



March 2014

Saxon House
211 High Street
Berkhamsted
Hertfordshire HP4 1AD

+44 (0)1442 870800
www.abc.org.uk

ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards (UK)

Changes have been agreed to the ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting Standards. We have updated the latest Reporting Standards – 2014 Version 3 – to incorporate these changes and you can now view or download these from our website www.abcstandards.org.uk.

There has also been a change to the ABC Byelaws detailed below. The ABC Byelaws are also available from our website.

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1. Identification of Audit Issue

This is a clarification of an existing requirement. Where the Audit Issue (designated for record keeping or reporting purposes) is identified with reference to being the one distributed nearest to a particular date then occasionally two issues may be equidistant from the date, leading to uncertainty over which issue is the Audit Issue.

This change clarifies that in such cases the media owner may choose either of the issues, denoted by shaded text being added as follows:

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND RECORD KEEPING

5. There is a designated Audit Issue [extract]

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- b) For 6 or 12 month Reporting Periods ending December the Audit Issue is the issue distributed nearest to the end of September and for Reporting Periods ending June the issue distributed nearest to the end of March (Note: For weekly publications exclude the seven days either side of Easter).

i. If two issues are equidistant from this date then you may choose either as the Audit Issue.

- c) For any other reporting Periods the Audit Issue is the issue distributed nearest to the first day of the last month in the Reporting Period, which also falls within the Reporting Period.

i. If two issues are equidistant from this date then you may choose either as the Audit Issue.

2. Reporting Periods

This is a clarification of existing requirements, relating to when publications first register with ABC:

Shaded text will be added as follows:

REPORTING PERIODS [extract]

1. You must report a continuous series of Reporting Periods on a mandatory frequency

- a. Once we have issued a publication's first ABC Certificate for a mandatory reporting period we must continue to issue Certificates for subsequent consecutive mandatory Reporting Periods (i.e. so there is no gap in certification) while the publication remains registered.

...

2. You can report optional shorter Reporting Periods

- a. Optional Reporting Periods are whole months or any number of whole months in addition to mandatory Reporting Periods...
- b. For newly registered publications only:
- i) You can report single issues until the start of the next month.
 - ii) You can report one or more consecutive optional Reporting Periods. I.e. there is no gap in certification) before reporting your first mandatory Reporting Period.
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3. ABC Byelaws – Late submission of circulation claims

The process and penalty for the late submission of circulation/data return claims set out in the ABC Byelaws has been amended to allow ABC greater flexibility where appropriate but retaining the ability to impose appropriate sanctions.

Byelaw 5e has been amended as shown below, removing struck-through text and adding shaded text:

~~In cases where there is an applicable submission deadline:~~

- ~~i. If we do not receive a Return Form by the submission deadline for the relevant audit period we will send you a letter requiring that you submit the Return Form and pay the penalty fee for late submission within 14 days of the date of the letter and invoice.~~
- ~~ii. If you do not submit the Return Form and pay the penalty fee by the date requested, we reserve the right to cancel the product's registration (and charge interest and apply the sanctions set out in section 4 above).~~

If we do not receive a Return Form by an applicable submission deadline we reserve the right to charge a penalty fee for late submission and/or cancel the product's registration.

If you would like ABC Consumer Magazine Reporting 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.

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