

ADR Entity Reporting – Biennial Report

Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)

Reporting period: 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2021

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 6 of the Regulations to communicate the following information every two years:

- (a) The number of disputes received by the ADR entity and the types of complaints to which the disputes related

In the reporting period, POSTRS received a total of 1459 disputes. Of these, 882 disputes came within the scope of what POSTRS can deal with, while 577 were either out of scope or were discontinued for operational reasons.

The following table sets out the types of disputes that were referred to POSTRS in the reporting period which came within the scope of what POSTRS can deal with.

Complaint Types	Number of Cases
Loss of item	570
Damage to item	62
Delay to item	73
Customer service	53
Other / undefined	124

- (b) The percentage share of alternative dispute resolution procedures which were discontinued before an outcome was reached

During the reporting period, POSTRS discontinued a total of 436 cases. This

represents 29.9% of the total amount of disputes received by POSTRS.

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	89%
The consumer submitted an incomplete application to POSTRS which could not be taken forward owing to the lack of information	3%
The trader that the consumer is complaining about was not registered with POSTRS as its ADR entity	Nil
The consumer was not a 'customer' of the trader under the definition set out in the POSTRS Scheme Rules	8%
The consumer voluntarily withdrew their dispute from POSTRS while it was in progress	Nil

- (c) The average time taken to resolve the disputes which the ADR entity has received

Disputes took an average of 24 calendar days to resolve.

- (d) The rate of compliance, if known, with the outcomes of its 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.

- (e) Any recommendations the ADR entity may have as to how any systematic or significant problems that occur frequently and lead to disputes between consumers and traders could be avoided or resolved in future

It is important that traders have clear policies in place for dealing with vulnerable customers and that they train their staff effectively to identify and make adjustments for those with vulnerabilities.

As the pandemic comes to an end, traders should take stock of how their customers were served and any improvements that could have been made, particularly by reference to identifying and catering to vulnerable customers. This will ensure that traders have a greater level of preparedness for similar events in future.

- (f) Where the ADR entity is a member of any network of ADR entities which facilitates the resolution of cross-border disputes, an assessment of the effectiveness of its co-operation in that network

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.

- (g) Where the ADR entity provides training to its ADR officials, details of the training it provides

POSTRS supports the continuing training and development of its ADR officials. In this reporting period, training has been provided to ADR officials on best practice on decision-making techniques, including requests for further evidence from the parties and making directions.

- (h) An assessment of the effectiveness of an alternative dispute resolution procedure offered by the ADR entity and of possible ways of improving its performance

POSTRS remains a highly effective alternative dispute resolution procedure which has evolved and innovated during the period covered by this Biennial Report.

Since April 2019, all disputes referred to POSTRS are processed through an online case management platform which the parties to the dispute can log into, upload all relevant evidence and submissions, and where the adjudicator can ask queries of the parties and upload their decision on the dispute. This platform, which provides 360-degree visibility for all parties, has been highly successful in providing users with a transparent and effective dispute resolution procedure.