

Groceries Code Adjudicator

Summary of GCA Introductory Meetings with Code Compliance Officers	
Location	Purpose of meeting
GCA, Victoria House, Southampton Row, London	Introductory meeting
Attendees	
GCA Christine Tacon (CT) and/or Helen Gordon-Lee (HGL) Angela Latta (AL)	<p><u>10th June 2013</u> Iceland Goods Ltd – Jayne Burrell</p> <p><u>18th June 2013</u> Co-Operative Group Ltd – Phil Willsmer Tesco PLC – Martin Field</p> <p><u>25th June 2013</u> Marks & Spencer PLC – Max Gillibrand and Robert Steadman</p> <p><u>28th June 2013</u> Aldi Stores Ltd – Jonathan Ward Wm Morrisons Supermarkets PLC – Steven Butts</p> <p><u>9th July 2013</u> Asda Stores Ltd – Alex Simpson</p> <p><u>10th July 2013</u> Lidl GmbH – Tim Belser and Patrik Bures</p> <p><u>23rd July 2013</u> J Sainsburys PLC – Tim Fallowfield and Susannah Hall</p> <p><u>20th August 2013</u> Waitrose Ltd – David Roberts (new CCO)</p>
Key Points Raised	
<p>GCA</p> <p>Individual meetings were held with each of the retailer Code Compliance Officers (CCOs) as per the schedule above.</p> <p><i>Summary outline of the discussion at each meeting</i></p> <p>CT explained that this was an introductory meeting and that the GCA team would be meeting all retailer CCOs.</p> <p>The GCA hopes to establish a relationship with retailers, with regular contact with the CCOs. CT suggested that this could be achieved through regular quarterly meetings which will be arranged by the GCA office.</p> <p>Awareness of the role of the GCA and the CCOs needs to be increased.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT suggested that it would be useful if the CCOs placed their details on the retailer's website, introducing themselves, outlining the structure of the business, who's who 	

within their business, the CCO contact details and referring to the establishment of the GCA office.

- CT would also like to publish CCO details on the GCA website, which will only be practicable if all retailers are willing to participate. CT appreciated that this role is not necessarily public-facing and would therefore be happy to include a general enquiries address, in place of individual contact details. CCOs were invited to let CT know if they were happy to do this, and provide the contact details to be made available.

CT had taken the following key messages from the British Retail Consortium (BRC) meeting;

- CCOs do not believe that they are breaking the Code.
- Concerns raised that the GCA office will be swamped with out of scope claims.

CT provided each CCO with a copy of the GCA standard presentation, noting that it is posted on the GCA website, used by CT at public speaking engagements such as NFU regional reps, shows/conferences, stakeholder meetings, supplier meetings, media UK and overseas, meetings with other Adjudicators and the Competition Commission.

CT conveyed messages received from suppliers;

- Some have no concerns at all.
- Most recognise the points CT mentioned in her presentation and indicated that many are still an issue.
- Some may not raise complaint themselves but willing to input to CT as evidence.
- The Code being inaccurately quoted by both retailers and suppliers.
- Concern as to whether Joint Business Plans are covered by the Code or not and are they the supply agreement (or part of it)?
- Questioned whether growers in a producer organisation, or dedicated milk/protein pools are covered by the Code.

CT made it clear that the GCA has no targets for the number of investigations that it may conduct, or the potential income from financial penalties. CT is aware that CCOs may believe the Code is not being broken, however should CT hear any concerns on Code related practice and evidence is gathered, she will contact the relevant CCO to indicate where the Code may be being broken, before taking any further action. This will provide the opportunity to check the relevant facts and that the GCA and the retailer are interpreting the Code in the same way. Investigations will then only be started if there does not appear to be any significant improvement in the situation.

On a positive note, CT outlined examples where she has heard of improvements;

- A retailer allowing packaging to be bought from any supplier.
- Suppliers receiving supply agreements.
- Retailers being clearer on reasons for de-listing.
- Suppliers being told who the CCOs are.

CT voiced concern that retailers may not be training all the necessary people: packing, haulage, merchandising, technical for example.

The Statutory Guidance consultation will be launched during the summer, and CCOs were invited to provide their views on how they would like to input.

CT offered to address the retailers' Boards or buying and training teams.