, an unmanned point, or a hand distribution point.
- Point description. *For example: type of bin, location at address.*
- Point restrictions. *For example it is particularly important to identify any points which can only be accessed via security barriers such as airport airside locations, some office buildings.*
- Name of responsible person:
 - a) Name of recipient for manned/hand distribution points.
 - b) Name of deliverer for unmanned points.
- Telephone number of responsible person.
- Normal day/date of delivery.
- Approximate time of delivery.
- Method of delivery. *For example: name of 3rd party distribution company.*
- Normal supply quantity.
- Normal day/date of collection of returned/damaged copies (net distribution only).
- Additional details as above for all regular top-up supplies

The master list of all distribution points must be supplied to ABC at the time the distribution point and process is submitted to ABC for approval prior to certification.

All changes to the above details for existing distribution points, any removal of distribution points and all additions to the distribution points should be notified to ABC as and when they occur. See also section 15.5 for details regarding significant changes to distribution.

- Text regarding controls for net distribution has been moved from section 15.8.1 (Manned Distribution points) to section 15.8 and has been expanded upon as follows:

In addition to the requirements for Gross Distribution you must be able to demonstrate controls which provide issue by issue details of the number of copies distributed net by hand and net – other. This will require details of the number of damaged and undistributed copies to be accounted for and removed from the claim, thereby arriving at a net distribution figure for each.

These controls and processes are reviewed by ABC as part of the joining process and continuing audit of a publication. These help underpin the audit in that they form part of the consideration of risk and consequently the type and extent of audit work done.

If weaknesses in management controls are found during the audit work, the publication's circulation auditor / ABC will inform the distributor and the publisher of defined improvements to be implemented and a timescale to ensure copies are still eligible for ABC purposes.

The ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards Group discussed and approved these changes. If you would like the Standards Group to review any current reporting standard or if you would like more information about how the above changes affect you, please contact your ABC Account Manager charlotte.brown@abc.org.uk or terry.rossiter@abc.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



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Setting the standard



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