

ADR Entity Reporting - Annual Report

Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)

Reporting period: 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018

In June 2015 POSTRS was approved by Ofcom to provide alternative dispute resolution under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”).

As part of Ofcom’s approval, POSTRS is required under Schedule 5 of the Regulations to produce an annual activity report containing the following information:

(a) The number of domestic disputes and cross-border disputes the ADR entity has received

In the reporting period, POSTRS received a total of 423 domestic disputes and no cross-border disputes. Of these, 243 disputes came within the scope of what POSTRS can deal with, while 180 were either out of scope or were discontinued for operational reasons.

(b) The types of complaints to which the domestic disputes and cross-border disputes relate

The following table sets out the types of domestic disputes that were referred to POSTRS in the reporting period which came within the scope of what POSTRS can deal with. No cross-border disputes were received by POSTRS.

Complaint Types	Number of Cases
Loss of item	156
Other / undefined	39
Damage to item	20
Delay to item	20
Customer service	8

No cross-border disputes were received by POSTRS.

- (c) A description of any systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders of which the ADR entity has become aware due to its operations as an ADR entity

Consumers often state that they feel as if traders' initial response to a complaint is always to reject it, irrespective of that complaint's merits, and it is only when the complaint is pursued that the trader takes it seriously. In this way, relatively minor disputes can 'snowball' into larger ones if traders are not quick to identify the problem, prevent it from recurring, and take appropriate steps to provide the consumer with redress.

- (d) Any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how the problems referred to in paragraph (c) could be avoided or resolved in future, in order to raise traders' standards and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices

Traders should always take each complaint seriously, and should consider at an early stage in their complaints process whether or not it may be appropriate to make an offer of settlement to a consumer. This may prevent small disputes 'snowballing' into larger ones.

- (e) The number of disputes which the ADR entity has refused to deal with, and percentage share of the grounds set out in paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 on which the ADR entity has declined to consider such disputes

POSTRS refused to deal with a total of 112 disputes in the reporting period. The following table sets out the percentage share of the grounds on which POSTRS declined to consider these disputes:

Reason for Refusal	Percentage Share
Prior to submitting the complaint to the body, the consumer has not attempted to contact the trader concerned in order to discuss the consumer's complaint and sought, as a first step, to resolve the matter directly with the trader	99%
The dispute is frivolous or vexatious	Nil
The dispute is being, or has been previously, considered by another ADR entity or by a court	Nil
The value of the claim falls below or above the monetary thresholds set by the body	Nil
The consumer has not submitted the complaint to the body within the time period specified by the body, provided that such time period is not less than 12 months from the date upon which the trader has given notice to	1%

the consumer that the trader is unable to resolve the complaint with the consumer	
Dealing with such a type of dispute would seriously impair the effective operation of the body	Nil

(f) The percentage of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued for operational reasons and, if known, the reasons for the discontinuation

During the reporting period, POSTRS discontinued a total of 68 cases for operational reasons. This represents 16% of the total amount of disputes received by POSTRS.

The following table sets out the percentage share of the reasons for which POSTRS discontinued cases for operational reasons:

Reason for Discontinuance	Percentage Share
The subject matter of the dispute did not fall within the scope of what POSTRS can consider under its Scheme Rules	50%
The consumer submitted an incomplete application to POSTRS which could not be taken forward owing to the lack of information	4%
The trader that the consumer is complaining about was not registered with POSTRS as its ADR entity	46%
The consumer voluntarily withdrew their dispute from POSTRS while it was in progress	Nil

(g) The average time taken to resolve domestic disputes and cross-border disputes

Domestic disputes took an average of 38.34 calendar days to resolve.

No cross-border disputes were received by POSTRS.

(h) The rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of the alternative dispute resolution procedures

POSTRS does not record data on the rate of compliance with outcomes.

POSTRS has a process in place whereby a trader that fails to comply with an adjudicator's decision that has been accepted by the consumer has their membership of POSTRS suspended. If non-compliance persists, the trader's membership of POSTRS is terminated.

- (i) The co-operation, if any, of the ADR entity within any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes

POSTRS has not dealt with any cross-border disputes in the reporting period, and therefore it does not co-operate with any network of ADR entities which facilitate the resolution of such disputes.