

Groceries Code Adjudicator

Record of the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) Quarterly Meetings with Code Compliance Officers (CCO)	
Location	Purpose of meeting
GCA, Victoria House, Southampton Row, London	<i>Quarterly Meeting</i>
Attendees	
<p style="text-align: center;">GCA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Christine Tacon (CT)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Angela Latta (AL)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Helen Gordon-Lee (HGL) <i>All except Iceland Foods Ltd and Waitrose Ltd meetings</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">James Courtenay (JC) <i>All except Asda Stores Ltd meeting</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jenny Hendricks (JH) <i>All except Aldi Stores Ltd and Waitrose Ltd meetings</i></p>	<p><u>1st December 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operative Group Limited – Phil Willsmer and Tom Chinnery <p><u>3rd December 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J Sainsbury plc – Susannah Hall and Dafydd Pugh • Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc – Steven Butts, and Denise Harris <p><u>8th December 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aldi Stores Limited – Jonathan Ward • Lidl UK GmbH – Patrik Bures and Tim Belser <p><u>10th December 2014</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tesco plc – David Ward, Kay Majid and Emer Kelly • Iceland Foods Limited – Jayne Burrell and Duncan Vaughan • Marks and Spencer plc – Max Gillibrand and Rob Steadman <p><u>12th January 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asda Stores Limited – Alex Simpson <p><u>13th January 2015</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waitrose Limited – David Roberts and Damen Bennion
Key Points Raised	
<p>GCA update on progress</p> <p><i>Positive changes noted since the introduction of the GCA:</i></p> <p>CT had received a number of comments from suppliers about the positive changes taking place since the introduction of the GCA, as well as the general feeling that things have appeared to have changed for the better over the past 6 months. CT noted that she had received positive feedback from a number of suppliers on issues such as greater flexibility in selecting third party packaging suppliers, as well as suppliers reporting a better reception from retailers when mentioning the Code to them. CCOs and retailers were therefore thanked for their part in making these changes.</p>	

Mini Survey –recontact group:

After the GCA last survey earlier this year there were a number of people who agreed to be recontacted. The GCA mini survey went out to the re-contact group on 1 December. Questions focused on finding out more about concerns suppliers had expressed about bringing issues to the GCA. The survey also provided an opportunity for suppliers to feed back issues and practices occurring in the sector at the moment.

Environment Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee:

CT informed retailers that she was invited to attend the EFRA Select Committee in Westminster to give oral evidence to the dairy prices inquiry. Although the GCA has no remit on dairy prices CT attended the committee session to clarify how the Groceries Code Adjudicator Act 2013 and the Groceries (Supply Chain Practices) Market Investigation Order 2009 define the role of the GCA. CT reported that a recurring theme from interested parties is that they would like the GCA to be involved in their area, as they have seen that the GCA is making a difference to Code related practices and would like her to be able to do the same for the dairy industry.

There was a general discussion about the information provided to the Select Committee - the written and oral evidence the GCA provided can be found [here](#). CT made it clear that the powers of the GCA are set by Parliament and that she is not requesting more powers or any extension to her remit.

GCA meeting with retailer Board Audit representatives:

CT had previously mentioned arranging a meeting in the New Year with retailers' Audit Committee Chairs (or equivalent), and asked CCOs to provide their names and contact details.

Helping the GCA better understand retailers

CT asked if there were any matters arising from the GCA's recent letter about customer complaint charges and forecasting.

Following on from the September CCO meetings, CT discussed the letter sent to each retailer providing feedback/requesting clarification on their Annual Compliance Report.

CCO progress report:

CCOs provided hard copies of their quarterly compliance progress reports, which covered the following areas in accordance with the agenda:

- Progress since the previous meeting on issues raised and kept under review by the GCA (in particular, the 'Top 5 issues');
- Feedback and any follow up being undertaken by retailers on the Drop and Drive presentation by 'Simply Supply Chain' at the CCO group meeting held in November;
- Any training or compliance issues arising since the previous meeting;
- Any upcoming retailer-supplier initiatives that were likely to generate enquiries to the GCA; and
- Any Code-related issues that had been raised with the CCO since the previous meeting.

The reports were reviewed and discussed.

AOB:

- Discussion about future Annual Compliance Reports, giving CCOs the opportunity to raise any queries they had; and
- *For those who made the voluntary commitment on forensic auditing:* The GCA requested an update on the implementation of the commitment.