

# ADR Entity Reporting - Annual Report

## Postal Redress Service (POSTRS)

Reporting period: 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

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 800 domestic disputes and no cross-border disputes. Of these, 465 disputes came within the scope of what POSTRS can deal with, while 335 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	124
Damage to item	16
Delay to item	15
Customer service	153
Other / undefined	157

(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

During this reporting period, the amount of disputes has increased when compared to the previous year. Of particular note is that there has been an increased proportion of complaints about customer service, showing that customers are less satisfied with the way in which their complaints are being handled than in previous years. Given the increasing levels of vulnerability among consumers, this is an area to which traders should pay particular attention.

(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

Providing an accessible and responsive customer service function is an essential for all public-facing companies, particularly when an increasing number of consumers are affected by health, financial and other social vulnerabilities. Improving the work of customer service functions to equip them with the tools to identify and resolve issues quickly is a key tool in preventing complaints from escalating into disputes that are referred to ADR.

- (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 147 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	Nil
The dispute is frivolous or vexatious	Nil
The dispute is being, or has been previously, considered by another ADR entity or by a court	1%
The value of the claim falls below or above the monetary thresholds set by the body	17%
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 the consumer that the trader is unable to resolve the complaint with the consumer	82%
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 188 cases for operational reasons. This represents 23.5% 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	69%
The consumer submitted an incomplete application to POSTRS which could not be taken forward owing to the lack of information	Nil
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	4%
The consumer voluntarily withdrew their dispute from POSTRS while it was in progress	27%

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

Domestic disputes took an average of 19 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.